NCLEX PRACTICE TEST (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. **What is a common side effect of opioid analgesics?**

   A. Nausea

   B. Drowsiness

   C. Constipation

   D. Respiratory depression

2. **Which are potential signs/symptoms related to preeclampsia in a client at 28 weeks gestation? Select all that apply.**

   A. 300 mg/24 hr (0.3 g/day) protein in urine

   B. Frequent urination

   C. Headache and blurry vision

   D. Hemoglobin 10 g/dL (100 g/L)

   E. 2+ pitting pedal edema

3. **Which statement made by a client with an ascending colostomy indicates that further teaching is required?**

   A. I always try to drink 3 liters of water each day

   B. I avoid eating beans, onions, broccoli, and cauliflower

   C. I change the appliance and bag every other day

   D. I empty the bag when it is about one-third full

4. **A nurse receives change-of-shift report on 4 clients. Which client should the nurse assess first?**

   A. Client who experienced a transient ischemic attack 2 days ago

   B. Client who had a subdural hemorrhage 36 hours ago

   C. Client with a bowel resection who had 4,800 mL of urine output

   D. Client with a stroke whose Glasgow Coma Scale changed from 9 to 13

5. **Which client condition is indicated by bruising behind the ears after a football injury?**

   A. Basilar skull fracture

   B. Clavicle fracture

   C. Concussion

   D. Orbital fracture

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6. What is the appropriate nursing action for a client with unstable angina who reports a new dull, throbbing headache after 5 minutes on a nitroglycerin IV infusion?

A. Decrease the infusion rate and reassess the client's report of pain

B. Document the finding and administer prescribed acetaminophen

C. Notify the health care provider and request a CT scan of the head

D. Stop the infusion immediately and notify the health care provider

7. Which vital sign is most critical to assess in a patient with sepsis?

A. Heart rate

B. Respiratory rate

C. Temperature

D. Blood pressure

8. Which intervention should be included in planning care for a client with a fractured femur in balanced suspension skeletal traction? Select all that apply.

A. Encourage intake of at least 2 L of clear fluids per day to prevent constipation

B. Ensure that the weights hang freely and do not touch the ground

C. Monitor for erythema, drainage, swelling, and malodor at the pin insertion sites

D. Perform frequent neurovascular checks on the affected extremity for the first 24 hours

E. Remove the weights for 10 minutes every 2 hours to prevent muscle spasm

9. What class of drug is commonly prescribed to manage hypertension?

A. Beta blockers

B. Calcium channel blockers

C. ACE inhibitors

D. Diuretics

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10. Which client should the nurse call back first in an ambulatory surgery center?

A. Client who had a colonoscopy with polypectomy who reports abdominal cramping and a small amount of rectal bleeding

B. Client who had a lumbar laminectomy with spinal fusion 3 days ago who reports straining to have a bowel movement

C. Client who underwent laparoscopic inguinal hernia repair yesterday who reports difficulty urinating

D. Client who underwent placement of an arteriovenous graft who reports a temperature of 100.9 F (38.3 C)

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is a common side effect of opioid analgesics?

A. Nausea

B. Drowsiness

C. Constipation

D. Respiratory depression

Opioid analgesics are widely used for pain management, but they come with a well-documented profile of side effects. One of the most common side effects is constipation. This occurs because opioids bind to specific receptors in the gastrointestinal tract, leading to decreased peristalsis and increased muscle tone in the bowel, resulting in slower transit and harder stools. While other side effects, such as nausea, drowsiness, and respiratory depression, are indeed common with opioid use, constipation tends to be a particularly significant issue due to its prevalence and potential to cause discomfort and complicate patient care routines. Maintaining gastrointestinal health is crucial for patients on opioids, and healthcare providers often implement preventive measures, like recommending fiber intake and hydration or prescribing laxatives, to mitigate this side effect. Understanding the implications of opioid side effects, particularly constipation, is critical for nursing care, as effective management can lead to improved patient comfort and adherence to treatment plans.

2. Which are potential signs/symptoms related to preeclampsia in a client at 28 weeks gestation? Select all that apply.

A. 300 mg/24 hr (0.3 g/day) protein in urine

B. Frequent urination

C. Headache and blurry vision

D. Hemoglobin 10 g/dL (100 g/L)

E. 2+ pitting pedal edema

Preeclampsia is a serious condition in pregnancy that usually occurs after 20 weeks gestation and is characterized by high blood pressure and signs of damage to other organ systems, often the liver and kidneys. Some potential signs and symptoms to look out for in a client at 28 weeks gestation may include high levels of protein in the urine, frequent urination, headache, blurry vision, low hemoglobin levels, and pitting pedal edema. Options B, C, D, and E are incorrect because they are not specifically related to preeclampsia. Frequent urination and headache may be common pregnancy symptoms, but they are not necessarily indicators of preeclampsia. A hemoglobin level of 10 g/dL (or 100 g/L) may be considered low, but it is not directly related to preeclampsia. 2+ pitting pedal edema may also be a common symptom in pregnancy, but it is not specific to preeclampsia. Overall, option A is the most specific and reliable indicator of preeclampsia in a client at 28 weeks gestation.

