

BLS Hospital Corpsman 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 is a BVM resuscitator primarily used for?**
 - A. To defibrillate patients in cardiac arrest**
 - B. To ventilate patients during respiratory arrest**
 - C. To administer medication during CPR**
 - D. To monitor cardiac activity**
- 2. What is the compression to ventilation ratio for adults when performed by one responder?**
 - A. 15:2**
 - B. 30:2**
 - C. 20:2**
 - D. 40:2**
- 3. What is the proper AED pad placement for infants?**
 - A. One pad on the chest and one on the abdomen**
 - B. Anterior/lateral position**
 - C. Anterior/posterior position**
 - D. Side-by-side on the chest**
- 4. Following the BLS algorithm, what should follow the activation of emergency response?**
 - A. Check for breathing and pulse**
 - B. Perform chest compressions**
 - C. Give rescue breaths**
 - D. Assess the victim's injury**
- 5. What is the recommended compression rate for performing CPR?**
 - A. 60-80 compressions per minute**
 - B. 100-120 compressions per minute**
 - C. 80-100 compressions per minute**
 - D. 120-140 compressions per minute**

- 6. During chest compressions, what is being compressed to facilitate blood flow?**
- A. Diaphragm between ribs**
 - B. Heart between sternum and spine**
 - C. Lungs and airway passage**
 - D. Blood vessels in the arms**
- 7. What action should be taken if a defibrillator is available on the scene?**
- A. Delay using it until emergency services arrive**
 - B. Use it as soon as possible**
 - C. Only use it after performing CPR for 10 minutes**
 - D. Wait for someone else to use it**
- 8. What is the first step in adult BLS?**
- A. Start chest compressions**
 - B. Call for emergency help or activate the emergency response system**
 - C. Check for breathing**
 - D. Perform rescue breaths**
- 9. Which technique is recommended for adults when a severe airway obstruction is suspected?**
- A. Sitting the victim upright**
 - B. Performing abdominal thrusts**
 - C. Giving rescue breaths**
 - D. Encouraging the victim to drink water**
- 10. During CPR, what is essential for moving blood efficiently through the body?**
- A. Regular verbal reassurances**
 - B. Continuous chest compressions**
 - C. Monitoring of the patient's arterial blood pressure**
 - D. Frequent changes in compression technique**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is a BVM resuscitator primarily used for?

- A. To defibrillate patients in cardiac arrest
- B. To ventilate patients during respiratory arrest**
- C. To administer medication during CPR
- D. To monitor cardiac activity

A Bag-Valve-Mask (BVM) resuscitator is primarily used to provide positive pressure ventilation to patients who are not breathing adequately or at all, which is why the correct answer involves ventilating patients during respiratory arrest. When a patient is in respiratory arrest, they require assistance to ensure that their lungs are adequately inflated with air, delivering oxygen to the bloodstream. The BVM consists of a self-expanding bag, a unidirectional valve, and a face mask, allowing a rescuer to deliver air or oxygen directly into the lungs. By squeezing the bag, the rescuer forces air into the patient's lungs, making it an essential tool for emergency situations where spontaneous breathing has ceased. In scenarios where patients are in cardiac arrest, the focus would shift to chest compressions and defibrillation, rather than solely providing ventilation. Other methods and equipment are utilized to administer medications or monitor cardiac activity, which are not the primary functions of a BVM. Thus, its central role is in assisting ventilation during respiratory emergencies.

2. What is the compression to ventilation ratio for adults when performed by one responder?

- A. 15:2
- B. 30:2**
- C. 20:2
- D. 40:2

The compression to ventilation ratio for adults when performed by one rescuer is 30:2. This means that for every 30 chest compressions administered, the rescuer should provide 2 rescue breaths. This ratio is designed to maximize blood flow during cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) while ensuring that the individual receives adequate oxygenation through ventilations. This approach is based on a balance of compressions and breaths that supports effective circulation and ventilation, crucial for sustaining life in a cardiac emergency. The 30:2 ratio has been standardized in guidelines to provide clear direction for single rescuer scenarios, making it easier for responders to remember and perform correctly in a high-stress situation. The other options present different ratios that are not recommended for adult CPR. The focus remains on the priority of chest compressions to maintain circulation, hence the established ratio of 30:2 is critical for efficiency and effectiveness during resuscitation efforts.

