

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE IN TROUBLE**

There may be surprises during your exam—questions you didn't expect, unusual circumstances arising during case management, a diagnosis that doesn't materialize, etc. Deal with these surprises by focusing on what you already know about the case at hand. Review the pertinent information you have obtained and clinical management accomplished so far. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Have I done a thorough history and physical examination?
2. Did I order all appropriate diagnostic studies?
3. Is my clinical management complete?

If something doesn't fit or seems to be missing and you can't pinpoint what it is, go back and start over. Reread the typewritten sheet the Examiner gave you at the beginning of the case, noting the chief complaint and vital signs. Evaluate it again. You may see something you didn't notice before. As you mentally review the case again, slow down and remain calm.

Concentrate on what is happening with each step you have taken. If you see an error or omission, correct it. If you need clarification on some point, ask the Examiner. Don't let up on your concentration. Stay alert, and most especially, pay attention to the Examiner. Don't expect or look for trick questions or comments. There aren't any. Listen for clues.

Methodical retracking is the key to recovering from errors. Lock on to what "is" and proceed step by step to solve the problem.