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3. Which statement made by a client with an ascending colostomy indicates that further teaching is required?

A. I always try to drink 3 liters of water each day

B. I avoid eating beans, onions, broccoli, and cauliflower

C. I change the appliance and bag every other day

D. I empty the bag when it is about one-third full

The statement indicating that further teaching is required is the one regarding the client aiming to drink 3 liters of water each day. While staying hydrated is important, this amount may be excessive for some individuals, especially considering factors such as the client's overall health, activity level, and any existing medical conditions. For someone with an ascending colostomy, fluid intake needs may vary and should be tailored to the individual's needs, potentially under the guidance of a healthcare provider. Maintaining adequate hydration is essential, but emphasizing that the client should listen to their body's signals and adjust their fluid intake appropriately is crucial. The other options reflect appropriate knowledge and habits for managing an ascending colostomy. For example, avoiding certain foods that can cause gas is a common recommendation for those with this type of colostomy, as it can help minimize discomfort and odor. Regularly changing the appliance every other day is also a typical practice, as it helps maintain skin integrity and hygiene. Lastly, emptying the bag when it is about one-third full is a good practice to prevent leakage and discomfort. Thus, the focus on fluid intake may need further clarification to ensure it aligns with their health status and individual hydration needs.

4. A nurse receives change-of-shift report on 4 clients. Which client should the nurse assess first?

A. Client who experienced a transient ischemic attack 2 days ago

B. Client who had a subdural hemorrhage 36 hours ago

C. Client with a bowel resection who had 4,800 mL of urine output

D. Client with a stroke whose Glasgow Coma Scale changed from 9 to 13

The nurse should assess the client who experienced a transient ischemic attack 2 days ago first because this indicates a recent change in condition that may require immediate intervention. The other clients have either had a longer interval since their acute events or have stable or improved conditions. The client with a subdural hemorrhage may have a more urgent condition, but the client with a transient ischemic attack should be assessed first because the symptoms may have progressed rapidly. The client with high urine output may need further evaluation, but they may have been receiving fluids, and the change in condition for the client with a stroke may not be as recent and therefore not as urgent.

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5. Which client condition is indicated by bruising behind the ears after a football injury?

A. Basilar skull fracture

B. Clavicle fracture

C. Concussion

D. Orbital fracture

Bruising behind the ears, particularly after a head injury such as the one described, is indicative of a basilar skull fracture. This type of fracture involves the base of the skull and can lead to significant complications, including cerebrospinal fluid leakage and cranial nerve damage. The bruising observed behind the ears is often referred to as "Battle's sign," which specifically points to potential trauma to the base of the skull. In contrast, although a clavicle fracture can cause significant pain and swelling, it is not associated with bruising behind the ears. A concussion typically presents with symptoms such as headache, confusion, dizziness, and other cognitive impairments, but not external bruising. An orbital fracture may lead to bruising around the eyes, known as "raccoon eyes," but does not explain bruising behind the ears. Therefore, the combination of the injury context and the specific signs noted strongly supports the diagnosis of a basilar skull fracture.

6. What is the appropriate nursing action for a client with unstable angina who reports a new dull, throbbing headache after 5 minutes on a nitroglycerin IV infusion?

A. Decrease the infusion rate and reassess the client's report of pain

B. Document the finding and administer prescribed acetaminophen

C. Notify the health care provider and request a CT scan of the head

D. Stop the infusion immediately and notify the health care provider

The appropriate nursing action for a client experiencing a new dull, throbbing headache after the initiation of a nitroglycerin IV infusion is to decrease the infusion rate and reassess the client's report of pain. Nitroglycerin is a vasodilator commonly used to relieve angina by reducing myocardial oxygen demand. However, a common side effect of nitroglycerin can include headaches due to the dilation of cerebral blood vessels. By reducing the infusion rate, the nurse can mitigate the side effect while still providing the necessary treatment for unstable angina. Reassessing the headache after the adjustment allows for continued monitoring of the client's symptoms and effectiveness of pain control. This gradual approach helps in managing potential side effects without abruptly stopping the treatment, which might compromise the management of the angina. Other choices could involve immediate actions that may not be the best first step given the context of nitroglycerin's known side effects.

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7. Which vital sign is most critical to assess in a patient with sepsis?

