

# Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics Practice Test (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. In what way can nutrition influence mental focus in athletes?**
  - A. By providing better hydration only**
  - B. By supplying adequate glucose for cognitive function**
  - C. By enhancing muscle mass alone**
  - D. By increasing fat intake for energy**
- 2. What role does protein play in an athlete's recovery?**
  - A. It increases the risk of injury.**
  - B. It helps repair and build muscle tissue.**
  - C. It has no effect on recovery.**
  - D. It should not be consumed post-exercise.**
- 3. What is the caloric intake goal for the first trimester based on weight?**
  - A. No increase**
  - B. 45 cal/kg**
  - C. 45 cal/kg + 340 cals**
  - D. 45 cal/kg + 452 cals**
- 4. What is the significance of protein quality in an athlete's diet?**
  - A. High-quality proteins provide essential amino acids for muscle repair and growth.**
  - B. Protein intake is irrelevant as all proteins are the same.**
  - C. Proteins should only be consumed after workouts.**
  - D. Protein quality does not affect athletic performance.**
- 5. What condition results from excessive training and can lead to short-term performance decrements?**
  - A. Overtraining**
  - B. Overreaching**
  - C. Fatigue syndrome**
  - D. Exhaustion**

- 6. What is a potential consequence of following a low carbohydrate diet?**
- A. High levels of glucose**
  - B. Low zinc levels**
  - C. Low B vitamins and vitamins A and C**
  - D. Increased endurance**
- 7. Which action is advised if blood glucose levels exceed 250 mg/dL with ketones present?**
- A. Hydrate and treat with insulin**
  - B. Increase exercise intensity**
  - C. Avoid hydration until blood sugar normalizes**
  - D. Wait for the next meal**
- 8. What type of exercise is characterized by near maximal effort for several minutes?**
- A. Long-duration, moderate-intensity**
  - B. Short-duration, high-intensity**
  - C. Very-high-intensity**
  - D. Moderate-intensity**
- 9. What hormone inhibits iron absorption and increases in response to exercise?**
- A. Testosterone**
  - B. Cortisol**
  - C. Insulin**
  - D. Hepcidin**
- 10. Which of the following is a plant source of Vitamin B12?**
- A. Spinach**
  - B. Fortified cereals**
  - C. Broccoli**
  - D. Carrots**



## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. In what way can nutrition influence mental focus in athletes?**

- A. By providing better hydration only
- B. By supplying adequate glucose for cognitive function**
- C. By enhancing muscle mass alone
- D. By increasing fat intake for energy

Nutrition plays a critical role in mental focus, especially for athletes who require sustained cognitive performance alongside their physical capabilities. One of the main ways nutrition influences mental focus is by supplying adequate glucose for cognitive function. Glucose is the brain's primary source of energy, and maintaining stable blood sugar levels is essential for optimal cognitive performance. When athletes consume carbohydrates, they ensure that their body has the necessary fuel to maintain energy levels during both physical activity and cognitive tasks. Adequate glucose availability enhances attention, decision-making, and reaction times, all of which are crucial during competition or training. While hydration is important for overall performance and can impact cognitive function indirectly, it is not the sole contributor to mental focus. Similarly, enhancing muscle mass and increasing fat intake for energy have less direct effects on mental focus as they primarily relate to physical performance or energy storage rather than immediate cognitive functioning. Therefore, providing adequate glucose is essential for supporting the mental aspect of an athlete's performance.

**2. What role does protein play in an athlete's recovery?**

- A. It increases the risk of injury.
- B. It helps repair and build muscle tissue.**
- C. It has no effect on recovery.
- D. It should not be consumed post-exercise.

Protein plays a crucial role in an athlete's recovery by helping to repair and build muscle tissue that may be damaged during exercise. After physical activity, particularly high-intensity or resistance training, the muscles experience micro-tears. Consuming protein provides the essential amino acids needed for muscle repair and recovery. This process not only aids in restoring muscle function but also supports the adaptation process, allowing athletes to build stronger muscles over time. Ensuring adequate protein intake is vital, as it helps increase muscle protein synthesis, which is the body's process of building new proteins. This is especially important for athletes who are aiming for improved performance, muscle growth, and reduced soreness after workouts. Hence, incorporating protein into a post-exercise recovery strategy is widely recommended among sports nutrition experts to optimize recovery outcomes.

