

# American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) Board Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

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- 1. What dietary pattern is commonly emphasized in Lifestyle Medicine?**
  - A. A high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet**
  - B. A whole-food, plant-based dietary pattern**
  - C. A ketogenic diet**
  - D. A gluten-free diet**
- 2. Developing discrepancy is meant to create:**
  - A. Confusion in the patient**
  - B. A sense of urgency**
  - C. Understanding between the counselor and patient**
  - D. An awareness of the gap between current behavior and desired goals**
- 3. What is a negative consequence of chronic stress in patients?**
  - A. Increased energy levels**
  - B. Reduced risk of chronic diseases**
  - C. Inflammation and higher disease risk**
  - D. Improved immune function**
- 4. What is the recommended maximum number of alcoholic drinks for a healthy, adult male in a single day?**
  - A. 2 drinks**
  - B. 3 drinks**
  - C. 4 drinks**
  - D. 5 drinks**
- 5. What is an example of an effective stress-relief technique?**
  - A. Ignoring stressors until they go away**
  - B. Deep breathing exercises**
  - C. Engaging in negative self-talk**
  - D. Limit interactions with family and friends**

- 6. How can health professionals support patients in smoking cessation?**
- A. By recommending over-the-counter medications only**
  - B. By providing resources and counseling**
  - C. By encouraging patients to quit cold turkey**
  - D. By limiting follow-up consultations**
- 7. What practice can enhance community health outcomes?**
- A. Isolated health interventions**
  - B. Community-based lifestyle programs**
  - C. Limiting access to health resources**
  - D. Prioritizing medical treatments over prevention**
- 8. What effect does blue light exposure at night have on the body?**
- A. Increases melatonin production**
  - B. Suppresses melatonin production**
  - C. Enhances sleep quality**
  - D. Induces relaxation**
- 9. In the context of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, maintenance refers to?**
- A. The final stage of quitting behavior**
  - B. A phase where change is actively sustained**
  - C. The action taken to initiate behavior change**
  - D. The reflection stage after achieving change**
- 10. What is a potential effect of a whole-food, plant-based diet?**
- A. Increased likelihood of nutrient deficiencies**
  - B. Improved chronic disease outcomes**
  - C. Higher levels of saturated fats**
  - D. Reduced fiber intake**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What dietary pattern is commonly emphasized in Lifestyle Medicine?**

- A. A high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet**
- B. A whole-food, plant-based dietary pattern**
- C. A ketogenic diet**
- D. A gluten-free diet**

The dietary pattern commonly emphasized in Lifestyle Medicine is a whole-food, plant-based dietary pattern. This approach focuses on the consumption of unprocessed or minimally processed foods, primarily derived from plants, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. This dietary pattern is supported by a growing body of research indicating numerous health benefits, including lower risks of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer. The whole-food, plant-based approach promotes nutrient density, providing essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants while avoiding the excesses of added sugars, unhealthy fats, and processed foods. Incorporating whole foods from plant sources helps enhance overall health, supports weight management, and improves metabolic outcomes. Such a dietary pattern aligns with the principles of Lifestyle Medicine, which focuses on lifestyle interventions—such as diet, physical activity, and stress management—as integral components of healthcare. Other dietary options like high-protein, low-carbohydrate diets, ketogenic diets, and gluten-free diets may be beneficial for specific conditions or populations, but they do not encompass the broad, health-promoting principles of Lifestyle Medicine as effectively as a whole-food, plant-based diet does.

**2. Developing discrepancy is meant to create:**

- A. Confusion in the patient**
- B. A sense of urgency**
- C. Understanding between the counselor and patient**
- D. An awareness of the gap between current behavior and desired goals**

Developing discrepancy aims to foster an awareness of the gap between a person's current behavior and their desired goals. This approach is foundational in motivational interviewing and behavior change strategies, as it encourages individuals to recognize how their current actions may not align with their values or long-term aspirations. By highlighting this discrepancy, the individual can better understand the consequences of their current behaviors and feel motivated to make changes. Creating this awareness helps to clarify the motivation for change, as it becomes evident that the current practices may be hindering progress toward goals. This process is crucial in promoting self-reflection and facilitating intrinsic motivation, allowing the individual to explore and affirm their desire to change in a supportive environment.