A. Heart rate

B. Respiratory rate

C. Temperature

D. Blood pressure

In a patient with sepsis, monitoring blood pressure is particularly critical because sepsis can lead to septic shock, which is characterized by a significant drop in blood pressure due to widespread vasodilation and fluid loss. Early identification of hypotension can facilitate timely intervention, such as fluid resuscitation and vasopressor therapy, which are essential in preventing organ failure and improving outcomes. Blood pressure is a key indicator of circulatory status and perfusion, and in the context of sepsis, it's crucial to track any changes that may indicate deterioration. Keeping a close eye on blood pressure helps healthcare providers assess the patient's response to treatment and the effectiveness of interventions aimed at stabilizing the condition. While heart rate, respiratory rate, and temperature are also important vital signs to monitor in sepsis, blood pressure carries the most immediate implications for the patient's hemodynamic stability and is often a focus in critical care settings.

8. Which intervention should be included in planning care for a client with a fractured femur in balanced suspension skeletal traction? Select all that apply.

A. Encourage intake of at least 2 L of clear fluids per day to prevent constipation

B. Ensure that the weights hang freely and do not touch the ground

C. Monitor for erythema, drainage, swelling, and malodor at the pin insertion sites

D. Perform frequent neurovascular checks on the affected extremity for the first 24 hours

E. Remove the weights for 10 minutes every 2 hours to prevent muscle spasm

The correct answer focuses on interventions that are essential for a client in balanced suspension skeletal traction for a fractured femur. Encouraging an intake of at least 2 liters of clear fluids per day is vital for several reasons. First, sufficient fluid intake helps to prevent constipation, which is a common concern in clients who are immobile or on bed rest due to their injury. Maintaining hydration can also improve overall health, support bowel function, and assist in the healing process by ensuring adequate circulation and nutrient delivery to tissues. In the context of balanced suspension skeletal traction, it's also important to consider issues surrounding safety and comfort. Ensuring that weights hang freely and do not touch the ground is crucial to maintain the effectiveness of the traction and prevent potential complications, such as disruption or inefficient traction. Additionally, monitoring for erythema, drainage, swelling, and malodor at the pin insertion sites is key to identifying signs of infection early. Performing frequent neurovascular checks on the affected extremity for the first 24 hours helps assess circulation and nerve function, further ensuring that any complications can be addressed promptly. Thus, while maintaining hydration is critical for managing the client's overall health, especially in preventing constipation, the other interventions are also necessary components to ensure that the client

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9. What class of drug is commonly prescribed to manage hypertension?

A. Beta blockers

B. Calcium channel blockers

C. ACE inhibitors

D. Diuretics

ACE inhibitors are commonly prescribed to manage hypertension because they work by inhibiting the angiotensin-converting enzyme, which plays a crucial role in the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system (RAAS). This system regulates blood pressure by controlling blood vessel constriction and fluid balance. By blocking this enzyme, ACE inhibitors reduce the formation of angiotensin II, a substance that narrows blood vessels and increases blood pressure. As a result, they promote vasodilation and decrease blood pressure, making them a primary choice in hypertension management. In addition to their effectiveness in lowering blood pressure, ACE inhibitors also have other beneficial effects, such as improving heart function in patients with heart failure and offering renal protection in diabetic patients. These attributes make them not only effective but also versatile in managing multiple aspects of cardiovascular health. While other classes of drugs for hypertension, such as beta blockers, calcium channel blockers, and diuretics, are also widely used, ACE inhibitors remain a first-line treatment for many patients due to their unique mechanisms and benefits in various comorbid conditions.

10. Which client should the nurse call back first in an ambulatory surgery center?

A. Client who had a colonoscopy with polypectomy who reports abdominal cramping and a small amount of rectal bleeding

B. Client who had a lumbar laminectomy with spinal fusion 3 days ago who reports straining to have a bowel movement

C. Client who underwent laparoscopic inguinal hernia repair yesterday who reports difficulty urinating

D. Client who underwent placement of an arteriovenous graft who reports a temperature of 100.9 F (38.3 C)

The client who underwent placement of an arteriovenous graft and reports a temperature of 100.9 F (38.3 C) should be prioritized for a callback. This client may be exhibiting signs of an infection, as a fever can indicate an inflammatory or infectious process, especially following a surgical procedure related to vascular access. Prompt assessment and intervention are critical to prevent potential complications related to infection. In an ambulatory surgery center, this situation presents a more urgent concern than the other scenarios. While abdominal cramping and rectal bleeding after a colonoscopy with polypectomy can be common and might not require immediate attention, it is essential to monitor those symptoms closely after the procedure. Additionally, straining to have a bowel movement post-surgery could indicate constipation, which may require management but is not immediately life-threatening. Lastly, difficulty urinating after laparoscopic inguinal hernia repair may warrant attention and evaluation but is often seen within a reasonable range of postoperative discomfort. Therefore, the presence of a fever in the client with the arteriovenous graft necessitates faster intervention to rule out serious complications, making this client the priority for follow-up.

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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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