

Board Certified Gerontological Nutritionist (BCGN) Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

SAMPLE

- 1. What is the recommended daily fluid intake for older adults?**
 - A. 1 to 1.5 liters**
 - B. 1.5 to 2 liters**
 - C. 2 to 3 liters**
 - D. 3 to 4 liters**
- 2. How does the gut microbiome affect nutrition in older adults?**
 - A. It has no influence on nutrition**
 - B. It can negatively impact digestion**
 - C. It can improve digestion and nutrient absorption**
 - D. It only affects younger populations**
- 3. What type of utensils should be used when serving meals to combative dementia patients?**
 - A. Fragile glass utensils**
 - B. Sturdy tableware**
 - C. Metal utensils**
 - D. Plastic utensils**
- 4. Which dietary component should contribute less than 7% of total calories according to TLC guidelines?**
 - A. Polyunsaturated fat**
 - B. Saturated fat**
 - C. Monounsaturated fat**
 - D. Carbohydrates**
- 5. What is one way Congress has tried to increase SNAP participation among the elderly?**
 - A. Eliminating asset limits**
 - B. Providing online application options**
 - C. Allowing coupons at restaurant locations**
 - D. Funding outreach programs**

- 6. What is the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables for older adults?**
- A. At least 3 servings**
 - B. At least 5 servings**
 - C. At least 7 servings**
 - D. At least 10 servings**
- 7. What is sarcopenia, and how is nutrition involved?**
- A. It is the loss of bone density that requires calcium intake.**
 - B. It is the loss of muscle mass due to aging; nutrition can help mitigate its effects.**
 - C. It refers to a condition that increases appetite.**
 - D. It is the gradual decline of cognitive function.**
- 8. Which factor can negatively affect appetite in elderly patients?**
- A. Increased physical activity**
 - B. Cognitive decline**
 - C. High social engagement**
 - D. Access to meals**
- 9. What is essential for maintaining skin health in older adults?**
- A. Increased exposure to sunlight**
 - B. Adequate hydration and nutrient intake**
 - C. Reduced bathing frequency**
 - D. Heavy sunscreen use**
- 10. What is a potential consequence of inadequate protein intake in older adults?**
- A. Improved cardiovascular health**
 - B. Increased muscle mass**
 - C. Muscle loss and increased frailty**
 - D. Enhanced immune response**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the recommended daily fluid intake for older adults?

- A. 1 to 1.5 liters
- B. 1.5 to 2 liters**
- C. 2 to 3 liters
- D. 3 to 4 liters

The recommended daily fluid intake for older adults falls within the range of 1.5 to 2 liters, which is crucial for maintaining proper hydration and supporting overall health. As people age, their sense of thirst may diminish, making them more susceptible to dehydration. Ensuring adequate fluid intake is vital to support bodily functions, including digestion, circulation, and temperature regulation. This specific range considers the physiological changes that commonly occur in older adults, as well as factors such as climate and physical activity level. The recommendation aims to balance hydration needs while still being manageable and realistic for this population. Additionally, fluid needs can also be met through food sources and beverages, which reinforces the importance of a well-rounded dietary approach in gerontological nutrition. While options above and below this range suggest higher or lower fluid intake, they may not account for the individual variability in hydration needs among older adults, which can be influenced by health conditions, medications, and activity levels.

2. How does the gut microbiome affect nutrition in older adults?

- A. It has no influence on nutrition
- B. It can negatively impact digestion
- C. It can improve digestion and nutrient absorption**
- D. It only affects younger populations

The correct answer highlights the positive role of the gut microbiome in improving digestion and nutrient absorption, which is particularly relevant for older adults. As individuals age, their gut microbiome can evolve, affecting how food is processed and nutrients are absorbed in the gastrointestinal tract. A diverse and balanced microbiome can enhance the breakdown of food, leading to better nutrient availability. Furthermore, a healthy gut microbiome supports the immune system, produces essential vitamins, and aids in the metabolism of certain compounds. This can be especially important in older adults who may have compromised digestive health or specific nutritional deficiencies. Research has indicated that interventions, such as probiotics and dietary changes, can positively modify the gut microbiome, leading to improved health outcomes, increased energy levels, and overall enhanced well-being in this population. The other choices do not recognize the beneficial aspects of the gut microbiome. Claiming that it has no influence on nutrition disregards the extensive evidence linking gut health to nutrient processing. While it is true that an imbalanced gut microbiome can negatively impact digestion, the focus should be on the overall potential for enhancement rather than solely on potential drawbacks. Lastly, it is a misconception that the gut microbiome's effects are limited to younger populations; this aspect is critical in older adults

