Canadian Red Cross Basic Life Support (BLS) 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. What is the recommended action for a victim who has fainted but is breathing normally?

A. Sit them up and give them water

B. Lay them on their side with their legs elevated

C. Position them on their back and keep the airway open

D. Move them to a cooler area immediately

2. What is the correct ratio of compressions to ventilations for a one-responder cycle for an infant?

A. 30:2

B. 15:2

C. 3:1

D. 10:1

3. Which action is not recommended while using a defibrillator?

A. Positioning the pads correctly

B. Performing CPR while charging

C. Ensuring no one is touching the patient

D. Clearing the area before discharging the shock

4. What should emergency services do upon arrival during ongoing CPR?

A. Continue performing CPR without interruption

B. Quickly assess the situation and take over care

C. Provide support but not take over

D. Assist by providing more rescue breaths

5. Which device provides the highest oxygen concentration?

A. Nasal cannula

B. Standard mask

C. Non-rebreather mask

D. Bag-valve-mask resuscitator

6. Where should you check for a pulse on a responsive adult?

- **A. Radial artery at the wrist**
- **B. Coronary artery in the chest**
- **C. Femoral artery in the thigh**
- **D. Temporal artery at the temple**

7. What is the one-responder CPR cycle for an adult?

- **A. 15 compressions, 2 ventilations**
- **B. 30 compressions, 2 ventilations**
- **C. 30 compressions, 1 ventilation**
- **D. 15 compressions, 1 ventilation**

8. What is the proper technique for performing chest compressions?

- **A. Use one hand for adults, two hands for children**
- **B. Keep elbows locked and compress through the heel of the hand**
- **C. Compress at a slow and steady rate**
- **D. Compress very lightly to avoid injury**

9. How should you react if you suspect a spinal injury in a conscious patient?

- **A. Minimize movement and keep the patient still until help arrives**
- **B. Encourage the patient to move to assess their condition**
- **C. Comfort the patient by moving them to a safer location**
- **D. Conduct a full assessment before calling for help**

10. What is the primary goal of Basic Life Support (BLS)?

- **A. To sustain life until professional help arrives**
- **B. To diagnose medical conditions**
- **C. To comfort the victim**
- **D. To perform surgery if necessary**

Answers

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

Explanations

1. What is the recommended action for a victim who has fainted but is breathing normally?

A. Sit them up and give them water

B. Lay them on their side with their legs elevated

C. Position them on their back and keep the airway open

D. Move them to a cooler area immediately

In the case of a victim who has fainted but is breathing normally, the recommended action is to position them on their back and ensure the airway remains open. This is crucial because lying the person flat helps facilitate blood return to the heart and brain, which can aid in their recovery. Additionally, position them in a way that keeps their airway unobstructed, allowing for unobstructed breathing. Keeping the airway open is essential to prevent any potential airway blockages and to ensure the individual continues to breathe effectively. This positioning provides the best chance for the person to regain consciousness and minimizes the risk of complications, such as aspiration if they were to vomit. While other options may seem beneficial, they are not the first line of response for someone who is breathing normally. For example, sitting someone up can hinder blood flow to the brain, and elevating the legs alone may not be necessary if the person is breathing adequately. Always prioritizing airway management and proper positioning is key in such situations.

2. What is the correct ratio of compressions to ventilations for a one-responder cycle for an infant?

A. 30:2

B. 15:2

C. 3:1

D. 10:1

The correct ratio of compressions to ventilations for a one-responder cycle for an infant is 15:2. This ratio is established in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) guidelines specifically for infants to ensure that adequate blood circulation and oxygenation are maintained during resuscitation efforts. In this scenario, the rescuer delivers 15 chest compressions followed by 2 rescue breaths. This approach is particularly important because infants have different physiological needs compared to adults or older children, so the emphasis is on providing more compressions relative to the number of ventilations, which helps to maintain circulation while also addressing the child's need for oxygen. This ratio reflects the higher rate of metabolic demand in infants; they require immediate and efficient circulatory support. Understanding this ratio helps in practicing effective BLS in emergency situations involving infants, making it crucial knowledge for anyone trained in CPR for this age group. Other ratios, like 30:2, are more applicable for adults and older children, while the 15:2 ratio is specifically tailored to the needs of infants during CPR.

