Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT) 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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Table of Contents

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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.

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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.

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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

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1. What should a pharmacy technician do if they suspect a medication error has occurred?

A. Ignore it

B. Notify the prescriber immediately

C. Document the error

D. Consult the patient

2. Which abbreviation indicates a route of administration that is subcutaneous?

A. sc

B. sl

C. ac

D. prn

3. How many fluid ounces is approximately equivalent to 60 mL of liquid medication?

A. 1

B. 1.5

C. 2

D. 3

4. Which schedule are medications with a high potential for abuse classified under?

A. Schedule I

B. Schedule II

C. Schedule III

D. Schedule IV

5. A pharmacy technician is processing a prescription for potassium citrate 10 mEq tablets that instruct "Take 2 tab bid." What is the total daily dosage for this prescription?

A. 10 mEq

B. 20 mEq

C. 30 mEq

D. 40 mEq

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6. Which abbreviation should a pharmacy technician recognize as error-prone?

A. qhs

B. ac

C. po

D. subcut

7. What is the role of the generic name as it pertains to patient medication therapy?

A. To provide a more recognizable name for patients

B. To assure equal efficacy when compared to brand names

C. To identify the medication's chemical structure

D. To simplify the prescription writing process

8. What term is used to describe a medication that is utilized daily for chronic conditions?

A. Rescue medication

B. Preventive medication

C. Maintenance medication

D. Adjuvant medication

9. What is necessary to identify a medication in the event of a recall?

A. Expiration date

B. Control number

C. Lot number

D. Manufacturer ID

10. Which process is used for reducing the size of particles and incorporating solids into lotions or creams?

A. Trituration

B. Levigation

C. Filtration

D. Evaporation

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What should a pharmacy technician do if they suspect a medication error has occurred?

A. Ignore it

B. Notify the prescriber immediately

C. Document the error

D. Consult the patient

When a pharmacy technician suspects a medication error has occurred, notifying the prescriber is the appropriate action. This is crucial because the prescriber is responsible for the patient's care and needs to be informed about any potential mistakes to determine the best course of action. The prescriber may need to reassess the situation, provide guidance on how to manage the error, and, if necessary, intervene to prevent harm to the patient. Taking immediate action by alerting the prescriber is vital for patient safety, as it allows for timely correction and ensures that the patient receives the correct medication or dosage. It also facilitates communication among healthcare professionals, which is essential in maintaining a high standard of care and reducing the risks associated with medication errors. While documentation of the error and consulting with the patient are also important steps that contribute to the overall process of addressing the error, the first line of action should focus on ensuring that the prescriber is aware of the situation to protect patient health.

2. Which abbreviation indicates a route of administration that is subcutaneous?

A. sc

B. sl

C. ac

D. prn

The abbreviation that indicates a subcutaneous route of administration is 'sc,' which stands for 'subcutaneously.' This method involves injecting medication into the fatty tissue layer beneath the skin, allowing for slow and steady absorption of the medication into the bloodstream. It is commonly used for insulin administration and for drugs that require a slower onset of action. Other choices do not relate to subcutaneous administration. For example, 'sl' stands for 'sublingual,' which involves placing a drug under the tongue for absorption. 'ac' means 'before meals,' which indicates timing rather than a route of administration. Lastly, 'prn' stands for 'as needed,' describing the frequency of administration without specifying how the medication is given. Hence, sc is the clear choice for recognizing the subcutaneous route.

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3. How many fluid ounces is approximately equivalent to 60 mL of liquid medication?

A. 1

B. 1.5

C. 2

D. 3

To convert milliliters (mL) to fluid ounces, it is important to understand the conversion factor between these two units of volume. One fluid ounce is approximately equal to 29.57 mL. To find how many fluid ounces are in 60 mL, you can use the following calculation: 1. Start with the total volume in milliliters: 60 mL. 2. Divide this number by the conversion factor for mL to fluid ounces: \(60 mL \div 29.57 mL/oz \approx 2.03 oz \). So, when rounding to the nearest whole number, 60 mL is approximately equivalent to 2 fluid ounces. This is why the answer of 2 fluid ounces is the correct choice, as it accurately reflects the conversion of 60 mL into fluid ounces. The other choices reflect conversion errors, as they either underestimate or overestimate the amount when compared to the correct calculation based on the established conversion factor.

4. Which schedule are medications with a high potential for abuse classified under?

A. Schedule I

B. Schedule II

C. Schedule III

D. Schedule IV

Medications classified under Schedule II are those that exhibit a high potential for abuse. This classification indicates that these substances can lead to significant psychological or physical dependence if misused. Schedule II substances are strictly regulated due to their risk of abuse and the potential for severe consequences associated with their misuse. Examples of Schedule II medications include opioids like morphine and oxycodone, as well as stimulants used for ADHD, such as amphetamine and methylphenidate. These drugs are approved for legitimate medical use but require careful monitoring and strict prescribing guidelines in order to minimize the risk of addiction and misuse. In contrast, Schedule I substances have no accepted medical use and are deemed to have the highest potential for abuse without any therapeutic benefit. Schedules III and IV include medications with decreasing potential for abuse compared to Schedule II, resulting in less stringent regulations.

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5. A pharmacy technician is processing a prescription for potassium citrate 10 mEq tablets that instruct "Take 2 tab bid." What is the total daily dosage for this prescription?