**3. What is the caloric intake goal for the first trimester based on weight?**

- A. No increase**
- B. 45 cal/kg**
- C. 45 cal/kg + 340 cal**
- D. 45 cal/kg + 452 cal**

The goal for caloric intake during the first trimester of pregnancy typically does not require an increase in caloric consumption compared to pre-pregnancy needs. This is primarily because the first trimester is a crucial period for fetal development, but it is also characterized by the fact that the embryo is very small, and the energy demands do not significantly rise during these initial weeks. Women are usually encouraged to focus on achieving a balanced diet rich in essential nutrients rather than stressing over caloric intake during the first trimester. By not requiring an increase at this stage, women can avoid excessive weight gain that may lead to complications later in pregnancy. This recommendation aligns with the guidelines issued by various health organizations. As the pregnancy progresses into the second and third trimesters, the caloric needs increase to support the growing fetus. This shift in caloric needs reflects the increased metabolic demands as the body adapts to support a developing baby. However, this increase is not relevant when focusing on the first trimester specifically, making the "no increase" option the most accurate reflection of dietary recommendations for that early stage of pregnancy.

**4. What is the significance of protein quality in an athlete's diet?**

- A. High-quality proteins provide essential amino acids for muscle repair and growth.**
- B. Protein intake is irrelevant as all proteins are the same.**
- C. Proteins should only be consumed after workouts.**
- D. Protein quality does not affect athletic performance.**

High-quality proteins play a crucial role in an athlete's diet because they supply all the essential amino acids needed for various physiological functions, particularly muscle repair and growth. Essential amino acids cannot be synthesized by the body and must be obtained through dietary sources. When athletes engage in rigorous training, their bodies undergo stress, leading to muscle micro-tears that require repair. Consuming high-quality proteins ensures that the athlete's body has the necessary building blocks to effectively repair and build muscle tissue, which is vital for recovery and enhanced performance. Moreover, high-quality proteins often come from sources like animal products (meat, fish, dairy) and some plant-based options (quinoa, soy), which are more easily absorbed and utilized by the body compared to lower-quality protein sources. This quality of protein impacts not only muscle recovery but also overall energy levels and immune function, contributing to an athlete's ability to perform at their best. The idea that protein intake is irrelevant or that all proteins are the same neglects the significant differences in amino acid profiles and digestibility among various protein sources. Additionally, suggesting that proteins should only be consumed after workouts overlooks the importance of a balanced intake throughout the day to support overall muscle protein synthesis and recovery. Lastly, the claim that protein quality

**5. What condition results from excessive training and can lead to short-term performance decrements?**

- A. Overtraining**
- B. Overreaching**
- C. Fatigue syndrome**
- D. Exhaustion**

The condition that results from excessive training and is associated with short-term performance decrements is overreaching. This term specifically refers to a temporary state where an athlete experiences a decline in performance due to inadequate recovery from an increased training load. Overreaching is often considered a part of a training cycle where the individual pushes their limits but can eventually lead to improved performance once rest and proper rehabilitation occur. It's important to recognize that overreaching differs from overtraining, which is a more severe and chronic condition that can take a longer time to recover from and often requires more extensive intervention. Fatigue syndrome typically refers to a broader experience of decreased energy and performance without the specific context of excessive training. Exhaustion can describe a complete depletion of energy and the body's resources, but it is generally not a defined term within sports performance and recovery contexts as overreaching is. Understanding these distinctions helps athletes and coaches recognize the signs and adapt training regimens effectively to optimize performance while minimizing the risk of burnout or more serious consequences from training stress.

**6. What is a potential consequence of following a low carbohydrate diet?**

- A. High levels of glucose**
- B. Low zinc levels**
- C. Low B vitamins and vitamins A and C**
- D. Increased endurance**

Following a low carbohydrate diet can potentially lead to low levels of B vitamins, as well as vitamins A and C, primarily because many carbohydrate-rich foods serve as sources of these essential nutrients. Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, which are often limited or eliminated in low-carb diets, are significant contributors to the intake of B vitamins, including thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, and folate. These vitamins play key roles in energy metabolism, red blood cell production, and overall cellular health. Additionally, fruits and vegetables, which are reduced in a low-carb diet, provide antioxidants such as vitamins A and C, which are vital for immune function, skin health, and cellular protection against damage. When these food groups are restricted, there is a risk of nutrient deficiencies, which can have a cascade of negative health effects, including compromised energy levels, mood disturbances, and impaired immune function. The other potential choices do not accurately reflect typical consequences of a low carbohydrate diet. For example, high levels of glucose are unlikely if carbohydrate intake is significantly reduced, and low zinc levels are not directly correlated with a low-carb diet. While some may argue about increased endurance, this typically depends on individual adaptation and is not universally applicable across all populations.

