

Common Medical Conditions in Factitious Disorder

Condition	Diagnostic Testing
Falsified Angina/Chest Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECG, troponins, and angiography results will be normal • Consider ordering a cardiac stress test and echocardiogram
Induced Hypoglycemia	Insulin levels will be high, but levels of C peptide will be low
Renal Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imaging studies (eg, ultrasounds, CT scans) will show no evidence of stones, masses, or other abnormalities typically associated with severe renal pain • Blood tests won't show elevated white blood cell counts or abnormal kidney function tests (eg, elevated creatinine levels)
Generalized Skin Lesions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biopsy results will be negative • Lesions may be in various stages of healing or occur only in areas accessible by the patient's hands • Lack of response to conventional treatments can also be a clue, as the patient may continuously exacerbate the self-induced lesions
Hyperaldosteronism from Excessive Licorice Consumption (and resulting hypertension and/or hypokalemia without a clear cause)	Glycyrrhizic acid, a component of licorice that mimics the effects of aldosterone, will be present in the patient's blood or urine
Thrombocytopenia Induced by Quinidine	Quinidine will be detectable in blood tests
Severe Bacterial Infection in a Non-Ill Appearing Patient	Blood samples may have been deliberately contaminated with stool, but the lab will identify organisms typically found only in the gut
Vomiting Induced by Ipecac	Emetine—an active compound in ipecac syrup—will be present in the blood or urine
Feigned Positive Pregnancy Test Due to hCG Injections	Ultrasound imaging will reveal a non-gravid uterus

From the article:

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by **Jonathan Heinzman, MD** and **Michael A. Strong, MD, MEd.**

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