

The background of the slide features a blurred image of healthcare professionals in a meeting. Overlaid on this is a grid of 12 small video conference windows, each showing a different person, suggesting a virtual meeting or telehealth session. The entire image has a blue tint.

Physical Assessments for Chronic Pain Conditions

A Practical Approach to Pain-Focused Assessments

Brittany Wu, Physical Therapist, The Hospital for Sick Children



Changing the world by connecting healthcare providers.





Faculty/Presenter Disclosure

- Faculty: **Brittany Wu, MScPT, BKin**
 - Special thanks to Anne Ayling Campos
- Relationships with commercial interests:
 - None
- This program has received financial support from the Ministry of Health (MOH)

1

- **Explain** the overarching goals of conducting a pain-focused physical assessment

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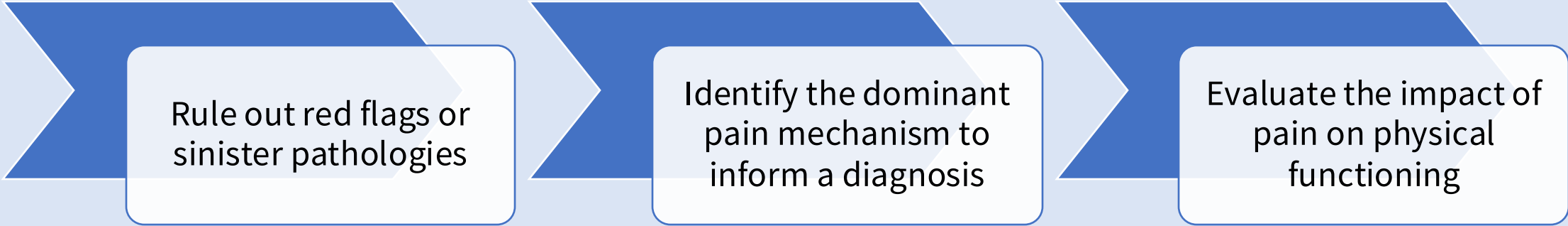
- **Identify** key components and assessment skills involved in the physical assessment of a child presenting with chronic pain

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- **Demonstrate** creativity with selected assessment skills in varying circumstances when assessing a child with chronic pain either virtually or in-person



