

# Alzheimer's Disease (Advanced Stages) HESI Case Study Practice Test (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

- 1. Which emotion may help caregivers cope with the progression of Alzheimer's in their loved one?**
  - A. Resentment toward the loved one**
  - B. Empathy towards the challenges faced**
  - C. Indifference to the loved one's condition**
  - D. Frustration over the situation**
- 2. How do advanced Alzheimer's patients often respond to their own emotions?**
  - A. With enhanced emotional expressions.**
  - B. With limited awareness or expression of emotions.**
  - C. With clear and articulate communication.**
  - D. With frequent emotional outbursts.**
- 3. What is one strategy for managing agitation in patients with advanced Alzheimer's?**
  - A. Utilizing restraint techniques**
  - B. Redirecting the patient's attention to calming activities**
  - C. Increasing stimulation to promote engagement**
  - D. Ignoring the behavior until it subsides**
- 4. Which environment modifications can aid in the care of Alzheimer's patients in advanced stages?**
  - A. Simplifying the environment and reducing distractions**
  - B. Increasing noise levels to simulate a lively environment**
  - C. Decorating with bright colors to stimulate senses**
  - D. Creating multiple choices for activities to promote engagement**
- 5. What symptom should a nurse monitor for potential adverse effects of trazodone?**
  - A. Severe headache.**
  - B. Dizziness upon standing.**
  - C. Increased appetite.**
  - D. Dry mouth.**

- 6. What is an appropriate initial response for a nurse when a client begins to display signs of agitation?**
- A. Clear the room of all distractions immediately**
  - B. Hold a physical restraint firmly**
  - C. Attempt to soothe the client through redirection**
  - D. Call an emergency code for assistance**
- 7. How can technology assist in the care of advanced Alzheimer's patients?**
- A. Use of entertainment apps only**
  - B. Monitoring devices and reminder systems**
  - C. Social media platforms for communication**
  - D. Virtual reality gaming systems**
- 8. Why is it important for caregivers to participate in self-care activities?**
- A. To feel guilty for needing time away from their responsibilities.**
  - B. To maintain their own physical and mental health amidst caregiving demands.**
  - C. To lessen their involvement with their loved ones.**
  - D. To ensure they remain in full control without external assistance.**
- 9. What can normal results from a CBC and TSH test help determine in the context of dementia?**
- A. They confirm a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease**
  - B. They help identify treatable causes of symptoms**
  - C. They indicate the advanced stage of dementia**
  - D. They provide information about cognitive improvement**
- 10. What should caregivers prioritize when planning activities for advanced Alzheimer's patients?**
- A. Activities that require complex reasoning**
  - B. Activities that simplify tasks and promote comfort**
  - C. Group activities to build social interaction**
  - D. Physical activities that exhaust the patient**

## **Answers**

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

## **Explanations**



**1. Which emotion may help caregivers cope with the progression of Alzheimer's in their loved one?**

- A. Resentment toward the loved one**
- B. Empathy towards the challenges faced**
- C. Indifference to the loved one's condition**
- D. Frustration over the situation**

Empathy towards the challenges faced by a loved one with Alzheimer's disease plays a significant role in helping caregivers cope with the emotional burden of the illness. This emotion allows caregivers to connect with their loved one's experience, fostering understanding and compassion. Recognizing the struggles associated with the disease not only affects the caregiver's approach but also positively impacts the emotional environment of the person with Alzheimer's. By cultivating empathy, caregivers can better navigate the complexities of the caregiving role, leading to a greater sense of fulfillment and a reduction in feelings of isolation or stress. This emotional perspective enables caregivers to offer more effective support and maintain a stronger bond, which can enhance the quality of life for both parties involved. Empathy can also provide a buffer against feelings of helplessness or anger that may arise from witnessing the loved one's gradual decline. In contrast, emotions like resentment, indifference, or frustration contribute to a negative dynamic in the caregiving relationship, potentially leading to burnout or withdrawal. These emotions can create additional challenges for both the caregiver and the person with Alzheimer's, further complicating an already difficult situation.

**2. How do advanced Alzheimer's patients often respond to their own emotions?**

- A. With enhanced emotional expressions.**
- B. With limited awareness or expression of emotions.**
- C. With clear and articulate communication.**
- D. With frequent emotional outbursts.**

In the advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease, patients typically exhibit limited awareness or expression of emotions. This is largely due to the neurodegenerative changes occurring in the brain, which affect their cognitive abilities and emotional processing. As the disease progresses, individuals may lose the ability to recognize their own feelings or the emotions of others, leading to a diminished capacity to express emotions. Their responses may become more muted, and they might not react to emotional stimuli in ways that would be expected in earlier stages of cognitive functioning. This makes emotional communication less evident, which is a hallmark of the later stages of Alzheimer's. Understanding this aspect of emotional expression is crucial for caregivers and healthcare providers, as it can influence how they interact with patients and provide necessary support.

