

Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of questions,

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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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

- 1. A 59-year-old single female with type 2 diabetes mellitus admits that she only takes half of her recommended Januvia, but takes the full Metformin dose. What barrier does the educator believe is most likely a concern for this patient?**
 - A. Transportation**
 - B. Cultural**
 - C. Cognitive ability**
 - D. Financial**

- 2. What is an appropriate behavioral objective for a patient regarding meal selection?**
 - A. "I will understand the reasons for monitoring my blood glucose."**
 - B. "I will choose items from the restaurant menu that fit my healthy plan."**
 - C. "I will know the difference between my diabetes medications."**
 - D. "My A1c will be below 8% in 6 months."**

- 3. In the context of the ADCES7 self-care behaviors goal sheet, which statement best exemplifies individualization of the goal "make better food choices" under the healthy eating category?**
 - A. Make better food choices to reduce A1C to less than 7.5%**
 - B. Make better food choices over the next 6 months (by October)**
 - C. Switch to diet soda and sugar-free ice cream**
 - D. Report to the educator each Monday on the previous week's food choices**

- 4. What aspect of diabetes education is crucial for managing hypoglycemia risk?**
 - A. Regular exercise**
 - B. Medication adherence**
 - C. Dietary carbohydrate counting**
 - D. Continuous glucose monitoring**

- 5. For a patient with type 2 diabetes who is mostly sedentary and has a BMI of 26, which goal is realistic and attainable?**
- A. Purchase a pair of walking shoes and walk to and from the mailbox every day**
 - B. Participate in the 1/2 marathon at the end of the month**
 - C. Enroll and attend all the daily spin classes at my local health club**
 - D. Walk briskly for 25 minutes every day following dinner**
- 6. Which food items are recognized as whole grains by the American Diabetes Association?**
- A. Quinoa, brown rice, and long-grain white rice**
 - B. Oatmeal, quinoa, and whole wheat flour**
 - C. Honey wheat flour, jasmine rice, and flour tortillas**
 - D. Millet, white wheat flour, and corn**
- 7. What would be an appropriate response to a patient who expresses confusion about their personal goals in diabetes education?**
- A. "What do you mean you don't know what I mean?"**
 - B. "How do you hope that learning more about diabetes will help you?"**
 - C. Don't say anything and allow them to think longer.**
 - D. "Well, for example, would you like to achieve your ideal weight, or reach your target blood glucose?"**
- 8. How do participant eligibility criteria for the CDC-Recognized Diabetes Prevention Program differ?**
- A. Fasting blood glucose levels, acceptability of gestational diabetes history, and acceptance of individual's self-report of blood-based test results**
 - B. No previous history of type 1 or type 2 diabetes, acceptability of gestational diabetes history, and acceptance of individual's self-report of blood-based test results**
 - C. Fasting blood glucose levels, acceptance of individual's self-report, BMI cut-off**
 - D. Fasting blood glucose levels, acceptance of individual's self-report, age**

- 9. Which strategy is best for diabetes educators when addressing lifestyle modifications with patients?**
- A. Providing a detailed meal plan**
 - B. Encouraging setting achievable goals**
 - C. Recommending strict dietary changes**
 - D. Focusing solely on medication adherence**
- 10. Which conclusion is incorrect if a patient considers a low glycemic index food with low sugar and high fiber as an ideal choice?**
- A. Amount of fiber in this food is not high enough to discount from total carbs**
 - B. Total sugar is not important because the starches rapidly convert to glucose as well**
 - C. Even though the food may be low GI, moderation and tracking of all carbs is still needed**
 - D. The patient is correct; the combination of low sugar, low GI, and high fiber makes this an ideal food choice in any amount**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. A 59-year-old single female with type 2 diabetes mellitus admits that she only takes half of her recommended Januvia, but takes the full Metformin dose. What barrier does the educator believe is most likely a concern for this patient?

