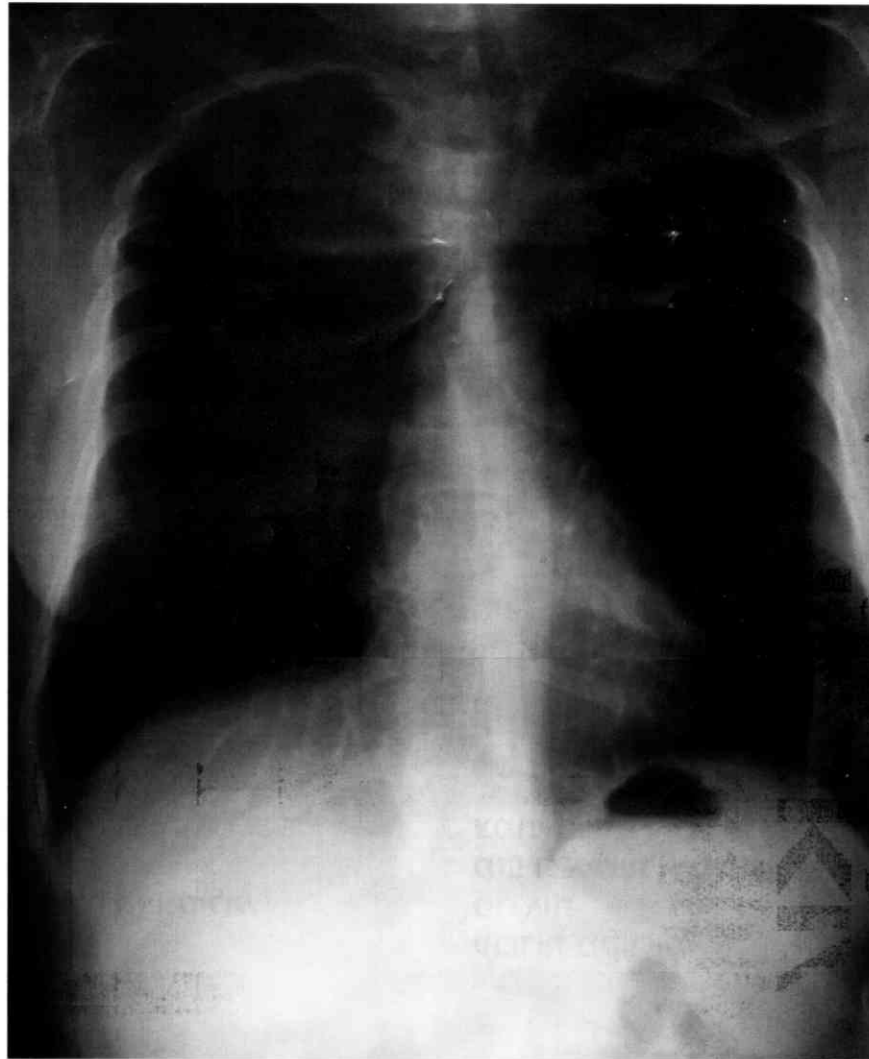


X-Ray

A 58 year old Yeminite woman comes to the Emergency Department with hoarseness, shortness of breath, cough and dizziness. She fainted once. She has no medical history, and is taking no medications. On physical exam she is nontoxic appearing, but with dry mucus membranes. Of note is that she is wearing a wig, although she is not married (many married Jewish women wear wigs) Her temperature is 38.5, BP is normal, pulse 120. Physical exam is unremarkable. WBC is 3.5.

What do you see on her x-ray?



Answer:

Chest film demonstrates a large mass in the area underneath the manubrium with some deviation of the trachea. It is a classic example of the four terrible T of the thorax. They are thymoma, teratoma, substernal thyroid, and terrible lymphoma. This woman is wearing a wig because she was an immigrant from Yemen. In 1949, when most of these immigrants came, they were subjected to radiation treatments to sanitize them. At that time it was known that radiation killed micro organisms, but its effects on health were less known. Her hair fell out. Her x ray demonstrates what was later to be determined to be a thymoma.