Learning Objectives

1. Describe the determinants of pleural fluid formation.
2. Interpret pleural fluid studies to distinguish between transudates and exudates.
3. Correctly correlate specific pleural fluid findings suggestive of underlying congestive heart failure, uncomplicated pneumonia, empyema, malignancy, pulmonary embolism, cirrhosis, tuberculosis and chylothorax.
4. Recognize Physical Exam and Chest Xray findings suggestive of pleural effusion and pneumothorax.
5. Summarize basic treatment approach to managing transudates, uncomplicated and complicated exudates, and empyema.
6. Give a clinical scenario, recognize tension pneumothorax as a cause of shock.
7. Summarize treatment options available for managing pneumothorax including observation, oxygen therapy, chest tube placement, and surgery.