NCCAOM HERBAL BOARD PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

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How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

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Questions

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1. Which herb can stop diarrhea?

A. Tu Si Zi

B. Wu Wei Zi

C. Bai Zhu

D. He Shou Wu

2. In Wu Ling San, which herb is the chief herb?

A. Fu Ling

B. Ze Xie

C. Zhu Ling

D. Bai Zhu

3. In Gui Zhi Fu Ling Wan, which herb is listed as the deputy (jun)?

A. Chi/Bai Shao

B. Gui Zhi

C. Fu Ling

D. Tao Ren

4. Which herb is contraindicated during pregnancy due to its diuretic properties?

A. Long Dan Cao

B. Da Huang

C. Qu Mai

D. Mu Tong

5. Gan Jiang enters which channels?

A. LI, UB, KD, SI

B. REN, DU, TH, YG

C. LU, HT, SP, ST

D. HE, PC, GB, SJ

6. What is the chief herb in Wu Ling San?

A. Ze Xie

B. Zhu Ling

C. Fu Ling

D. Gui Zhi

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7. Which herb is listed as draining damp and associated with promoting lactation?

A. Hei Zhi Ma

B. Mu Tong

C. Pu Gong Ying

D. Wang Bu Liu Xing

8. In Si Jun Zi Tang, what is the dosage range for Bai Zhu?

A. 3-6 g

B. 6-9 g

C. 9-12 g

D. 12-15 g

9. Which herb is listed as toxic heat in the lactation-promoting section?

A. Pu Gong Ying

B. Mai Ya

C. Dong Kui Zi

D. Chuan Shan Jia

10. Fu Shen is described as the innermost part of Fu Ling around and including which part?

A. The root

B. The outer bark

C. The stem

D. The fruit

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Answers

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1. A
2. B
3. A
4. C
5. C
6. A
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. A

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Explanations

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1. Which herb can stop diarrhea?

A. Tu Si Zi

B. Wu Wei Zi

C. Bai Zhu

D. He Shou Wu

Stopping diarrhea in patterns of deficiency relies on an herb that both binds leakage and supports the organs that hold things together, especially the kidneys and spleen. Tu Si Zi is a classic stabilizer with strong astringent properties and the ability to anchor the kidney essence, which helps prevent stools from becoming loose. It also tonifies kidney yang and jing, reinforcing the body's structural support to hold in what should be formed stool. This combination—binding action plus deficiency support—makes Tu Si Zi especially effective for chronic diarrhea caused by spleen/kidney deficiency, where the issue is loss of stability rather than excess damp or heat. Wu Wei Zi can also bind and stop diarrhea, but it's more of a general astringent with broader uses (thirst, cough, etc.), whereas Tu Si Zi directly targets leakage and deficiency-related stool instability. Bai Zhu strengthens the spleen and dries dampness, which helps diarrhea from dampness or weak SP, but it does so primarily by tonifying qi rather than binding leakage. He Shou Wu is aimed at tonifying liver/kidney blood and nourishing the hair and Jing rather than addressing stool stability. So, for stopping diarrhea, Tu Si Zi provides the most direct, defpattern-specific action.

2. In Wu Ling San, which herb is the chief herb?

A. Fu Ling

B. Ze Xie

C. Zhu Ling

D. Bai Zhu

The main idea is that the chief herb is the one most directly driving the formula's main action: draining dampness and moving water out of the body. In Wu Ling San, that primary driver is Ze Xie, the Alisma rhizome, because its strongest function is to drain dampness from the lower burner and promote urination. This targets the core pattern of water retention with dampness, directly reducing dampness and aiding downward water flow. The other herbs support this primary action. Fu Ling helps transform dampness and tonify the spleen, Bai Zhu strengthens the spleen to prevent improper water movement, and Zhu Ling also promotes urination to assist drainage. Gui Zhi aids in dispersing exterior patterns and helps harmonize the formula, ensuring the water-dampness movement remains balanced. But Ze Xie provides the principal mechanism for clearing dampness and moving water, which is why it's considered the chief herb.

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3. In Gui Zhi Fu Ling Wan, which herb is listed as the deputy (jun)?

A. Chi/Bai Shao

B. Gui Zhi

C. Fu Ling

D. Tao Ren

The main idea here is how this formula uses one herb to lead the action and another to balance and support it. Gui Zhi Fu Ling Wan targets stagnation of blood in the uterus with underlying deficiency, so the herb that leads the action is Gui Zhi, moving and warming to dispel stasis. The deputy herb, White Peony (Bai Shao), provides the balancing support: it nourishes the blood and preserves Yin, which keeps the warming and moving effects from overdoing it and helps stabilize the uterine vessels. This harmonizing role is essential in a postpartum pattern where you want blood to move but also to be nourished and protected. A useful contrast: Chi Shao (red peony) also moves blood and helps break up stasis, but its action is more aggressive on blood movement and can be drying. In this formula, Bai Shao fits the deputy's stabilizing, nourishing function best, especially in a pattern that involves deficiency alongside stagnation. The other ingredients support dampness, calm the mind, or actively move blood, but Bai Shao's nourishing, Yin-preserving support is what makes it the deputy.

