















Figure 2.2 Model of 3D thinking.

WEIGHTED RED FLAG LIST

Subjective examination: age, previous medical history and lifestyle questions (Ch. 3)

- Age
 - <10 
 - 11–19 
 - 20–50
 - >51 
- Medical history (current or past) of 
 - Cancer
 - TB
 - HIV/AIDS or injection drug abuse
 - Osteoporosis
- Smoking 

Subjective examination: history of current episode questions (Ch. 4)

- Weight loss (3–6 months)
 - Weight loss <5% body weight 
 - Weight loss 5–10% body weight 
 - Weight loss >10% body weight 
- Cauda equina syndrome 
- Systemically unwell 
- Trauma 
- Vertebrobasilar insufficiency 
- Bilateral pins and needles in hands and/or feet 
- Previous failed treatment 

Age >50 years + history of cancer + unexplained weight loss + failure to improve after 1 month of conservative therapy 🚩🚩🚩🚩

Subjective examination: pain questions (Ch. 4)

- Constant progressive pain 🚩🚩
- Thoracic pain 🚩
- Abdominal pain and changed bowel habits but with no change of medication 🚩🚩
- Severe night pain 🚩🚩🚩
- Headache 🚩

Objective examination (Ch. 5)

- Physical appearance 🚩
- Inability to lie supine 🚩🚩
- Bizarre neurological deficit 🚩🚩
- Marked partial articular restriction of movement 🚩
- Loss of sphincter tone and altered S4 sensation 🚩🚩🚩
- Spasm 🚩🚩
- Vertebral artery testing 🚩
- Upper cervical instability tests 🚩
- Positive extensor plantar response 🚩🚩🚩
- Disturbed gait 🚩🚩

Red Herrings

- Misattribution by:
 - Patient