Goals of Conducting a Physical Assessment

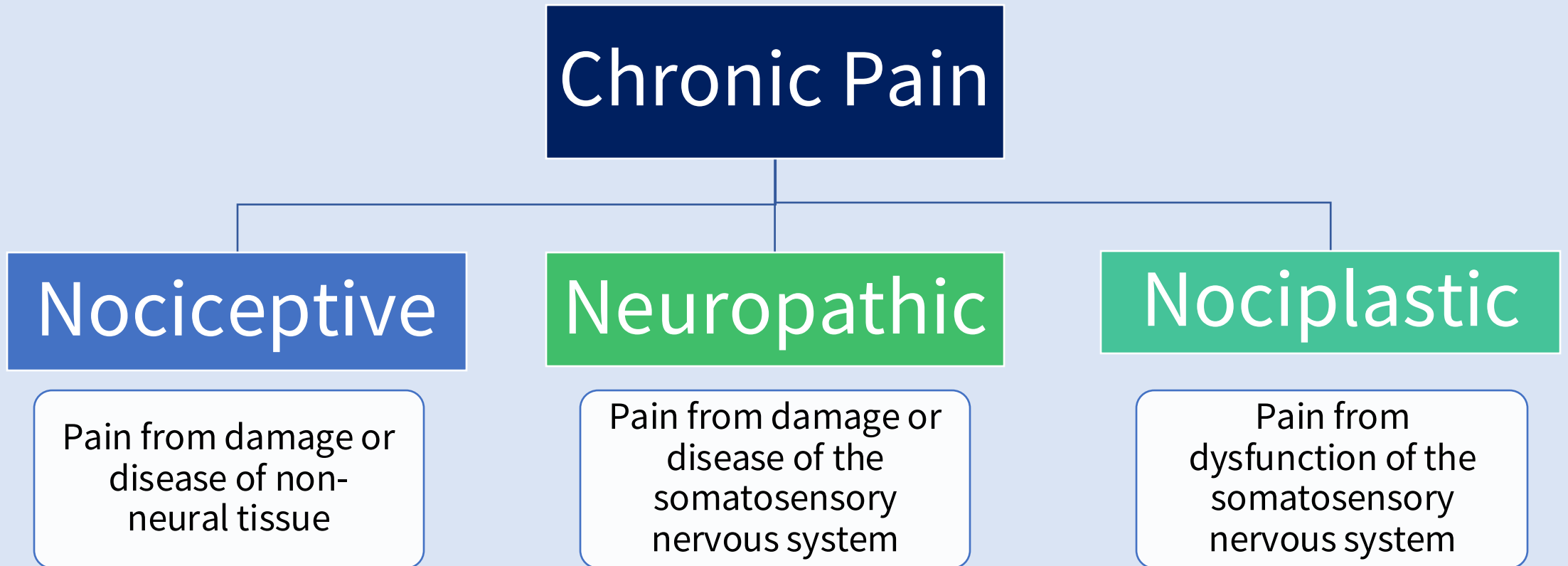


Rule out red flags or sinister pathologies

Identify the dominant pain mechanism to inform a diagnosis

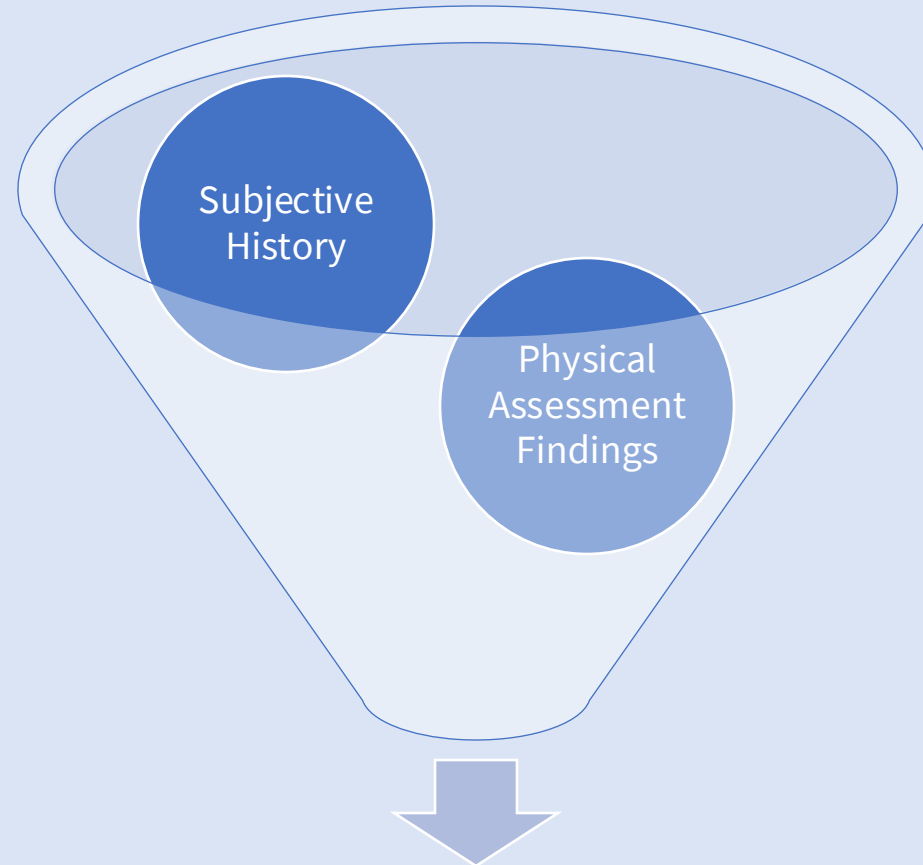
Evaluate the impact of pain on physical functioning

Pain Mechanisms Underpinning Pain Diagnoses



*Patients can have MIXED pain, so the physical exam helps us identify the dominant pain mechanism