- A. Transportation**
- B. Cultural**
- C. Cognitive ability**
- D. Financial**

In this scenario, the patient is only taking half of her prescribed dose of Januvia, while consistently taking the full dose of Metformin. This behavior suggests a potential financial barrier to her medication management. Januvia, as a medication, tends to be more expensive compared to Metformin, which is a generic and typically more affordable option. The patient might be rationing her use of Januvia to save money, indicating that she potentially cannot afford the full cost of all her diabetes medications. Understanding the financial burden that diabetes medications can impose is crucial. Many patients with chronic conditions like diabetes may prioritize their medication based on their financial situation, opting to fully adhere to the more affordable options and reducing dosages of pricier alternatives. This emphasizes the importance of assessing patients' financial circumstances during diabetes education, as well as discussing potential options for medication assistance, sliding scale payment plans, or alternative therapies to ensure comprehensive diabetes management.

2. What is an appropriate behavioral objective for a patient regarding meal selection?

- A. "I will understand the reasons for monitoring my blood glucose."**
- B. "I will choose items from the restaurant menu that fit my healthy plan."**
- C. "I will know the difference between my diabetes medications."**
- D. "My A1c will be below 8% in 6 months."**

Choosing items from the restaurant menu that fit a healthy plan reflects a specific and measurable behavioral objective related to meal selection. This objective encourages the patient to actively engage in their dietary choices, which is crucial for diabetes management. Focusing on actual behavior, such as selecting appropriate meals when dining out, allows the patient to apply their knowledge in real-life situations. This goal is realistic and attainable, promoting independent decision-making and fostering a sense of responsibility towards their health. The objective not only emphasizes meal selection but also aligns with the overall aim of maintaining blood glucose levels within a target range through healthier food choices. Other options, while they may involve valuable knowledge or outcomes, do not directly address the specific behavior of meal selection, making them less appropriate as a behavioral objective focused on meal planning and dietary choices.

3. In the context of the ADCES7 self-care behaviors goal sheet, which statement best exemplifies individualization of the goal "make better food choices" under the healthy eating category?

A. Make better food choices to reduce A1C to less than 7.5%

B. Make better food choices over the next 6 months (by October)

C. Switch to diet soda and sugar-free ice cream

D. Report to the educator each Monday on the previous week's food choices

The choice that exemplifies individualization of the goal "make better food choices" is focused on a specific behavior that a person can implement in their dietary habits. Switching to diet soda and sugar-free ice cream represents a personalized and actionable step that someone can take to modify their food intake in a way that aligns with their preferences and lifestyle. This option highlights a concrete change in food selection, providing clarity on what "better food choices" means for that individual. This approach acknowledges that dietary changes can vary greatly among individuals based on their tastes, health conditions, and lifestyle. Personalized goals help make the broader objective more tangible, allowing individuals to take ownership and feel more engaged in their self-care journey. The other choices, while related to making better food choices, are not as individualized. For instance, setting an A1C target or a reporting schedule can be helpful, but they don't directly define specific actions tied to food selection. These options are more focused on outcomes or tracking without detailing whether the changes being made will genuinely resonate with the individual's circumstances and preferences.

4. What aspect of diabetes education is crucial for managing hypoglycemia risk?

A. Regular exercise

B. Medication adherence

C. Dietary carbohydrate counting

D. Continuous glucose monitoring

Continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) plays a critical role in managing hypoglycemia risk as it provides real-time data about blood glucose levels. This technology allows individuals with diabetes to see their glucose trends and fluctuations, enabling them to take proactive steps to prevent hypoglycemic episodes. For example, if the CGM indicates that blood glucose levels are dropping, a person can take preventive measures—such as consuming carbohydrates—before reaching a dangerously low level. Additionally, CGMs often have alerts that notify users when their glucose is falling rapidly, which can further assist in recognizing and responding to hypoglycemia early. While regular exercise, medication adherence, and dietary carbohydrate counting are important aspects of diabetes management, they might not directly address hypoglycemia risk in the same way that continuous glucose monitoring does. Regular exercise can contribute to overall glucose control but may also pose a risk for hypoglycemia if not balanced with food intake or insulin adjustments. Medication adherence is pivotal for maintaining stable blood glucose levels, but without a monitoring system, it may not effectively prevent hypoglycemia from occurring. Dietary carbohydrate counting is beneficial for managing overall carbohydrate intake; however, it requires appropriate blood glucose monitoring to ensure that carbohydrate consumption aligns with the individual's glucose levels to avoid hypoglycemia. In

5. For a patient with type 2 diabetes who is mostly sedentary and has a BMI of 26, which goal is realistic and attainable?

