Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

BY EXAMZIFY

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 medical prescriptions, what does "gtts" refer to?

A. Tablets

B. Injections

C. Drops

D. Capsules

2. In pharmacy terminology, what does 'sublingual' imply?

A. Applied on the skin

B. Injected intravenously

C. Placed beneath the tongue

D. Swallowed whole

3. What is an appropriate response when a patient asks about child-resistant caps on their medications?

A. The Poison Prevention Act of 1970 requires child-resistant caps on prescription medications.

B. Your insurance company requires child-resistant caps because they reduce medication waste.

C. The medication you are taking requires a cap to prevent exposure to moisture.

D. The Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act requires child-resistant caps on prescription medications.

4. An agent that promotes the discharge of mucus from the respiratory tract is known as what?

A. Antitussive

B. Expectorant

C. Decongestant

D. Bronchodilator

5. When preparing a sterile product, what is the primary reason for using a laminar flow hood?

A. To maintain temperature

B. To provide a sterile work environment

C. To increase productivity

D. To make compounding easier

6. A pharmacy technician receives a faxed prescription for diltiazem (Cardizem). This medication is prescribed for patients who have which of the following conditions?

A. Chronic Obstructive pulmonary disease

B. Alzheimer's disease

C. Depression

D. Hypertension

7. In medical terminology, where can roots typically be found?

A. Beginning

B. Middle

C. End

D. Throughout

8. What does "it" stand for in drug administration?

A. Indeterminable

B. Intrathecal

C. Immediate

D. Both ears

9. What is a vial used for in pharmacy?

A. Holding liquid beverage

B. Storing non-sterile powders

C. Containing medication in a sterile environment

D. Measuring dosages

10. Which abbreviation is recognized as error-prone according to the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP)?

A. qod

B. daw

C. qid

D. mcg

Answers

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

Explanations

1. In medical prescriptions, what does "gtts" refer to?

A. Tablets

B. Injections

C. Drops

D. Capsules

In medical prescriptions, "gtts" is an abbreviation for "guttae," which is the Latin term for "drops." This notation typically refers to liquid medications that are dispensed in small volumes, such as eye drops or ear drops. Using "gtts" instructs the pharmacist or the healthcare provider to prepare the medication in a way that allows for its administration in drop form. The other options do not relate to the term "gtts" since they refer to different forms of medication. Tablets, injections, and capsules are specific solid or liquid dosage forms that do not coincide with the indication of administering a medication in drops. Understanding these abbreviations is crucial for accurately interpreting prescriptions and ensuring proper patient care.

2. In pharmacy terminology, what does 'sublingual' imply?

A. Applied on the skin

B. Injected intravenously

C. Placed beneath the tongue

D. Swallowed whole

The term 'sublingual' refers specifically to the route of administration for medications that are placed underneath the tongue. This method allows for rapid absorption directly into the bloodstream through the mucous membranes in the mouth, bypassing the digestive system and avoiding first-pass metabolism in the liver. This is particularly useful for medications that need to act quickly or for patients who may have difficulty swallowing pills. The other options refer to different routes of administration. For example, applying a substance on the skin is termed 'topical,' while injecting medication directly into a vein is described as 'intravenous.' Swallowing a medication whole indicates oral administration, which involves ingestion through the digestive tract. Each of these methods has distinct implications for how a medication behaves in the body and how quickly it takes effect. Thus, 'sublingual' specifically denotes the unique placement of medication under the tongue, which is why it is the correct choice in this context.

3. What is an appropriate response when a patient asks about child-resistant caps on their medications?

A. The Poison Prevention Act of 1970 requires child-resistant caps on prescription medications.

B. Your insurance company requires child-resistant caps because they reduce medication waste.

C. The medication you are taking requires a cap to prevent exposure to moisture.

D. The Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act requires child-resistant caps on prescription medications.