3. Which action is not recommended while using a defibrillator?

A. Positioning the pads correctly

B. Performing CPR while charging

C. Ensuring no one is touching the patient

D. Clearing the area before discharging the shock

Performing CPR while charging a defibrillator is not recommended because it poses a risk to both the rescuer and the patient. While the defibrillator is charging, it's essential to ensure that no one is in contact with the patient, as the discharge of electricity can cause harm to anyone touching the person receiving the shock. Additionally, during CPR, the focus should be on providing high-quality compressions and ensuring that the patient is in the best position to receive defibrillation when ready. Therefore, it's crucial to stop CPR while the defibrillator is preparing to deliver a shock to avoid complications that could occur during this critical moment. The other options prioritize the safe and effective use of the defibrillator, ensuring the pads are correctly positioned, maintaining a clear zone for safety, and taking precautions to prevent accidental shocks.

4. What should emergency services do upon arrival during ongoing CPR?

A. Continue performing CPR without interruption

B. Quickly assess the situation and take over care

C. Provide support but not take over

D. Assist by providing more rescue breaths

When emergency services arrive during ongoing CPR, it is essential for them to quickly assess the situation and take over care. This transition ensures that the patient receives the most effective and uninterrupted treatment. Trained emergency personnel will have the knowledge and equipment necessary to manage the situation appropriately, including advanced life support techniques that may be required. Their arrival allows for a seamless transfer of care, which is critical for increasing the chances of survival for the patient. Continuing CPR without interruption is important until professional help arrives, but the arrival of emergency responders who are trained to handle such situations means they will assess factors like the effectiveness of the current resuscitation efforts, the patient's condition, and whether additional interventions are needed. This approach ensures that the victim receives comprehensive medical care right away. The other options involving providing support or simply assisting with rescue breaths do not fully utilize the expertise and equipment that emergency services bring. Their primary role is to take over, implement advanced care, and assure that the patient gets the best possible outcomes in a critical situation.

5. Which device provides the highest oxygen concentration?

A. Nasal cannula

B. Standard mask

C. Non-rebreather mask

D. Bag-valve-mask resuscitator

The non-rebreather mask is designed to provide the highest concentration of oxygen to a patient. This device features a reservoir bag and a one-way valve that prevents exhaled air from returning to the bag. When the patient inhales, they receive oxygen from the reservoir, which allows for a significant volume of oxygen to be delivered directly to the lungs. This method of oxygen delivery is particularly effective in emergencies when rapid and high concentrations of oxygen are essential, such as in cases of respiratory distress or hypoxemia. Due to its design, a non-rebreather mask can deliver oxygen concentrations between 80% and 100%, making it the most efficient among common oxygen delivery systems. Other devices, while useful in different contexts, do not achieve the same oxygen concentration. A nasal cannula typically offers a lower concentration due to mixing with ambient air, while a standard mask cannot achieve the same level of oxygen delivery as a non-rebreather because it lacks a reservoir and does not have a one-way valve. The bag-valve-mask resuscitator, while capable of delivering a high concentration of oxygen, is typically employed in advanced life support scenarios and requires proper technique to ensure effectiveness.

6. Where should you check for a pulse on a responsive adult?

A. Radial artery at the wrist

B. Coronary artery in the chest

C. Femoral artery in the thigh

D. Temporal artery at the temple

Checking for a pulse in an adult who is responsive is typically done at the radial artery located at the wrist. The radial pulse is the most accessible and convenient site for assessing the heart rate in a conscious individual. It is also easy to locate, requiring minimal interference with the patient compared to other sites. In a responsive person, the radial pulse reflects the blood flow that's circulating adequately through the body, providing immediate feedback about the cardiovascular status. If the person is responsive, the lateral aspect of the wrist is often the preferred location as it is comfortable and non-invasive for both the rescuer and the individual in need. While the femoral artery can provide a pulse check in cases of unconsciousness or shock, it is not ideal for a responsive adult due to its location and the need for more invasive assessment. The coronary artery is not accessible for pulse checks; it is located internally and cannot be felt externally. The temporal artery, while useful in some contexts, is less common for routine pulse checks in responsive individuals compared to the radial artery. Thus, the radial pulse is the best choice in this scenario for a quick and effective assessment.

