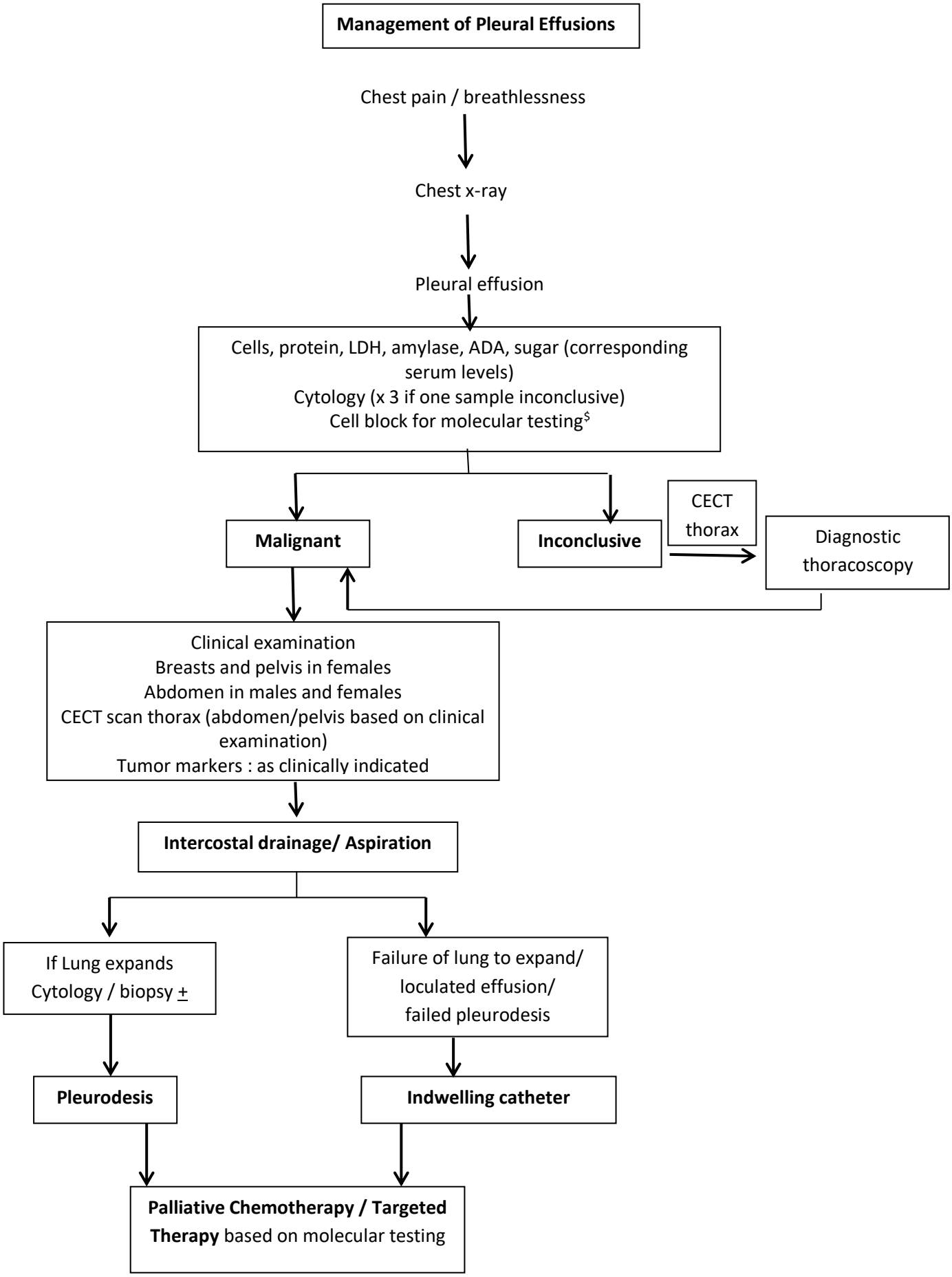
Management of Pleural Effusions
Chest pain / breathlessness
Chest x-ray
Pleural effusion
Cells, protein, LDH, amylase, ADA, sugar (corresponding serum levels)
Cytology (x 3 if one sample inconclusive)
Cell block for molecular testing$
Malignant
Inconclusive
CECT thorax
Diagnostic thoracoscopy
Clinical examination
Breasts and pelvis in females
Abdomen in males and females
CECT scan thorax (abdomen/pelvis based on clinical examination)
Tumor markers : as clinically indicated
Intercostal drainage/ Aspiration
If Lung expands
Cytology / biopsy ±
Failure of lung to expand/ loculated effusion/ failed pleurodesis
Pleurodesis
Indwelling catheter
Palliative Chemotherapy / Targeted Therapy based on molecular testing