A. 10 mEq

B. 20 mEq

C. 30 mEq

D. 40 mEq

To determine the total daily dosage for the prescription of potassium citrate 10 mEq tablets, you need to analyze the directions given, which state "Take 2 tab bid." The term "bid" refers to the Latin phrase "bis in die," meaning "twice a day." Therefore, if the patient is instructed to take 2 tablets twice a day, this means they will take a total of 4 tablets in one day (2 tablets in the morning and 2 tablets in the evening). Next, since each tablet contains 10 mEq of potassium citrate, you can calculate the total daily dosage by multiplying the number of tablets taken in a day by the amount of potassium in each tablet. So, for this prescription: - 4 tablets total per day × 10 mEq per tablet = 40 mEq This calculation confirms that the total daily dosage for this prescription is 40 mEq.

6. Which abbreviation should a pharmacy technician recognize as error-prone?

A. qhs

B. ac

C. po

D. subcut

The abbreviation "qhs" stands for "quaque hora somni," which means "every bedtime." In a clinical setting, the potential for misunderstanding this abbreviation is significant, as the "q" could be easily confused with "Q" (which means "every") or "q8h" (every eight hours), leading to potentially dangerous medication errors. The use of "qhs" is discouraged because it may lead to misinterpretation, particularly in relation to timing and frequency of dosing. Recognizing the context in which these abbreviations are used is crucial for maintaining patient safety. The Joint Commission and the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) have both identified this abbreviation as error-prone, recommending that it be written out in full to avoid confusion. In contrast, the other abbreviations—such as "ac" (before meals), "po" (by mouth), and "subcut" (subcutaneously)—while they might need careful attention, are not listed as high-risk for error in the same way that "qhs" is. Thus, "qhs" stands out as particularly notable in terms of potential errors in a pharmacy setting.

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7. What is the role of the generic name as it pertains to patient medication therapy?

A. To provide a more recognizable name for patients

B. To assure equal efficacy when compared to brand names

C. To identify the medication's chemical structure

D. To simplify the prescription writing process

The role of the generic name in patient medication therapy is primarily to assure equal efficacy when compared to brand names. Generic medications are required by regulatory agencies, such as the FDA, to have the same active ingredient, strength, dosage form, and route of administration as their brand-name counterparts. This ensures that both the generic and brand-name medications provide the same therapeutic effect, making generic alternatives a safe and effective option for patients. While the generic name does contribute to a more recognizable name for patients and aids in the simplification of the prescription writing process, its most critical function is confirming that the generic version is therapeutically equivalent to the brand-name drug. The generic name refers to the pharmacological substance itself, rather than its specific marketing or brand identity. This standardization is crucial in promoting the interchangeability of medications and supporting medication adherence by allowing patients access to lower-cost alternatives without compromising efficacy.

8. What term is used to describe a medication that is utilized daily for chronic conditions?

A. Rescue medication

B. Preventive medication

C. Maintenance medication

D. Adjuvant medication

The term "maintenance medication" refers to medications prescribed for daily use to manage chronic conditions over the long term. These medications are intended to stabilize a patient's condition, control symptoms, and prevent flare-ups or complications associated with the chronic illness. For instance, individuals with diabetes may use maintenance medications like insulin or oral hypoglycemics, while those with hypertension often take antihypertensive agents regularly. In contrast, rescue medications are typically used on an as-needed basis to relieve acute symptoms rather than for long-term management. Preventive medications are generally instituted to prevent disease or complications from occurring, often seen in conditions like asthma or migraines where the goal is to lower the incidence of attacks. Adjuvant medications might be added to enhance the effect of primary treatments but are not classified as daily medications for chronic conditions on their own. Understanding this distinction emphasizes the importance of adherence to maintenance medications, as they play a critical role in ensuring optimal health outcomes for individuals with chronic diseases.

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9. What is necessary to identify a medication in the event of a recall?

A. Expiration date

B. Control number

C. Lot number

D. Manufacturer ID

Identifying a medication during a recall largely relies on the lot number, which is a unique identifier assigned to a specific batch of product. The lot number allows manufacturers and regulators to trace back the production details, including the specific ingredients and processes used. This is essential for determining which products are affected by a recall and ensuring that patients are notified properly. The expiration date is important for determining the viability of a medication but does not provide information about specific production batches. Control numbers generally refer to inventory systems used by pharmacies and do not convey the same level of specificity about production as a lot number. The manufacturer ID may identify the company that produced the medication, but it does not uniquely identify the specific batch that might be impacted by a recall. Therefore, the lot number is the critical element in tracing and identifying medications for safe management during recalls.

10. Which process is used for reducing the size of particles and incorporating solids into lotions or creams?

A. Trituration

B. Levigation

C. Filtration

D. Evaporation

Levigation is the process used for reducing the size of solid particles and incorporating them into creams or lotions. This method involves the use of a small amount of liquid (which is typically a suitable solvent) to create a paste from the solid material, allowing for the smooth dispersion of the solid into the final formulation. By doing this, the particles are effectively reduced in size and evenly distributed, enhancing the texture and stability of the product. In the context of pharmacy and compounding, achieving a uniform particle size is essential for the effectiveness and aesthetic quality of topical preparations. Proper levigation helps to ensure that the active ingredients are properly incorporated, which can influence the therapeutic efficacy and the sensory properties of the lotion or cream.

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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://pharmacytech.examzify.com

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

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