4. Which herb is contraindicated during pregnancy due to its diuretic properties?

A. Long Dan Cao

B. Da Huang

C. Qu Mai

D. Mu Tong

The main idea is that herbs with strong diuretic effects are avoided in pregnancy because increased urine flow can lead to dehydration and may stimulate uterine contractions, risking miscarriage or premature labor. Qu Mai is known for its rapid, notable diuretic action to promote urination. Because of this strong diuretic effect, it can irritate the uterus and increase the likelihood of pregnancy loss, so it is contraindicated during pregnancy. The other herbs listed do not have diuretic action as their primary effect, so they don't carry the same pregnancy-specific risk in this context.

5. Gan Jiang enters which channels?

A. LI, UB, KD, SI

B. REN, DU, TH, YG

C. LU, HT, SP, ST

D. HE, PC, GB, SJ

Gan Jiang's warming, moving effect travels through multiple channels to address cold in both the middle burner and the chest. It enters the Lung channel to warm the lungs and dispel cold-phlegm, the Stomach and Spleen channels to strengthen the middle burner and transform cold-damp, and the Heart channel to influence chest warmth and related cold-damage symptoms. So the channels involved are Lung, Heart, Spleen, and Stomach. This multi-channel entry explains its broad use in warming interior cold and supporting digestion and chest conditions, rather than targeting a single meridian.

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6. What is the chief herb in Wu Ling San?

A. Ze Xie

B. Zhu Ling

C. Fu Ling

D. Gui Zhi

In Wu Ling San, the main goal is to drain dampness and promote urination to resolve water buildup, especially in the lower burner. The herb that serves as the chief agent for this diuretic action is Ze Xie. Alisma orientale directly and strongly drains dampness through the urine, targeting the lower burner where dampness tends to accumulate, which is the core mechanism behind this formula's effect. The other herbs support this action by helping transform and move dampness, tonifying the spleen to prevent further dampness, and harmonizing the interior so water metabolism can proceed smoothly. So Ze Xie stands out as the principal ingredient driving the diuretic and dampness-draining effect of Wu Ling San.

7. Which herb is listed as draining damp and associated with promoting lactation?

A. Hei Zhi Ma

B. Mu Tong

C. Pu Gong Ying

D. Wang Bu Liu Xing

Draining damp and promoting lactation go hand in hand when an herb clears damp-heat in the breast area while supporting milk production. Pu Gong Ying (dandelion) fits this pattern beautifully: it is cooling and bitter, clears damp-heat and toxins, and is widely used to promote lactation and treat breast infections caused by damp-heat. This combination of actions makes it the best fit for an herb described as draining damp and linked to lactation. Hei Zhi Ma nourishes yin and moistens dryness, not damp-dispelling; Mu Tong clears damp-heat and unblocks urine but is not primarily a lactation herb; Wang Bu Liu Xing promotes lactation and helps with breast lumps, but its main role isn't draining damp-heat.

8. In Si Jun Zi Tang, what is the dosage range for Bai Zhu?

A. 3-6 g

B. 6-9 g

C. 9-12 g

D. 12-15 g

Tonify qi and strengthen the Spleen while balancing dampness. In Si Jun Zi Tang, Bai Zhu serves as the main Spleen qi tonic and damp-drying agent, and its dose is kept in a middle range to harmonize with the other herbs. A 6-9 g amount provides enough Spleen qi support to improve digestion, energy, and resistance to dampness without tipping the formula toward excessive drying or overpowering the other ingredients. Using less than this (3-6 g) would under-tone the Spleen qi, while more than this (9-12 g or higher) could disrupt the formula's balance and damp-drying effect.

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9. Which herb is listed as toxic heat in the lactation-promoting section?

A. Pu Gong Ying

B. Mai Ya

C. Dong Kui Zi

D. Chuan Shan Jia

In lactation-promoting contexts, herbs that clear heat-toxin from the breast area are prized because heat-toxins can block milk flow and cause mastitis. Pu Gong Ying (dandelion) fits this role well: it's bitter and cool, and it clears heat-toxin, often used to treat breast abscesses and inflammation. By resolving these toxins in the breast, it helps restore milk movement and lactation. That makes Pu Gong Ying the herb listed under toxic heat in the lactation-promoting section. The other options work through different actions—Mai Ya mainly aids digestion and relieves stagnation; Dong Kui Zi promotes lactation without the specific toxin-clearing action; Chuan Shan Jia (pangolin shell) is a strong toxin-clearing herb but isn't the typical lactation-promoting choice in standard references.

10. Fu Shen is described as the innermost part of Fu Ling around and including which part?

A. The root

B. The outer bark

C. The stem

D. The fruit

Fu Shen refers to the innermost portion of Fu Ling that encircles and includes the root. This means the root of the sclerotium-substrate is the part described as being included within Fu Shen, making the root the correct choice. The other parts described in this context would correspond to different layers or forms of the Fu Ling preparation (not the innermost portion around the root).

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Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

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We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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