

AAPC A/P Certified Inpatient Coder (CIC) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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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.

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!

Questions

- 1. What term describes the restriction of blood supply that may lead to tissue damage or dysfunction?**
 - A. Ischemia**
 - B. Infusion**
 - C. Embolism**
 - D. Thrombosis**
- 2. What is the medical term for the muscle that covers the shoulder joint?**
 - A. Trapezius**
 - B. Deltoid**
 - C. Pectoralis Major**
 - D. Latissimus Dorsi**
- 3. What is the role of the optic nerve in vision?**
 - A. Receives light rays**
 - B. Regulates the size of the pupil**
 - C. Transmits visual impulses to the brain**
 - D. Blocks excess light from entering**
- 4. What is the primary characteristic of a vesicle?**
 - A. Filled with pus**
 - B. Contains clear fluid**
 - C. Swellings above the skin**
 - D. Loss of pigmentation**
- 5. Which structure transports urine from the kidneys to the urinary bladder?**
 - A. Urethra**
 - B. Ureter**
 - C. Kidney**
 - D. Glomerulus**

- 6. Which term is defined as softening of the brain often due to ischemia or infarction?**
- A. Cerebrospinal**
 - B. Encephalomalacia**
 - C. Dysphasia**
 - D. Hemiparesis**
- 7. What is the significance of the prefix pht/o in relation to plants?**
- A. Growth**
 - B. Movement**
 - C. Production**
 - D. Plant**
- 8. What is the primary function of the cochlea in the ear?**
- A. Sound amplification**
 - B. Sound detection and transmission**
 - C. Balance maintenance**
 - D. Pressure regulation**
- 9. Which condition is often assessed using an X-ray to determine the degree of curvature in the spine?**
- A. Kyphosis**
 - B. Lordosis**
 - C. Scoliosis**
 - D. Pectus carinatum**
- 10. Which of the following describes severe or stabbing pain associated with nerve pain?**
- A. Neunasia**
 - B. Pneuralgia**
 - C. Neuralgia**
 - D. Neuronitis**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What term describes the restriction of blood supply that may lead to tissue damage or dysfunction?

A. Ischemia

B. Infusion

C. Embolism

D. Thrombosis

The term that best describes the restriction of blood supply, which can cause tissue damage or dysfunction, is ischemia. Ischemia occurs when there is insufficient blood flow to meet the metabolic demands of tissues, leading to reduced oxygen levels and nutrient delivery. This can result in cellular injury and, if prolonged, can lead to tissue death. Infusion refers to the introduction of a substance, typically a fluid, into the body, and does not relate to the restriction of blood supply. Embolism involves the obstruction of a blood vessel by a clot or foreign material that has traveled through the bloodstream, while thrombosis refers specifically to the formation of a blood clot within a blood vessel. While both embolism and thrombosis can lead to ischemia, they do not define the condition itself. Thus, ischemia is the most accurate term for the restriction of blood supply that results in potential tissue damage or dysfunction.

2. What is the medical term for the muscle that covers the shoulder joint?

A. Trapezius

B. Deltoid

C. Pectoralis Major

D. Latissimus Dorsi

The correct answer identifies the deltoid as the muscle covering the shoulder joint. The deltoid muscle is a large, triangular muscle located on the outer aspect of the shoulder. It plays a crucial role in the movement of the shoulder, allowing for actions such as lifting the arm and rotating it. Specifically, the deltoid encompasses the shoulder joint and is responsible for a range of movements including flexion, extension, abduction, and rotation of the arm. Its structure is designed to provide both strength and stability to the shoulder area, making it essential for many daily activities and athletic movements. In contrast, the trapezius muscle, while it does play a role in shoulder movement, primarily aids in the elevation and rotation of the scapula rather than covering the shoulder joint directly. The pectoralis major, a large chest muscle, contributes to shoulder movements but does not cover the joint itself. The latissimus dorsi is a major back muscle that assists in many arm movements but is not associated with actively covering the shoulder joint.

3. What is the role of the optic nerve in vision?

- A. Receives light rays
- B. Regulates the size of the pupil
- C. Transmits visual impulses to the brain**
- D. Blocks excess light from entering

The optic nerve plays a crucial role in vision by transmitting visual impulses from the retina to the brain. Once light enters the eye, it is focused onto the retina, where photoreceptor cells convert the light rays into electrical signals. These signals are then carried by the optic nerve to the visual cortex of the brain, where they are processed and interpreted as images. This pathway is essential for the perception of visual information, making the optic nerve critical for sight. The other roles mentioned, such as receiving light rays and regulating pupil size, are functions performed by different components of the eye, such as the cornea, lens, and iris. The optic nerve specifically does not block light; instead, it serves to relay the information captured after the light has been processed in the retina. Hence, the correct understanding of the optic nerve's function highlights its importance in connecting visual stimuli to the brain for interpretation.

4. What is the primary characteristic of a vesicle?

- A. Filled with pus
- B. Contains clear fluid**
- C. Swellings above the skin
- D. Loss of pigmentation

The primary characteristic of a vesicle is that it contains clear fluid. Vesicles are small, fluid-filled sacs found within or on the surface of the skin. They typically arise due to various conditions, such as infections or allergic reactions, and they have a well-defined border. Their clear fluid distinguishes them from other types of lesions, which may contain pus or other substances. Other options describe characteristics of different skin conditions. For instance, pus-filled lesions are indicative of pustules rather than vesicles. Swellings above the skin could refer to a range of other lesions, including papules or plaques. Loss of pigmentation pertains to conditions affecting skin color, distinct from fluid-filled formations. Understanding these distinctions helps in accurately identifying skin lesions in clinical coding and diagnostics.