3. What type of utensils should be used when serving meals to combative dementia patients?

- A. Fragile glass utensils
- B. Sturdy tableware**
- C. Metal utensils
- D. Plastic utensils

Choosing sturdy tableware when serving meals to combative dementia patients is essential for several reasons. Sturdy tableware is designed to withstand force and resist breaking, which is crucial in situations where individuals may handle their utensils with less control or in a confrontational manner. The risk of injury is minimized with more durable materials, providing a safer dining experience for both the patient and staff. When dealing with dementia patients, particularly those who might become agitated or aggressive, it's important to use utensils that can endure potential dropping or throwing without shattering. This is not only about avoiding accidents but also about creating an environment that is as safe and calming as possible, reducing the likelihood of further agitation. Though metal and plastic utensils could serve functional purposes, they do not provide the same level of durability as sturdy tableware. Metal utensils can be heavy or cause injury if thrown, while plastic utensils may not offer sufficient strength against aggressive handling. Fragile glass utensils are generally unsuitable in these situations due to the high risk of them breaking and causing harm. Hence, sturdy tableware is the best choice for serving meals to combative dementia patients, ensuring safety and practicality during mealtime.

4. Which dietary component should contribute less than 7% of total calories according to TLC guidelines?

- A. Polyunsaturated fat
- B. Saturated fat**
- C. Monounsaturated fat
- D. Carbohydrates

Saturated fat should contribute less than 7% of total calories according to the Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC) guidelines. These guidelines are designed to promote heart health and overall wellness, particularly for individuals at risk of cardiovascular disease. High intake of saturated fat has been shown to raise levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, often referred to as "bad" cholesterol, which can lead to an increased risk of heart disease and stroke. By limiting saturated fat to below 7% of total caloric intake, individuals can help manage blood lipid levels more effectively. In contrast, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are generally considered healthier fat sources that can provide beneficial effects on lipid profiles and cardiovascular health when consumed in moderation. Carbohydrates are a necessary part of a balanced diet, and their recommendations are typically based on total caloric intake rather than a percentage limitation like those for saturated fat.

5. What is one way Congress has tried to increase SNAP participation among the elderly?

- A. Eliminating asset limits**
- B. Providing online application options**
- C. Allowing coupons at restaurant locations**
- D. Funding outreach programs**

The effort to increase SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) participation among the elderly includes several approaches, and one notable strategy is the funding of outreach programs. These outreach initiatives are designed to inform seniors about their eligibility for SNAP, the application process, and the benefits they can receive. They help to alleviate common barriers that older individuals may face, such as lack of access to information and assistance. Outreach programs can involve partnerships with community organizations, local agencies, and other entities that are trusted by older adults. By increasing awareness and easing the application process through these programs, Congress aims to ensure that more elderly individuals can access the nutritional assistance they need to improve their well-being and food security. The other options do not specifically focus on combating the barriers to SNAP participation among the elderly in the same direct way. For instance, while eliminating asset limits or providing online application options may assist with the application itself, these measures do not address the critical need for outreach and education that can ultimately influence participation rates.

6. What is the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables for older adults?

- A. At least 3 servings**
- B. At least 5 servings**
- C. At least 7 servings**
- D. At least 10 servings**

The recommendation of at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables for older adults is based on numerous health studies indicating that a higher intake of fruits and vegetables contributes significantly to overall health, particularly in later life. This specific amount is associated with a reduced risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers, which are of particular concern for older populations. Fruits and vegetables provide critical nutrients, including vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber, which are essential for maintaining health and preventing malnutrition in older adults. As people age, the nutritional needs change, and the diet must be adjusted to support these requirements. Consuming a variety of fruits and vegetables can also help with digestive health, weight management, and can provide antioxidant properties that combat oxidative stress. While some might suggest higher servings, such as 7 or 10, the universally established benchmark of at least 5 servings is more practical and achievable, promoting a balanced diet without overwhelming older adults who may have dietary restrictions or difficulties in meal preparation. Ensuring that older adults meet this 5-serving benchmark encourages a healthier lifestyle while being mindful of their specific challenges.