- A. Purchase a pair of walking shoes and walk to and from the mailbox every day**
- B. Participate in the 1/2 marathon at the end of the month**
- C. Enroll and attend all the daily spin classes at my local health club**

D. Walk briskly for 25 minutes every day following dinner

Setting realistic and attainable goals is crucial for individuals with type 2 diabetes, particularly those who may lead a sedentary lifestyle. Walking briskly for 25 minutes every day following dinner is a practical approach that allows the patient to gradually increase their physical activity. This goal aligns with the recommendations for individuals with diabetes to engage in regular moderate-intensity exercise, which can help improve insulin sensitivity, lower blood sugar levels, and enhance overall health. This option is specific, measurable, and attainable for someone who may not currently exercise regularly, making it a sustainable change to incorporate into their routine. Walking is an accessible form of exercise that requires minimal equipment and can be done anywhere, making it a suitable choice for the patient's lifestyle. On the contrary, participating in a half marathon at the end of the month would demand a significant level of fitness and training that the patient may not be prepared for, likely leading to frustration or injury. Enrolling in daily spin classes at a local health club may also be too ambitious, given that the patient is mostly sedentary and might find it challenging to maintain such a rigorous schedule. Walking to and from the mailbox every day may not provide adequate physical activity to make a significant impact on the patient's health and diabetes management.

6. Which food items are recognized as whole grains by the American Diabetes Association?

- A. Quinoa, brown rice, and long-grain white rice**
- B. Oatmeal, quinoa, and whole wheat flour**
- C. Honey wheat flour, jasmine rice, and flour tortillas**
- D. Millet, white wheat flour, and corn**

The selection of oatmeal, quinoa, and whole wheat flour as whole grains is aligned with the recommendations of the American Diabetes Association because these foods retain their outer bran layer and germ, providing more nutrients and fiber compared to refined grain products. Oatmeal is a well-known whole grain that offers a good source of soluble fiber, which can help improve blood lipid levels and regulate blood sugar. Quinoa, often recognized as a superfood, contains all nine essential amino acids, making it a complete protein and a nutrient-dense option. Whole wheat flour retains the essential components of the wheat grain, including fiber, vitamins, and minerals, which support digestive health and aid in blood sugar management. Options that do not include these foods include various refined grains and products that have been stripped of their nutritional value. For instance, many other options listed involve grains that may not retain the whole grain classification due to processing, which removes beneficial nutrients and fiber, making them less favorable for individuals managing diabetes. These nutrients are essential because they contribute to better blood sugar control and overall health.

7. What would be an appropriate response to a patient who expresses confusion about their personal goals in diabetes education?

A. "What do you mean you don't know what I mean?"

B. "How do you hope that learning more about diabetes will help you?"

C. Don't say anything and allow them to think longer.

D. "Well, for example, would you like to achieve your ideal weight, or reach your target blood glucose?"

The appropriate response to a patient expressing confusion about their personal goals in diabetes education is to encourage a dialogue that allows the patient to reflect on their aspirations and motivations. Asking, "How do you hope that learning more about diabetes will help you?" fosters an open-ended conversation that empowers the patient to articulate their expectations and desires related to managing their diabetes. This approach promotes engagement, allowing healthcare professionals to better understand the patient's perspective and tailor diabetes education to meet their individual needs. By encouraging the patient to discuss their thoughts and feelings about diabetes management, this response instills a sense of collaboration and support. It acknowledges that diabetes education should be patient-centered and that understanding personal goals is fundamental to improving health outcomes. This type of inquiry not only clarifies the patient's confusion but also builds rapport and trust between the patient and healthcare provider, essential components in effective diabetes education. The other options do not adequately support the patient's needs. For instance, demanding clarification without empathy can alienate the patient, while remaining silent does not facilitate their understanding. Providing examples may help, but it lacks the personal engagement that allows patients to explore their feelings and goals more deeply.