**7. Which action is advised if blood glucose levels exceed 250 mg/dL with ketones present?**

- A. Hydrate and treat with insulin**
- B. Increase exercise intensity**
- C. Avoid hydration until blood sugar normalizes**
- D. Wait for the next meal**

When blood glucose levels exceed 250 mg/dL accompanied by the presence of ketones, it indicates a potential risk for diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), particularly in individuals with type 1 diabetes. The safest and most effective approach in this scenario is to hydrate and treat with insulin. Hydration is crucial, as it helps to dilute the blood glucose concentration and mitigates the risk of dehydration that can occur due to elevated blood sugar levels. The administration of insulin is equally important, as it helps to lower blood glucose levels by facilitating the uptake of glucose into the cells, thereby reducing the likelihood of ketoacidosis. Monitoring and addressing both hydration and glucose levels promptly can help prevent serious complications associated with high blood sugar and ketone presence. Actions like increasing exercise intensity would not be advisable because exercise can further elevate blood sugar levels in the absence of proper insulin action. Similarly, avoiding hydration until blood sugar normalizes and waiting for the next meal disregard the immediate need for intervention to manage the condition.

**8. What type of exercise is characterized by near maximal effort for several minutes?**

- A. Long-duration, moderate-intensity**
- B. Short-duration, high-intensity**
- C. Very-high-intensity**
- D. Moderate-intensity**

The correct answer highlights a specific characteristic of exercise that involves bursts of activity performed at or near maximal effort for a duration that manages to span several minutes. This type of exercise is often referred to as high-intensity interval training (HIIT) or can pertain to activities that push the body close to its physiological limits within a sustained effort timeframe. During such high-intensity exercises, the body relies on both anaerobic and aerobic energy systems, utilizing stored energy substrates quickly and effectively. This makes it particularly effective for improving both aerobic and anaerobic capacities, enhancing performance across various athletic endeavors. The engagement of muscle fibers at a near-maximal capacity also leads to significant adaptations, including increased muscle strength, endurance, and improved metabolic efficiency. In contrast, other options describe different energy expenditure profiles. Long-duration, moderate-intensity exercise focuses on sustained efforts that are manageable and typically performed at a lower intensity, while very-high-intensity exercise usually encompasses activities with exertion at maximal effort but for shorter time frames, often lasting seconds rather than minutes. Moderate-intensity exercise is characterized by a level of activity that is comfortably challenging but does not reach the intensity required to categorize it as high-intensity, making it less taxing than the type of exercise referenced in the

**9. What hormone inhibits iron absorption and increases in response to exercise?**

- A. Testosterone**
- B. Cortisol**
- C. Insulin**
- D. Hepcidin**

Hepcidin is the correct answer because it plays a crucial role in the regulation of iron metabolism in the body. This peptide hormone is produced by the liver and is known to inhibit iron absorption from the diet by binding to ferroportin, the protein responsible for transporting iron from inside intestinal cells into the bloodstream. When hepcidin levels are elevated, iron absorption from the gut decreases, and iron release from stores is also impaired. In response to exercise, hepcidin levels are known to increase, likely as a protective mechanism to prevent iron overload or to respond to changes in iron demand that can occur during physical activity. Exercise can induce factors that lead to the release of hepcidin, such as inflammatory cytokines, which further emphasizes its role in iron regulation, especially in athletes and individuals engaging in regular physical activity. Understanding the function of hepcidin is critical for those working in sports dietetics, as it informs dietary recommendations related to iron intake for athletes who may be at risk for deficiencies, particularly endurance athletes or those undergoing intensive training.

**10. Which of the following is a plant source of Vitamin B12?**

- A. Spinach**
- B. Fortified cereals**
- C. Broccoli**
- D. Carrots**

Vitamin B12, also known as cobalamin, is primarily found in animal products, which poses a challenge for individuals on vegetarian or vegan diets to meet their B12 requirements. However, certain plant-based foods can be fortified with Vitamin B12, providing an essential source for those not consuming animal products. Fortified cereals are a notable example, as these cereals are specifically enhanced with vitamins and minerals that may lack in a plant-based diet. They often have Vitamin B12 added during manufacturing, making them a reliable, convenient source of this nutrient for those looking to increase their intake without consuming animal-derived foods. In contrast, spinach, broccoli, and carrots do not naturally contain Vitamin B12. While they provide various other vitamins and minerals that are beneficial for overall nutrition and health, they do not serve as sources of B12. Thus, fortified cereals stand out as the correct choice for plant sources of Vitamin B12.



## 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](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://boardcertsportsdietetics.examzify.com>**

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