7. What is the one-responder CPR cycle for an adult?

A. 15 compressions, 2 ventilations

B. 30 compressions, 2 ventilations

C. 30 compressions, 1 ventilation

D. 15 compressions, 1 ventilation

The one-responder CPR cycle for an adult consists of 30 compressions followed by 2 ventilations. This ratio is crucial for effective cardiopulmonary resuscitation, as it balances the need for providing oxygen to the victim while also maintaining circulation. During the compression phase, administering 30 compressions helps to create adequate blood flow to vital organs, which is essential for survival. After completing the compressions, providing 2 ventilations allows for oxygen to enter the lungs and, subsequently, the bloodstream. This cycle should be continued until help arrives or the victim shows signs of life. The emphasis on 30 compressions followed by 2 ventilations is supported by guidelines, which stress that maintaining blood circulation through compressions is the top priority during cardiac arrest. In scenarios where CPR is performed, following this sequence helps maximize the chances of survival and recovery for the victim.

8. What is the proper technique for performing chest compressions?

A. Use one hand for adults, two hands for children

B. Keep elbows locked and compress through the heel of the hand

C. Compress at a slow and steady rate

D. Compress very lightly to avoid injury

Using the heel of the hand with locked elbows during chest compressions is essential for delivering effective compressions. This technique maximizes the force applied to the chest, allowing for adequate blood circulation to vital organs during a cardiac arrest. Locking the elbows helps maintain a proper posture and technique, ensuring that compressions are delivered with sufficient depth and efficiency. Effective compressions should be performed at a depth of at least 5 cm (2 inches) in adults and at a rate of 100 to 120 compressions per minute. This helps to create enough pressure to circulate the blood effectively. Compressions that are too slow or too shallow may not provide the necessary blood flow to sustain life until emergency medical services (EMS) arrive. It's critical to apply firm pressure during compressions, as compressing lightly will not adequately circulate blood and may compromise a victim's chance of survival. Using two hands for adults ensures that adequate force can be applied, as adults typically have a larger chest cavity than children or infants.

9. How should you react if you suspect a spinal injury in a conscious patient?

A. Minimize movement and keep the patient still until help arrives

B. Encourage the patient to move to assess their condition

C. Comfort the patient by moving them to a safer location

D. Conduct a full assessment before calling for help

If you suspect a spinal injury in a conscious patient, minimizing movement and keeping the patient still until help arrives is crucial for several reasons. Spinal injuries can lead to serious complications, including paralysis, if the spine is moved or twisted improperly. Stabilizing the patient's condition by limiting movement helps to prevent further injury to the spinal cord and surrounding structures. The spinal cord is vulnerable, and any unnecessary movement can exacerbate an existing injury, potentially leading to irreversible damage. Additionally, keeping the patient still allows emergency personnel to assess the situation without creating additional risks. The priority is to maintain the patient's position until trained medical responders can take over. This approach aligns with best practices in emergency care and reflects a clear understanding of the potential severity of spinal injuries.

10. What is the primary goal of Basic Life Support (BLS)?

A. To sustain life until professional help arrives

B. To diagnose medical conditions

C. To comfort the victim

D. To perform surgery if necessary

The primary goal of Basic Life Support (BLS) is to sustain life until professional help arrives. This involves a series of critical actions aimed at maintaining effective circulation and breathing in a person who is in cardiac arrest or experiencing another life-threatening emergency. The BLS protocols focus on recognizing the signs of such emergencies, calling for help, and providing immediate interventions like chest compressions and rescue breaths. These actions are essential for increasing the chances of survival and minimizing potential brain damage caused by a lack of oxygen. The other options do not align with the objectives of BLS. Diagnosing medical conditions is outside the scope of BLS, as it requires specialized knowledge and tools that lay responders do not possess. Comforting the victim, while important in providing emotional support, does not address the urgent physical needs in a life-threatening situation. Surgery is not within the realm of BLS; it is a complex medical procedure that requires extensive training and is performed by healthcare professionals. Thus, the main focus of BLS is to keep a person alive until advanced medical care can take over.

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://canadianredcrossbls.examzify.com

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