7. What is sarcopenia, and how is nutrition involved?

- A. It is the loss of bone density that requires calcium intake.
- B. It is the loss of muscle mass due to aging; nutrition can help mitigate its effects.**
- C. It refers to a condition that increases appetite.
- D. It is the gradual decline of cognitive function.

Sarcopenia is defined as the loss of muscle mass and strength that commonly occurs as individuals age. This condition can significantly impact mobility, functional ability, and overall quality of life in older adults. Nutrition is intricately involved in addressing sarcopenia, as adequate protein intake, along with other essential nutrients, plays a critical role in muscle preservation and growth. Ensuring that older adults consume sufficient high-quality protein is vital because it enhances muscle protein synthesis. Additionally, other nutrients, such as vitamin D and certain micronutrients, are important for muscle function and health. Engaging in regular physical activity, particularly resistance training, combined with proper nutrition can help counteract the muscle loss associated with sarcopenia, ultimately leading to improved strength and physical performance in the aging population. This understanding of the relationship between sarcopenia and nutrition underscores the importance of dietary strategies in maintaining muscle health and function in older adults.

8. Which factor can negatively affect appetite in elderly patients?

- A. Increased physical activity
- B. Cognitive decline**
- C. High social engagement
- D. Access to meals

Cognitive decline is a significant factor that can negatively affect appetite in elderly patients. As individuals age, cognitive issues such as dementia or other forms of cognitive impairment can interfere with their ability to recognize hunger cues, plan meals, or even remember to eat. This decline can lead to decreased motivation to prepare food or to eat, ultimately resulting in poor nutrition and potential weight loss. While increased physical activity and high social engagement typically enhance appetite by stimulating hunger and encouraging social meals, these factors can also help maintain a healthier lifestyle. Access to meals usually supports proper nutrition and appetite, making it an unlikely contributor to appetite decline. Thus, cognitive decline stands out as a key factor hindering the elderly's appetite, showcasing the complex interactions between mental health and nutrition in this population.

9. What is essential for maintaining skin health in older adults?

- A. Increased exposure to sunlight**
- B. Adequate hydration and nutrient intake**
- C. Reduced bathing frequency**
- D. Heavy sunscreen use**

Maintaining skin health in older adults is crucial, as aging can lead to a variety of skin issues, including dryness, reduced elasticity, and higher susceptibility to injury and infection. Adequate hydration plays a vital role because as people age, their skin tends to become drier due to reduced oil production. Drinking enough fluids helps to maintain skin moisture levels and overall hydration. Moreover, nutrient intake is equally important for skin health. Essential nutrients, such as vitamins C and E, omega-3 fatty acids, and antioxidants, contribute to skin repair and protection. A balanced diet that includes a variety of nutrients helps to support the skin's structure and function, promoting healing and potentially delaying some signs of aging. While other options mention aspects related to sun exposure, bathing frequency, and sunscreen use, these factors do not encompass the foundational element of hydration and nutrition necessary for overall skin health in older adults. Adequate hydration and nutrient intake directly address the biological needs of aging skin, making these the most critical factors in maintaining skin health.

10. What is a potential consequence of inadequate protein intake in older adults?

- A. Improved cardiovascular health**
- B. Increased muscle mass**
- C. Muscle loss and increased frailty**
- D. Enhanced immune response**

Inadequate protein intake in older adults can lead to muscle loss and increased frailty. As people age, the body's ability to synthesize new muscle protein can decline, a condition known as sarcopenia. This age-related muscle loss can be exacerbated by insufficient dietary protein, which is essential for maintaining muscle mass and function. When protein intake is low, the body begins to break down existing muscle tissue to meet its needs for amino acids, which can lead to decreased muscle mass, strength, and physical performance. This can significantly affect daily functioning and increase the risk of falls and other injuries, contributing to frailty—a condition characterized by reduced strength, endurance, and physiological function, making older adults more vulnerable to adverse health outcomes. Maintaining adequate protein intake is crucial for counteracting these negative effects and promoting overall health and mobility in older adults. It supports not only muscle health but also contributes to various bodily functions, including repairing tissues, hormone production, and immune responses, although those options would not reflect the consequence of inadequate intake correctly in this context.