### **3. What is a negative consequence of chronic stress in patients?**

- A. Increased energy levels**
- B. Reduced risk of chronic diseases**
- C. Inflammation and higher disease risk**
- D. Improved immune function**

Chronic stress has been widely studied and is known to have several negative effects on the body, one of which is inflammation and an increased risk of chronic diseases. When a person experiences prolonged stress, the body's stress response system becomes activated continuously, leading to elevated levels of stress hormones such as cortisol. This can result in various physiological changes that contribute to chronic inflammation. Inflammation plays a crucial role in the development and progression of several chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and autoimmune conditions. The persistent overlap between stress-induced inflammation and the pathophysiology of these diseases underscores the connection between chronic stress and poorer health outcomes. In contrast, increased energy levels, reduced risk of chronic diseases, and improved immune function do not align with the well-documented health impacts associated with chronic stress. Instead, chronic stress tends to be linked to fatigue, vulnerability to illnesses due to immune suppression, and a host of other symptoms that detract from overall health. Therefore, understanding the implications of chronic stress and its potential to exacerbate inflammation and disease risk is crucial for effective lifestyle medicine.

### **4. What is the recommended maximum number of alcoholic drinks for a healthy, adult male in a single day?**

- A. 2 drinks**
- B. 3 drinks**
- C. 4 drinks**
- D. 5 drinks**

The recommended maximum number of alcoholic drinks for a healthy, adult male in a single day is based on guidelines provided by various health organizations, which generally suggest moderation for alcohol consumption. For healthy adult males, the guidelines typically advise limiting intake to no more than four standard drinks per day. This recommendation takes into account various factors, including the physiological differences in how men metabolize alcohol, as well as the associated risks of alcohol-related health issues. Exceeding this limit can lead to increased risks of alcohol use disorders, liver disease, and other health complications. Therefore, recognizing that a daily intake of up to four drinks is considered a moderate level helps individuals maintain their health while enjoying alcohol responsibly. While lower limits are recommended for certain individuals or groups—such as women, who are advised to have a maximum of three drinks per day—four drinks remains the standard maximum for healthy adult males, making it the correct answer to the question.

**5. What is an example of an effective stress-relief technique?**

- A. Ignoring stressors until they go away**
- B. Deep breathing exercises**
- C. Engaging in negative self-talk**
- D. Limit interactions with family and friends**

Deep breathing exercises are recognized as an effective stress-relief technique because they help activate the body's relaxation response, which counteracts the physiological effects of stress. This technique involves focusing on slow, deep, and consistent breathing, which can lower heart rate, reduce blood pressure, and promote a feeling of calm. By bringing awareness to one's breath, individuals can redirect their attention from stressors, facilitating a more mindful approach to managing stress. This practice is accessible and can be performed anywhere, making it a practical and versatile tool for stress management. In addition, evidence shows that regular engagement in deep breathing can lead to improved emotional regulation, reduced anxiety, and enhanced overall well-being. In contrast, the other options do not promote effective stress management. Ignoring stressors tends to lead to increased anxiety and unresolved issues, while negative self-talk can exacerbate feelings of inadequacy and stress. Additionally, limiting interactions with family and friends can isolate individuals, leading to a decrease in social support, which is crucial for coping with stress.

**6. How can health professionals support patients in smoking cessation?**

- A. By recommending over-the-counter medications only**
- B. By providing resources and counseling**
- C. By encouraging patients to quit cold turkey**
- D. By limiting follow-up consultations**

Providing resources and counseling is the most effective way for health professionals to support patients in smoking cessation. This approach addresses the multifaceted nature of addiction by offering both emotional support and practical strategies tailored to individual needs. Counseling can include techniques such as motivational interviewing, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and support group referrals, which help patients develop coping strategies, identify triggers, and reinforce their commitment to quit. Additionally, providing resources can encompass a variety of materials, including educational pamphlets about the health impacts of smoking, tips for managing withdrawal symptoms, and information on support services or quitlines. This holistic support increases the likelihood of success compared to simply suggesting other methods without the backing of professional guidance. While recommending over-the-counter medications can be a part of the smoking cessation plan, it is not a standalone solution and may not be sufficient without accompanying support. Encouraging patients to quit cold turkey may not be effective for everyone, as individual circumstances and levels of addiction vary. Limiting follow-up consultations can hinder the ongoing support that is critical for long-term success in cessation efforts. Therefore, comprehensive support that includes counseling and resources is essential for fostering lasting change.