3. What is the proper AED pad placement for infants?

- A. One pad on the chest and one on the abdomen
- B. Anterior/lateral position
- C. Anterior/posterior position**
- D. Side-by-side on the chest

The proper placement of AED pads for infants is in an anterior/posterior position. This means one pad is placed on the front of the infant's chest (anterior) and the other pad is placed on the back (posterior). This configuration is especially important for infants due to their smaller size and the unique anatomical considerations compared to adults and older children. Using the anterior/posterior position helps to create a more effective electrical pathway for the shock delivered by the AED, ensuring that the shock passes through the heart. This method minimizes the risk of pad overlap and ensures that the shocks are administered effectively. In this context, the anterior/lateral position, while beneficial in certain scenarios for older children and adults, is not appropriate for infants who are smaller and require specific positioning to ensure both safety and efficacy of the defibrillation process. Similarly, placing AED pads side-by-side on the chest does not provide the necessary coverage and effective conduction of the electrical shock. The anterior/abdominal position is also not recommended as it does not target the heart effectively. Therefore, the anterior/posterior pad placement is the recommended practice for infants in need of defibrillation.

4. Following the BLS algorithm, what should follow the activation of emergency response?

- A. Check for breathing and pulse**
- B. Perform chest compressions
- C. Give rescue breaths
- D. Assess the victim's injury

After activating emergency response, the next crucial step according to the BLS algorithm is to check for breathing and pulse. This assessment helps determine the victim's condition and whether they are in need of immediate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). If the victim is unconscious and showing no signs of breathing or pulse, it indicates that they may not be circulating oxygen-rich blood, which requires prompt action. By checking for breathing and pulse, you can confirm whether to proceed with chest compressions and rescue breaths. This step is vital as it guides your subsequent actions in providing the necessary care. Only once you ascertain that the victim needs help would you move on to performing chest compressions or giving rescue breaths as part of the CPR process. In summary, checking for breathing and pulse is essential because it leads the responder to provide the correct intervention based on the patient's condition, ensuring they receive appropriate life-saving measures as quickly as possible.

5. What is the recommended compression rate for performing CPR?

- A. 60-80 compressions per minute**
- B. 100-120 compressions per minute**
- C. 80-100 compressions per minute**
- D. 120-140 compressions per minute**

The recommended compression rate for performing CPR is 100-120 compressions per minute. This range is based on research and guidelines aimed at maximizing the effectiveness of chest compressions during cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Delivering compressions within this rate helps to maintain adequate blood flow to vital organs and increases the likelihood of survival in cases of cardiac arrest. This compression rate aligns with the goal of providing high-quality CPR, which emphasizes not only the rate but also the depth and the minimizing of interruptions in compressions. A rate of 100-120 compressions per minute corresponds to the rhythm of songs like "Stayin' Alive" by the Bee Gees, making it easier for rescuers to maintain the correct timing during CPR. Values outside this recommended range may lead to decreased perfusion and lower chances of successful resuscitation. Therefore, understanding and applying the correct compression rate is crucial in emergency response situations.

6. During chest compressions, what is being compressed to facilitate blood flow?

- A. Diaphragm between ribs**
- B. Heart between sternum and spine**
- C. Lungs and airway passage**
- D. Blood vessels in the arms**

The correct answer focuses on the heart being compressed between the sternum and spine during chest compressions. When performing CPR, effective chest compressions are crucial for maintaining blood circulation in a person who has experienced cardiac arrest. By pressing down on the chest, the sternum moves towards the spine, which compresses the heart located just behind the sternum. This action increases intrathoracic pressure, forcing blood out of the heart and into the circulation, ultimately delivering oxygen to vital organs. In CPR, the compressions create a critical blood flow that helps to sustain the brain and other organs until advanced care can be provided. The effectiveness of these compressions is heavily reliant on the mechanics of how the heart is situated between the bony structures of the chest, making it essential to apply adequate force and proper technique during the process. Understanding this anatomical relationship is key to performing high-quality CPR and improving the chances of survival for the patient.

