

AAPC A/P CERTIFIED INPATIENT CODER (CIC) PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



Prepare with structure. Pass with confidence



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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

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- 1. What could ataxia indicate regarding muscle function?**
 - A. Increased muscle strength
 - B. Coordination impairment
 - C. Sensation loss in the limbs
 - D. Total paralysis
- 2. What is the process of palpation primarily used for?**
 - A. To assess body movements
 - B. To listen for heart sounds
 - C. To detect abnormalities through touch
 - D. To visualize internal organs
- 3. What is defined as any neoplastic disease of lymphoid tissue?**
 - A. Lymphangitis
 - B. Lymphedema
 - C. Thymitis
 - D. Lymphoma
- 4. What is another term for icterus?**
 - A. Melena
 - B. Diarrhea
 - C. Jaundice
 - D. Eructation
- 5. What does otalgia refer to?**
 - A. Ear irritation
 - B. Common ear ache
 - C. Ear swelling
 - D. Hearing loss
- 6. Which bone is known for having trochanters?**
 - A. Femur
 - B. Tibia
 - C. Humerus
 - D. Radius

7. Amnesia is characterized by what condition?

- A. Loss of consciousness
- B. Loss of memory
- C. Loss of balance
- D. Loss of hearing

8. What condition is described as a cystic mass resulting from chronic otitis media?

- A. Cholesteatoma
- B. Otitis externa
- C. Otitis media
- D. Labyrinthitis

9. What is the primary function of the alveolar sac?

- A. Filters inspired air
- B. Conducts air to and from the lungs
- C. Exchanges gases in the pulmonary system
- D. Supports the structure of the trachea

10. What hormone is commonly referred to as adrenaline?

- A. Norepinephrine
- B. Epinephrine
- C. Cortisol
- D. Serotonin

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What could ataxia indicate regarding muscle function?

- A. Increased muscle strength
- B. Coordination impairment**
- C. Sensation loss in the limbs
- D. Total paralysis

Ataxia is a clinical term that refers to a lack of voluntary coordination of muscle movements, which can affect various movements such as walking, reaching for objects, or speaking. When a patient exhibits ataxia, it signifies that there is an impairment in the coordination of muscle function, rather than any changes in strength or sensation. This condition can arise from issues in the cerebellum, which is the part of the brain responsible for coordinating voluntary movements, as well as other neurological pathways. This understanding of ataxia helps differentiate it from other conditions related to muscle function. Increased muscle strength would suggest a different scenario, potentially indicating conditions where muscle power is overall enhanced. Sensation loss in the limbs pertains to problems with the sensory pathways rather than motor coordination, while total paralysis indicates a complete loss of muscle function, which is far more severe than the coordination issues presented in ataxia. Therefore, the appropriate interpretation of ataxia as indicative of coordination impairment aligns well with the medical understanding of the condition.

2. What is the process of palpation primarily used for?

- A. To assess body movements
- B. To listen for heart sounds
- C. To detect abnormalities through touch**
- D. To visualize internal organs

Palpation is a physical examination technique used primarily to detect abnormalities through touch. During this process, a healthcare provider uses their hands to feel various parts of the patient's body, checking for issues such as abnormal masses, fluid buildup, organ size, or tenderness in certain areas. This tactile method is essential for diagnosing conditions that may not be visible through diagnostic imaging or other examination techniques. The other options, while relevant to different examination techniques, do not accurately represent the primary purpose of palpation. Assessing body movements typically involves evaluating range of motion and strength, which is different from the tactile examination involved in palpation. Listening for heart sounds is conducted through auscultation, which utilizes a stethoscope, clearly distinguishing it from the touch-based method of palpation. Visualization of internal organs is generally achieved through imaging technologies, like ultrasound, CT scans, or MRIs, rather than through manual examination. Thus, the primary function of palpation as a means of detecting abnormalities through touch remains distinctly relevant and accurate.

3. What is defined as any neoplastic disease of lymphoid tissue?

- A. Lymphangitis
- B. Lymphedema
- C. Thymitis
- D. Lymphoma**

Neoplastic diseases of lymphoid tissue are characterized by the uncontrolled growth of cells that are part of the lymphatic system, which includes lymph nodes, the spleen, and various lymphoid tissues. Lymphoma is a term used to describe these types of cancer, which can be classified into several types, including Hodgkin lymphoma and non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Lymphoma arises from either B-cells or T-cells, both of which are essential components of the immune system. These cancers manifest in lymph nodes and other lymphoid tissues, disrupting normal bodily functions and immune response. The term "neoplastic" specifically indicates that these diseases involve malignancy or tumors resulting from abnormal cell proliferation. In contrast, the other options do not accurately describe neoplastic conditions of lymphoid tissue. Lymphangitis refers to inflammation of the lymphatic vessels, lymphedema is a condition resulting from the accumulation of lymphatic fluid due to obstruction, and thymitis is the inflammation of the thymus gland, which is a specific lymphoid organ but does not encompass the broader category of neoplastic diseases associated with lymphoid tissues. Therefore, lymphoma is the correct term that encompasses any neoplastic disease of lymphoid origin.

4. What is another term for icterus?

- A. Melena
- B. Diarrhea
- C. Jaundice**
- D. Eructation

Icterus is a medical term that refers to the yellow discoloration of the skin, mucous membranes, and the whites of the eyes. This condition occurs due to an elevated level of bilirubin in the blood, which is often seen in liver dysfunction, hemolysis, or bile duct obstruction. The term "jaundice" is synonymous with icterus, and it is the more commonly used term in both clinical and general contexts. Understanding the relationship between these terms is key for healthcare professionals, particularly coders and billers, as they need to accurately link clinical conditions with appropriate billing codes and documentation. By recognizing that icterus and jaundice are interchangeable, it becomes easier to comprehend and communicate patient diagnoses effectively. The other terms – melena, diarrhea, and eructation – refer to different medical phenomena, each associated with various conditions not related to the yellowing of the skin or eyes.