## 7. What practice can enhance community health outcomes?

- A. Isolated health interventions
- B. Community-based lifestyle programs**
- C. Limiting access to health resources
- D. Prioritizing medical treatments over prevention

Community-based lifestyle programs play a crucial role in enhancing health outcomes because they focus on the collective health and wellbeing of the population, addressing the social determinants of health. These programs often involve the participation of residents in planning, implementing, and evaluating health initiatives that cater to the specific needs of the community. By promoting healthy behaviors and lifestyle changes—such as nutrition education, physical activity, and mental wellbeing—community-based programs foster a supportive environment that encourages individuals to make healthier choices. They also strengthen social connections and create a sense of belonging, which can be beneficial for mental health and overall community cohesion. Moreover, these programs typically aim to reduce health disparities by ensuring that underserved populations have access to resources and support they might not otherwise receive. This holistic approach to health not only improves individual outcomes but can lead to broader public health benefits by reducing the incidence of chronic diseases, healthcare costs, and improving quality of life across the community.

## 8. What effect does blue light exposure at night have on the body?

- A. Increases melatonin production
- B. Suppresses melatonin production**
- C. Enhances sleep quality
- D. Induces relaxation

Blue light exposure at night has a significant effect on the body's circadian rhythm, primarily through its influence on melatonin production. Melatonin is a hormone produced by the pineal gland that plays a critical role in regulating sleep-wake cycles. When blue light is present, especially from screens and artificial lighting, it interferes with the natural release of melatonin, leading to its suppression. This suppression can disrupt the body's ability to initiate and maintain sleep, creating challenges for sleep quality and overall well-being. The suppression of melatonin due to blue light exposure is particularly concerning in our modern lifestyle, where exposure to screens and artificial light continues well into the night. This disruption can lead to difficulties falling asleep, an altered sleep schedule, and can impact overall sleep health. As for the other options, the increase in melatonin production, enhancement of sleep quality, and induction of relaxation are all counterproductive to what blue light does at night. Thus, the correct understanding of blue light's impact is that it indeed suppresses melatonin production, affecting sleep negatively.

**9. In the context of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, maintenance refers to?**

- A. The final stage of quitting behavior**
- B. A phase where change is actively sustained**
- C. The action taken to initiate behavior change**
- D. The reflection stage after achieving change**

In the context of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), maintenance refers to a phase where changes achieved through therapeutic intervention are actively sustained over time. This concept underscores the importance of not only initiating and achieving behavior change but also ensuring that these changes are preserved in the long term. During the maintenance phase, individuals work on integrating new, healthier behaviors into their daily lives to prevent relapse into previous patterns. This may involve continuing strategies learned in therapy, ongoing self-monitoring, and implementing coping strategies for potential triggers that might lead to reverting to old behaviors. The focus here is on consistency and reinforcement of positive changes rather than merely experiencing the initial excitement of change. In contrast, other phases mentioned in the options, such as quitting behavior or initiating action, do not capture the essence of sustaining and solidifying the changes over time, which is critical for lasting improvement in mental health and behavioral outcomes. Thus, recognizing the maintenance phase as a critical component of the CBT process highlights the ongoing nature of personal and behavioral development.

**10. What is a potential effect of a whole-food, plant-based diet?**

- A. Increased likelihood of nutrient deficiencies**
- B. Improved chronic disease outcomes**
- C. Higher levels of saturated fats**
- D. Reduced fiber intake**

A whole-food, plant-based diet emphasizes the consumption of minimally processed foods, primarily fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. This dietary approach has been associated with numerous health benefits, particularly in the management and prevention of chronic diseases. Research indicates that individuals following a whole-food, plant-based diet often experience improved outcomes in various chronic conditions. For example, studies have shown that this diet can lead to reductions in the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and certain forms of cancer. The high intake of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provides an abundance of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and phytochemicals that can contribute to overall health and well-being. Moreover, this dietary pattern is typically low in saturated fat and high in fiber, which supports digestive health and aids in managing weight, further contributing to improved health outcomes. The anti-inflammatory properties of the foods commonly consumed in a whole-food, plant-based diet also play a key role in enhancing chronic disease management and prevention. In summary, a whole-food, plant-based diet is beneficial for improving chronic disease outcomes due to its nutrient density and health-promoting components.