7. What action should be taken if a defibrillator is available on the scene?

- A. Delay using it until emergency services arrive**
- B. Use it as soon as possible**
- C. Only use it after performing CPR for 10 minutes**
- D. Wait for someone else to use it**

Using a defibrillator as soon as possible is crucial for increasing the chances of survival in a patient experiencing a cardiac arrest. When a defibrillator is available, it can deliver an electric shock to the heart to restore a normal rhythm, especially if the patient is in a shockable rhythm like ventricular fibrillation or pulseless ventricular tachycardia. The sooner the defibrillator is used, the better the outcome for the patient, as every minute counts when it comes to effective resuscitation. The device is designed to be user-friendly and often provides audio and visual prompts to guide the user, making it accessible even to those who may not be highly trained in advanced medical procedures. Immediate defibrillation, coupled with early CPR, significantly enhances the likelihood of survival and recovery.

8. What is the first step in adult BLS?

- A. Start chest compressions**
- B. Call for emergency help or activate the emergency response system**
- C. Check for breathing**
- D. Perform rescue breaths**

The first step in adult Basic Life Support (BLS) is to call for emergency help or activate the emergency response system. This action is crucial because it ensures that professional medical assistance is on the way while you attend to the victim. Before beginning any resuscitation efforts, it is imperative to get support quickly, as time is vital in emergency situations. By calling for help, you ensure that additional resources and personnel will be available to take over or assist as needed. This proactive step helps to manage the situation effectively and can significantly improve the victim's chances of survival. Once emergency help has been summoned, the rescuer can then proceed by checking for breathing and, if necessary, initiating chest compressions or rescue breaths, depending on the victim's condition. Prioritizing the activation of the emergency response system lays the foundation for a coordinated approach to handling cardiac arrest or other life-threatening emergencies.

9. Which technique is recommended for adults when a severe airway obstruction is suspected?

- A. Sitting the victim upright**
- B. Performing abdominal thrusts**
- C. Giving rescue breaths**
- D. Encouraging the victim to drink water**

When a severe airway obstruction is suspected in adults, performing abdominal thrusts is the recommended technique because it is specifically designed to remove a foreign object that is blocking the airway. This method involves applying quick, inward and upward pressure on the abdomen, which forces air from the lungs to expel the obstruction. The effectiveness of abdominal thrusts lies in their ability to generate enough pressure to push the object out of the airway, facilitating breathing once the obstruction is removed. This technique is particularly crucial in emergency situations where the victim is unable to breathe, cough, or speak, indicating a serious risk. The other options, such as sitting the victim upright, giving rescue breaths, or encouraging the victim to drink water, do not directly address the immediate need to clear an obstruction. While sitting upright may provide some comfort, it does not relieve the obstruction. Rescue breaths are intended for individuals not breathing but capable of an open airway, and encouraging the victim to drink water could exacerbate the situation by further blocking the airway. Thus, abdominal thrusts are clearly the most effective and recommended approach in cases of severe airway obstruction.

10. During CPR, what is essential for moving blood efficiently through the body?

- A. Regular verbal reassurances**
- B. Continuous chest compressions**
- C. Monitoring of the patient's arterial blood pressure**
- D. Frequent changes in compression technique**

During cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), continuous chest compressions are critical for maintaining blood circulation. Chest compressions create pressure in the chest cavity, which facilitates the flow of blood to vital organs, particularly the brain and heart. The goal of CPR is to restore a level of circulation that can sustain life until advanced medical help arrives. The effectiveness of chest compressions depends on several factors, including the rate, depth, and continuity of the compressions. Providing consistent and uninterrupted compressions ensures that blood is being pumped effectively throughout the body, which is essential for the patient's chances of survival. The American Heart Association emphasizes that high-quality chest compressions should be performed at a rate of 100 to 120 compressions per minute, with a depth of at least 2 inches for adults. Other methods such as verbal reassurances, monitoring arterial blood pressure, or making frequent changes in compression technique may not contribute effectively to blood circulation during CPR. While reassurance can help calm witnesses, it does not directly aid in providing blood flow. Monitoring blood pressure, while important in a clinical setting, is not practical or necessary during the immediate life-saving process of CPR. Changing compression techniques frequently can disrupt the continuous flow of blood and reduce the overall effectiveness of

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://blshospitalcorpsman.examzify.com>

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