**3. What is one strategy for managing agitation in patients with advanced Alzheimer's?**

- A. Utilizing restraint techniques**
- B. Redirecting the patient's attention to calming activities**
- C. Increasing stimulation to promote engagement**
- D. Ignoring the behavior until it subsides**

Redirecting the patient's attention to calming activities is an effective strategy for managing agitation in individuals with advanced Alzheimer's disease. As the disease progresses, patients often exhibit increased agitation due to confusion, frustration, or environmental stimuli they cannot process. By engaging the patient in soothing activities—such as listening to calming music, engaging in simple crafts, or gentle physical activities—caregivers can help divert focus from the agitation triggers and create a more peaceful environment. Calm activities can also provide a sense of routine and stability, which is beneficial for those with cognitive impairments. This approach fosters a reassuring atmosphere that can reduce anxiety and restore a degree of tranquility, allowing patients to feel more secure. Utilizing restraint techniques is not considered ethical or therapeutic in managing agitation, as it can lead to increased feelings of fear and aggression. Increasing stimulation might overwhelm the patient further, exacerbating agitation rather than alleviating it. Ignoring the behavior could lead to escalation, as unmet needs or discomfort may intensify agitation if not appropriately addressed. Redirecting attention, therefore, remains a patient-centered, compassionate method to mitigate distress.

**4. Which environment modifications can aid in the care of Alzheimer's patients in advanced stages?**

- A. Simplifying the environment and reducing distractions**
- B. Increasing noise levels to simulate a lively environment**
- C. Decorating with bright colors to stimulate senses**
- D. Creating multiple choices for activities to promote engagement**

Simplifying the environment and reducing distractions is critical in caring for patients with advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease. As cognitive function declines, individuals can become easily overwhelmed by complex surroundings, which may lead to increased agitation, confusion, and stress. A simplified environment helps to create a sense of calm and stability, allowing patients to focus on their immediate surroundings without the burden of excessive stimuli. A well-organized space that minimizes clutter, uses subdued colors, and maintains a familiar layout provides comfort and safety for those with dementia. This environmental approach can enhance their ability to navigate their surroundings and engage in daily activities while reducing anxiety and frustration that may come from an overly stimulating environment. Options that suggest increasing noise levels or providing multiple choices of activities can lead to increased confusion or overwhelm, which is counterproductive in their care. Decorating with bright colors may not necessarily provide the calming effect needed for patients in advanced stages; it can, in fact, be overstimulating rather than soothing. Creating an environment that prioritizes simplicity and tranquility will ultimately benefit those with Alzheimer's in advanced stages.

**5. What symptom should a nurse monitor for potential adverse effects of trazodone?**

- A. Severe headache.**
- B. Dizziness upon standing.**
- C. Increased appetite.**
- D. Dry mouth.**

Monitoring for dizziness upon standing is especially important when administering trazodone, as this medication is known to potentially cause orthostatic hypotension. This refers to a drop in blood pressure that can occur when a patient stands up, leading to dizziness or lightheadedness. Such symptoms can increase the risk of falls and complications, especially in older adults or those in advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease, where balance and cognitive function may already be compromised. It is essential for nurses to be vigilant about this symptom during the patient's treatment to ensure safety and well-being. Other symptoms associated with trazodone, such as severe headache, increased appetite, and dry mouth, might also require monitoring but do not pose the immediate risk that dizziness from orthostatic hypotension does. Therefore, recognizing and addressing dizziness is crucial in managing the patient's safety when using trazodone for treatment.

**6. What is an appropriate initial response for a nurse when a client begins to display signs of agitation?**

- A. Clear the room of all distractions immediately**
- B. Hold a physical restraint firmly**
- C. Attempt to soothe the client through redirection**
- D. Call an emergency code for assistance**

Choosing to attempt to soothe the client through redirection is a highly appropriate initial response when a client exhibits signs of agitation. This technique involves engaging the person in a calming activity or conversation that can help distract them from their agitation. Redirection can effectively de-escalate the situation by shifting the individual's focus away from their distress and towards a more positive interaction. In individuals with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia, maintaining a calm and composed demeanor is vital, as it can help create a reassuring environment that may alleviate feelings of anxiety or confusion. This approach also aligns with person-centered care principles, which emphasize understanding the unique experiences of each individual and tailoring responses based on their specific needs and current state. Additionally, using redirection encourages communication and engagement, which can help improve the person's emotional state and promote a sense of safety and security. In contrast, clearing the room of all distractions might lead to feelings of isolation or increased anxiety in the client. Similarly, the use of physical restraints can exacerbate distress and is generally avoided unless absolutely necessary for safety. Calling an emergency code should be reserved for more critical situations where the client poses a risk to themselves or others, making redirection a far more appropriate first step in managing agitation.