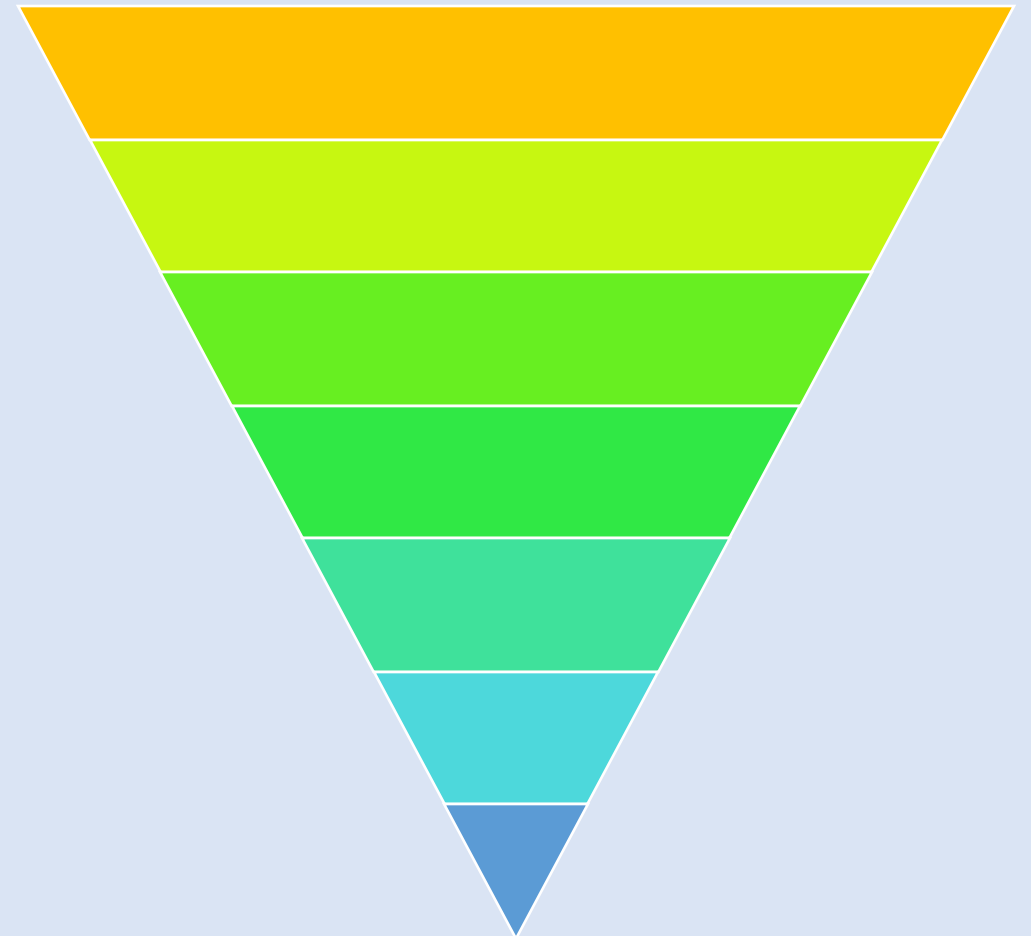
Goals of Conducting a Physical Assessment



Pain Diagnosis

The Nuts and Bolts of a Pain-Focused Physical Exam

- Observation
- Inspection
- Functional Tasks
- Neuro Scan
- MSK Scan
- Palpation
- Special tests





The Nuts and Bolts of a Pain Focused Physical Assessment

Observation	• Overall presentation • Demeanour • Willingness to engage • Pain behaviours (e.g., grimacing, audible noises) • Protective posturing, postural abnormalities
Inspection	• Skin - rashes, colour, texture, scars, infection, bruising, self-harm indicators • Joints – swelling, symmetry
Functional Tasks	• Intentional vs non-intentional movements • Gross movements (squat, wall push-up, transfers)