5. What does otalgia refer to?

- A. Ear irritation
- B. Common ear ache**
- C. Ear swelling
- D. Hearing loss

Otalgia specifically refers to pain in the ear, commonly understood as an earache. It can result from various underlying conditions such as infections, blockages, or inflammation affecting the ear or related structures. While "common ear ache" may not capture the full spectrum of possible pain intensity or cause, it aligns most closely with the definition of otalgia compared to the other options provided. The alternative choices present terms that are related to the ear but do not accurately define otalgia. Ear irritation refers to discomfort or irritation, which is broader and not specifically focused on pain. Ear swelling can occur due to various conditions but does not inherently indicate pain, nor does it refer to the sensation of an earache. Hearing loss pertains to a decrease in the ability to hear and is unrelated to the concept of ear pain itself. Thus, "common ear ache" is the best fit for the definition of otalgia.

6. Which bone is known for having trochanters?

- A. Femur**
- B. Tibia
- C. Humerus
- D. Radius

The femur is known for having trochanters, which are large, prominent projections found at the proximal end of the femur. These projections serve as important attachment points for muscles and ligaments that are involved in the movement and stabilization of the hip joint. The greater and lesser trochanters are specifically noted for their roles in the attachment of muscles such as the iliopsoas and the gluteus medius, among others. Trochanters are characteristic features of the femur that distinguish it from the other bones listed in the options, such as the tibia, humerus, and radius. Each of these bones has its own distinct anatomical features that are suited to their respective functions, but they do not have trochanters. Understanding the unique structures of bones, like the trochanters on the femur, is essential for accurately coding and interpreting medical documentation related to musculoskeletal conditions.

7. Amnesia is characterized by what condition?

- A. Loss of consciousness
- B. Loss of memory**
- C. Loss of balance
- D. Loss of hearing

Amnesia is primarily characterized by a loss of memory, which can affect a person's ability to recall past events, learn new information, or recognize familiar people or places. This condition may arise from various causes, including trauma, psychological factors, certain diseases, or substance abuse. It is important to note that while other symptoms may co-occur with amnesia, such as confusion or disorientation, the central defining feature of amnesia itself is the impairment or complete loss of memory function. Consequently, the focus on memory makes the correct choice clear in understanding the nature of amnesia.

8. What condition is described as a cystic mass resulting from chronic otitis media?

- A. Cholesteatoma**
- B. Otitis externa
- C. Otitis media
- D. Labyrinthitis

A cholesteatoma is a cystic mass that forms in the middle ear as a result of chronic otitis media, which is an ongoing inflammation or infection of the middle ear. This condition occurs when skin cells and other waste material accumulate in the middle ear, creating a sac-like structure that can grow and potentially damage surrounding structures. Cholesteatomas can lead to complications such as hearing loss, infections, and even damage to the bones of the middle ear. Chronic otitis media often results in negative pressure in the middle ear, leading to retraction of the eardrum and the formation of these cystic masses. It is important to recognize cholesteatomas due to the risks associated with them, including the possibility of eroding into surrounding tissues, which can affect both the ear and adjacent areas. The other options refer to different conditions that do not involve the cystic mass formation resulting from chronic otitis media. Otitis externa involves inflammation of the outer ear canal; otitis media, while related, refers to the inflammation itself rather than a resulting cyst; labyrinthitis describes an inner ear condition affecting balance and hearing, but does not involve a cystic mass from chronic middle ear infections.

9. What is the primary function of the alveolar sac?

- A. Filters inspired air
- B. Conducts air to and from the lungs
- C. Exchanges gases in the pulmonary system**
- D. Supports the structure of the trachea

The primary function of the alveolar sac is indeed to exchange gases in the pulmonary system. Alveolar sacs are clusters of tiny air sacs, called alveoli, where the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide occurs. This process is essential for respiration, as it allows oxygen from the air inhaled into the lungs to pass into the bloodstream and carbon dioxide, a waste product produced by the body's metabolism, to be expelled from the body. Within the alveoli, the thin walls allow for efficient diffusion of gases. The structure is specifically designed to maximize surface area and facilitate this exchange, making it a crucial component of the respiratory system. This gas exchange is vital for maintaining the body's oxygen levels and removing carbon dioxide, thereby supporting cellular function.

10. What hormone is commonly referred to as adrenaline?

- A. Norepinephrine
- B. Epinephrine**
- C. Cortisol
- D. Serotonin

The hormone commonly referred to as adrenaline is epinephrine. This hormone plays a crucial role in the body's fight-or-flight response, which prepares the body to respond to perceived threats or emergencies. When released, epinephrine increases heart rate, enhances blood flow to muscles, and boosts energy production, enabling a quick response to stress. Epinephrine is produced in the adrenal glands, which are situated on top of each kidney. It is part of the catecholamines group of hormones, alongside norepinephrine, which is another hormone involved in the stress response but is not commonly referred to as adrenaline. The specificity of the term adrenaline to epinephrine is significant in both medical and physiological contexts, as it denotes the acute stress response primarily mediated by epinephrine release. Understanding the relationship between the hormones and their functions is essential for correct coding and documentation in a clinical setting, especially for those studying for the Certified Inpatient Coder exam.

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!

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