

## Chest X-ray quiz

### Answer and discussion

This patient is very breathless because there is a tension pneumothorax. A tension pneumothorax is a medical emergency, as cardiac venous return is obstructed with potentially fatal results if the pleural cavity is not urgently drained (Corne, Carroll et al, 1998). The classic features demonstrated here are a shift of the trachea and mediastinum to the left, depression of the right hemidiaphragm and compression of the right lung. The extratranslucent (i.e. increased blackness) right pleural space projects beyond the mid-line into the left hemithorax.

### Reference

Corne J, Carroll M, Brown I, & Delany D. (1997) *Chest X-Ray Made Easy*. New York, Churchill Livingstone

For question see page 151 of this issue.