5. Which structure transports urine from the kidneys to the urinary bladder?

A. Urethra

B. Ureter

C. Kidney

D. Glomerulus

The ureter is the correct choice because it is specifically designed as a muscular tube that connects the kidneys to the urinary bladder, facilitating the transport of urine. This structure is crucial in the urinary system, as it allows for the movement of urine that is produced in the kidneys to be stored in the bladder before elimination from the body. The ureters have peristaltic movements that help propel the urine downward from the kidneys, ensuring that it reaches the bladder effectively. In this context, the kidneys primarily function to filter blood and produce urine, rather than transport it. The urethra, while it plays an important role in urine elimination by carrying urine from the bladder out of the body, does not transport urine from the kidneys. The glomerulus is part of the kidney's filtration system and also does not have a function related to the transport of urine. Therefore, the ureter is the key structure responsible for conveying urine from the kidneys to the urinary bladder.

6. Which term is defined as softening of the brain often due to ischemia or infarction?

A. Cerebrospinal

B. Encephalomalacia

C. Dysphasia

D. Hemiparesis

The term that refers to the softening of the brain, often due to ischemia or infarction, is encephalomalacia. This condition occurs when there is a loss of brain tissue, which can happen as a result of various factors, including reduced or interrupted blood flow to the brain. Ischemia leads to the death of brain cells, and over time, the affected area may become softened or necrotic. In clinical practice, encephalomalacia is significant because it can help diagnose the underlying causes of neurological deficits in patients, including past strokes or other forms of cerebral injury. Recognizing the signs of this condition is essential for appropriate treatment and management of patients with brain damage. The other terms provided refer to different medical issues: cerebrospinal relates to the cerebrospinal fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord; dysphasia is a language disorder affecting the production or comprehension of speech; and hemiparesis refers to weakness on one side of the body. Understanding these distinctions clarifies why encephalomalacia is the correct term for the condition described.

7. What is the significance of the prefix pht/o in relation to plants?

- A. Growth**
- B. Movement**
- C. Production**
- D. Plant**

The prefix pht/o is significant because it specifically relates to plants, deriving from the Greek word "phyton," which means plant. This prefix is commonly found in various scientific and botanical terms that pertain directly to plant biology, such as photosynthesis, which is the process by which plants convert light energy into chemical energy. Understanding prefixes like pht/o is crucial in fields such as botany, ecology, and related disciplines, as it provides insight into what the terms indicate regarding plant life and processes. The other options, while relevant to biological concepts, do not directly correspond to the specific meaning of the prefix in the context of plants.

8. What is the primary function of the cochlea in the ear?

- A. Sound amplification**
- B. Sound detection and transmission**
- C. Balance maintenance**
- D. Pressure regulation**

The cochlea plays a crucial role in the process of hearing. It is a spiral-shaped structure located in the inner ear that transforms sound vibrations from the environment into neural signals that the brain can interpret. This process involves the detection of sound waves as they enter the cochlea and the subsequent transmission of these signals to the auditory nerve. Specifically, when sound enters the cochlea, it causes the fluid inside to move, which in turn stimulates tiny hair cells located within the cochlea. These hair cells convert the mechanical vibrations into electrical impulses. The auditory nerve then carries these impulses to the brain, where they are processed and recognized as specific sounds. While other functions related to hearing and balance are associated with different structures in the ear, the cochlea's main responsibility is indeed the detection and transmission of sound. This fundamental function is what distinguishes it from structures involved in balance or pressure regulation.

9. Which condition is often assessed using an X-ray to determine the degree of curvature in the spine?

- A. Kyphosis**
- B. Lordosis**
- C. Scoliosis**
- D. Pectus carinatum**

The condition that is typically assessed using an X-ray to determine the degree of curvature in the spine is scoliosis. Scoliosis is characterized by an abnormal lateral curvature of the spine, which can vary in severity and can develop in children or adolescents as they grow. X-rays are crucial in evaluating the degree of the curvature, which is usually measured in degrees (Cobb angle), and assists healthcare providers in determining the appropriate treatment, whether it be monitoring, bracing, or surgery. Assessing scoliosis through X-rays is essential because it provides a clear visual representation of the spine's alignment and curvature, allowing for proper diagnosis and management. Other spinal conditions like kyphosis and lordosis also relate to spinal curvature but typically have different characteristics and may not be as commonly assessed with X-rays for curvature measurement as scoliosis. Pectus carinatum, on the other hand, is a chest wall deformity rather than a spinal condition, and while it may affect appearance and chest development, it is not directly related to spinal curvature assessment.

10. Which of the following describes severe or stabbing pain associated with nerve pain?

- A. Neunasia**
- B. Pneuralgia**
- C. Neuralgia**
- D. Neuronitis**

The correct answer is neuralgia. This term specifically refers to severe, often stabbing pain that is associated with nerve damage or dysfunction. Neuralgia can occur in various parts of the body and is a common symptom of conditions that affect the nervous system, such as shingles or multiple sclerosis. The word itself comes from the roots "neuro" meaning nerve and "algia" meaning pain, directly implying pain stemming from nerve issues. Other terms provided in the question do not accurately capture this specific type of pain. For instance, "neunasia" and "pneuralgia" are not recognized medical terms. Meanwhile, "neuronitis" pertains to inflammation of a neuron rather than describing the type of pain experienced due to nerve injury or irritation. Understanding the terminology related to symptoms is crucial in coding and identifying conditions accurately in medical coding practices.

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:

<https://aapapcic.examzify.com>

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