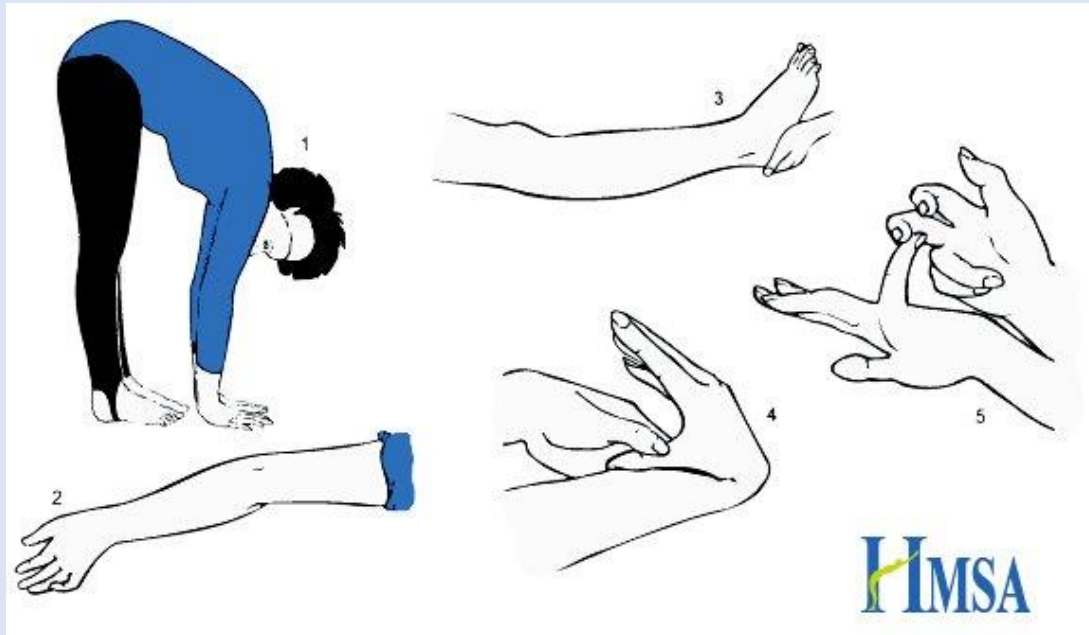
The Nuts and Bolts of a Pain Focused Physical Assessment

Neurological Screening	• Myotomes • Dermatomes • Sensation • Reflexes – can use items at home including side of a hand or a rubber spatula
Musculoskeletal Screening	• Range of motion (AROM, PROM) through specific and/or functional tasks • Strength (MMT testing) • Movement quality, hesitation, fear
Palpation	• Soft tissues, bones, joint line • TOP, trigger points • Temperature differences

The Nuts and Bolts of a Pain Focused Physical Assessment

Special Tests

- Beighton Score – hypermobility
- Budapest Criteria – CRPS



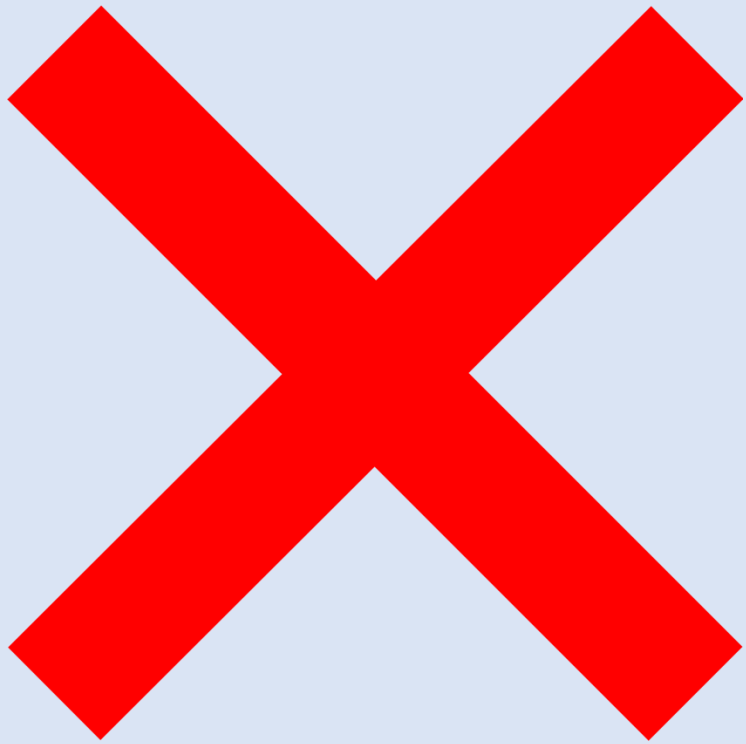
Optimizing the Physical Exam

Do:

- **Engage** the child
- **Validate** their pain experience
- **Explain** each test prior to starting
- Ask **permission** to touch
- Observe **non-verbal cues** for pain
- Be calm, **flexible**, and improvise
- Incorporate age-appropriate **play** and fun



Optimizing the Physical Exam



Don't:

- Use **medical jargon**
- Draw **attention** to abnormal findings
- Have **multiple** examiners touching at the same time

Audience Poll

What best describes your current clinical environment with respect to assessment appointments?

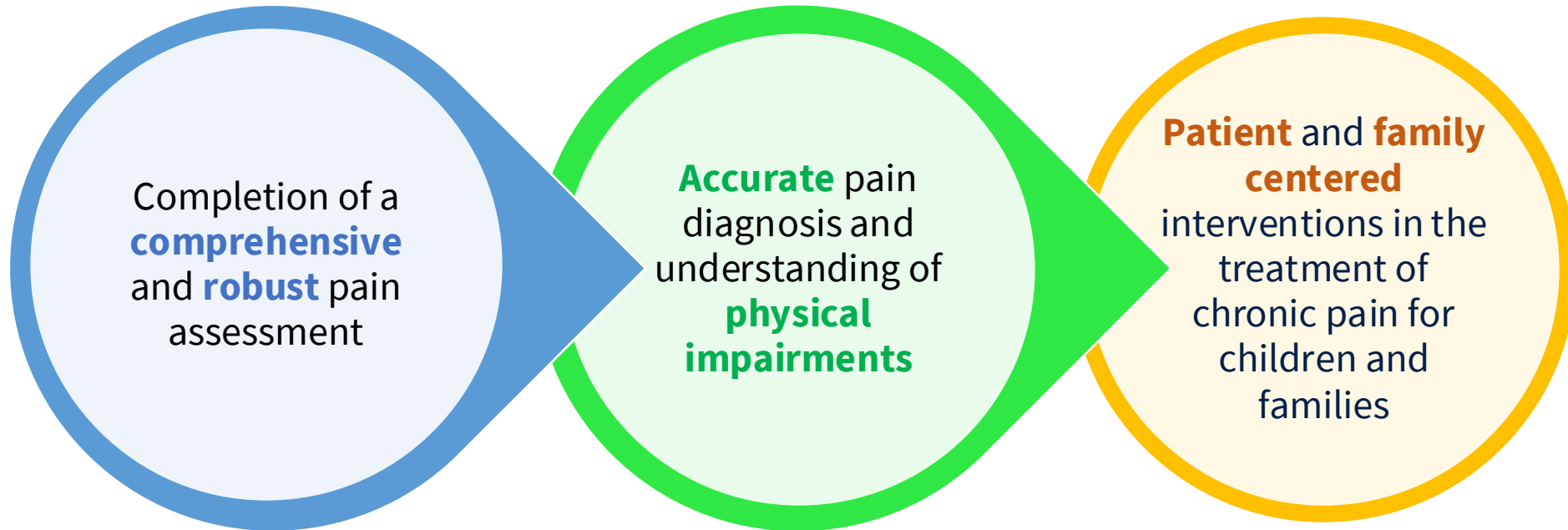
- a) All appointments are in-person
- b) Hybrid model with both virtual and in-person visits
- c) All appointments are virtual visits

Virtual Exam Considerations

- Eye contact
- Audio lags
- Preparation
 - Good lighting, adequate space
 - Appropriate clothing
 - Appropriate supports – equipment, personnel



Benefits of Optimizing the Physical Assessment





Thank you!

Questions?



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