8. How do participant eligibility criteria for the CDC-Recognized Diabetes Prevention Program differ?

- A. Fasting blood glucose levels, acceptability of gestational diabetes history, and acceptance of individual's self-report of blood-based test results**
- B. No previous history of type 1 or type 2 diabetes, acceptability of gestational diabetes history, and acceptance of individual's self-report of blood-based test results**
- C. Fasting blood glucose levels, acceptance of individual's self-report, BMI cut-off**
- D. Fasting blood glucose levels, acceptance of individual's self-report, age**

The selected choice outlines key components of participant eligibility criteria for the CDC-Recognized Diabetes Prevention Program. It emphasizes the importance of fasting blood glucose levels, which are a vital indicator used to assess an individual's risk for developing diabetes. This aspect helps to ensure that participants are identified accurately based on objective measures. Additionally, the acceptance of a history of gestational diabetes is critical because individuals who have experienced this condition are at a higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes later on. This inclusion strengthens the program by targeting those who would benefit the most from preventive measures. Furthermore, allowing for the acceptance of an individual's self-report of blood-based test results recognizes the practicality of obtaining certain health information from participants when access to formal testing may be limited. This flexibility in eligibility ensures that more individuals can enter the program, thereby extending the reach of diabetes prevention efforts. Together, these criteria create a more comprehensive and inclusive framework for identifying eligible participants, aligning well with the program's goals of reducing the incidence of type 2 diabetes in at-risk populations.

9. Which strategy is best for diabetes educators when addressing lifestyle modifications with patients?

- A. Providing a detailed meal plan**
- B. Encouraging setting achievable goals**
- C. Recommending strict dietary changes**
- D. Focusing solely on medication adherence**

Encouraging patients to set achievable goals is a pivotal strategy for diabetes educators when discussing lifestyle modifications. This approach emphasizes the importance of personalizing the process, making it more relevant and manageable for the individual. By promoting small, specific, and attainable goals, patients are more likely to experience success, which can enhance their motivation and engagement in managing their diabetes. This method fosters a sense of ownership as patients see progress in their efforts, whether it's through improved blood glucose levels, weight loss, or increased physical activity. Setting achievable goals helps break down the often overwhelming task of making lifestyle changes into smaller, actionable steps, enabling patients to gradually integrate healthier choices into their daily routines. In contrast, a detailed meal plan may feel too restrictive and overwhelming, potentially leading to frustration instead of motivation. Recommending strict dietary changes can also be counterproductive, as overly strict guidelines may cause patients to abandon efforts entirely if they feel they cannot adhere to them. Focusing solely on medication adherence ignores the essential role that lifestyle choices play in managing diabetes effectively. Overall, encouraging achievable goals integrates well into a patient-centered approach and fosters sustainable lifestyle changes.

10. Which conclusion is incorrect if a patient considers a low glycemic index food with low sugar and high fiber as an ideal choice?

A. Amount of fiber in this food is not high enough to discount from total carbs

B. Total sugar is not important because the starches rapidly convert to glucose as well

C. Even though the food may be low GI, moderation and tracking of all carbs is still needed

D. The patient is correct; the combination of low sugar, low GI, and high fiber makes this an ideal food choice in any amount

The assertion that the combination of low sugar, low GI, and high fiber makes this an ideal food choice in any amount is incorrect because it overlooks the principle of moderation in carbohydrate intake. While low glycemic index foods can have benefits when managing blood sugar levels, consuming them in excessive amounts can still lead to increased blood glucose levels. Even foods considered healthy can contribute to overall carbohydrate intake, which is crucial for diabetes management. Tracking total carbohydrate intake, including sugars and starches (even those with low glycemic indices), is essential to maintain stable blood glucose levels. Moderation ensures that the balance of nutrients is maintained and helps prevent spikes in blood sugar, highlighting the importance of managing portion sizes regardless of the food's profile. In contrast, the other conclusions reflect important considerations in diabetes management. The amount of fiber must be substantial to meaningfully impact the total carbohydrate count, and the conversion of starches to glucose reinforces the necessity of evaluating the overall carbohydrate content rather than just focusing on individual components like sugars.

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://cdces.examzify.com>

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