## **7. How can technology assist in the care of advanced Alzheimer's patients?**

- A. Use of entertainment apps only**
- B. Monitoring devices and reminder systems**
- C. Social media platforms for communication**
- D. Virtual reality gaming systems**

The integration of monitoring devices and reminder systems into the care of advanced Alzheimer's patients plays a crucial role in enhancing their overall well-being and safety. These technologies can assist caregivers by providing real-time data about the patient's physical health, such as heart rate and activity levels, which can help detect any sudden changes that may require immediate attention. Additionally, reminder systems are essential for helping patients maintain routines and manage daily tasks, such as taking medications or attending appointments. These reminders can alleviate anxiety for both patients and caregivers by fostering a sense of structure and predictability in daily life. In advanced stages of Alzheimer's, when patients often struggle with memory loss, these technological aids can significantly improve quality of life and help maintain independence for as long as possible. While entertainment apps, social media platforms, and virtual reality gaming systems may offer benefits such as engagement or emotional stimulation, they do not directly address the critical needs of safety, routine management, and real-time monitoring that are paramount in the care of patients with advanced Alzheimer's disease. Thus, the use of monitoring devices and reminder systems is particularly effective in creating a supportive environment tailored to the unique challenges faced by individuals in advanced stages of this condition.

## **8. Why is it important for caregivers to participate in self-care activities?**

- A. To feel guilty for needing time away from their responsibilities.**
- B. To maintain their own physical and mental health amidst caregiving demands.**
- C. To lessen their involvement with their loved ones.**
- D. To ensure they remain in full control without external assistance.**

Participating in self-care activities is crucial for caregivers, particularly those caring for individuals with Alzheimer's disease, because it allows them to maintain their own physical and mental health amidst the demanding responsibilities they face. Caregiving can be emotionally and physically exhausting, often leading to burnout, stress, and decline in the caregiver's well-being. Engaging in self-care activities provides caregivers with essential time to recharge, reduces stress levels, and helps them manage their emotional health. By prioritizing self-care, caregivers are better equipped to provide high-quality support and interaction with their loved ones. Maintaining their health ensures they have the energy and mental clarity needed to handle daily challenges, perform caregiving tasks effectively, and foster meaningful relationships with those they care for. This proactive approach to maintaining one's health is fundamental within the caregiving role.

**9. What can normal results from a CBC and TSH test help determine in the context of dementia?**

- A. They confirm a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease**
- B. They help identify treatable causes of symptoms**
- C. They indicate the advanced stage of dementia**
- D. They provide information about cognitive improvement**

The correct choice identifies that normal results from a Complete Blood Count (CBC) and Thyroid-Stimulating Hormone (TSH) test can help identify treatable causes of symptoms. These tests are used to rule out other medical conditions that could be contributing to cognitive decline or other dementia-like symptoms. For example, anemia or infection can be detected through a CBC, while abnormalities in thyroid function can be assessed with a TSH test. If these tests return normal, it suggests that the symptoms are less likely to be due to these treatable conditions. This is crucial because certain medical issues can mimic or exacerbate symptoms of dementia, and addressing those might improve the patient's overall health and cognitive function. In contrast, confirming a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease is not possible solely based on CBC and TSH results; a comprehensive assessment that includes clinical evaluation and cognitive testing is typically required. Similarly, these tests do not directly indicate the stage of dementia, nor do they provide information about cognitive improvement, which would involve tracking cognitive performance over time rather than relying on blood test results.

**10. What should caregivers prioritize when planning activities for advanced Alzheimer's patients?**

- A. Activities that require complex reasoning**
- B. Activities that simplify tasks and promote comfort**
- C. Group activities to build social interaction**
- D. Physical activities that exhaust the patient**

When planning activities for advanced Alzheimer's patients, it is crucial to prioritize activities that simplify tasks and promote comfort. This approach recognizes the cognitive and functional decline that occurs in the later stages of Alzheimer's disease. At this point, individuals often struggle with complex tasks and may experience confusion or frustration, making simpler activities more appropriate. Choosing activities that are straightforward helps to minimize confusion and anxiety, allowing patients to engage more meaningfully and enjoyably. Such activities might include simple crafts, sensory experiences, or gentle movement exercises tailored to the individual's abilities and preferences. The focus on comfort helps to create a more supportive environment, fostering a sense of security and well-being. In contrast, activities requiring complex reasoning would likely overwhelm patients and lead to increased agitation or disengagement. While social interaction is beneficial, advanced Alzheimer's patients may not have the ability to participate effectively in group activities, which could lead to feelings of isolation instead of connection. Lastly, physical activities should be designed to be refreshing rather than exhausting, as fatigue can diminish the overall quality of care and engagement. Thus, prioritizing simple, comfort-promoting activities aligns best with the needs of patients in the advanced stages of Alzheimer's.