The correct choice explains that the Poison Prevention Act of 1970 mandates child-resistant caps on prescription medications to enhance safety and prevent accidental poisoning in children. This act aims to protect children by requiring that many medications be packaged in a way that makes them difficult to open for small hands, thereby reducing the risk of accidental ingestion. This choice highlights the importance of regulatory measures in pharmacy practice designed explicitly to safeguard public health, particularly vulnerable populations like children. The understanding of such regulations is crucial for pharmacy technicians, as they play a significant role in ensuring compliance and educating patients about safety measures associated with medications. The other choices do not accurately relate to the regulations governing child-resistant packaging. For instance, the mention of insurance practices or moisture prevention does not reflect the core purpose of child-resistant caps, which is strictly tied to preventing accidental poisonings.

4. An agent that promotes the discharge of mucus from the respiratory tract is known as what?

A. Antitussive

B. Expectorant

C. Decongestant

D. Bronchodilator

The correct term for an agent that promotes the discharge of mucus from the respiratory tract is an expectorant. Expectorants work by increasing the hydration and volume of respiratory secretions, which helps to loosen mucus and make it easier to cough up. This action can help clear the airways and alleviate congestion, making it particularly useful in conditions like bronchitis or pneumonia where mucus accumulates. Antitussives, on the other hand, are designed to suppress coughing rather than promote the expulsion of mucus. Decongestants focus on reducing swelling in the nasal passages to relieve nasal congestion but do not specifically assist in expelling mucus from the respiratory system. Bronchodilators are medications that relax muscle tissues in the airways, making it easier to breathe, but they also do not directly promote mucus clearance. Thus, expectorants specifically target mucus release while the other options address different aspects of respiratory issues. This is why the choice of expectorant is the most accurate in this context.

5. When preparing a sterile product, what is the primary reason for using a laminar flow hood?

A. To maintain temperature

B. To provide a sterile work environment

C. To increase productivity

D. To make compounding easier

Using a laminar flow hood is primarily aimed at providing a sterile work environment. This is crucial when preparing sterile products, such as injectable medications or compounds, because contamination can lead to serious patient safety issues. The laminar flow hood uses HEPA filters to ensure that the air flowing over the work surface is sterile, effectively reducing the risk of airborne contaminants affecting the preparation of sterile products. The design allows for unidirectional airflow, which further enhances sterility by continuously moving air away from the sterile area. By maintaining this sterile environment, the laminar flow hood helps prevent infections and other complications associated with contaminated pharmaceuticals, ensuring the highest level of patient safety and product integrity. This is foundational in pharmaceutical practices where sterility is paramount.

6. A pharmacy technician receives a faxed prescription for diltiazem (Cardizem). This medication is prescribed for patients who have which of the following conditions?

A. Chronic Obstructive pulmonary disease

B. Alzheimer's disease

C. Depression

D. Hypertension

Diltiazem, commonly known as Cardizem, is primarily prescribed for hypertension, among other conditions. It belongs to a class of medications called calcium channel blockers. These drugs work by relaxing the blood vessels, which reduces the force of the heart's contractions and allows for easier blood flow. Consequently, this leads to a decrease in blood pressure. In addition to treating hypertension, diltiazem is also effective in managing certain types of angina (chest pain) and can be used to control heart rate in conditions like atrial fibrillation. However, it is not indicated for the treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Alzheimer's disease, or depression. Each of those conditions is managed with different classes of medications and therapies that specifically target the underlying mechanisms of those diseases, highlighting the importance of selecting the appropriate medication based on the condition being treated.

7. In medical terminology, where can roots typically be found?

A. Beginning

B. Middle

C. End

D. Throughout

In medical terminology, roots are typically found in the middle of the word. Roots serve as the foundational part of a medical term, conveying the primary meaning related to the body system, organ, or condition. For example, in the word "gastroenteritis," the roots "gastr" and "enter" signify the stomach and intestine, respectively, indicating that the condition pertains to both of those areas. While roots can appear in various structures of a word, including at the beginning or end when combined with prefixes or suffixes, the most common placement is indeed in the middle. This positioning is essential for understanding how different prefixes and suffixes modify the meaning of the root, making it easier to decipher complex medical terms.

8. What does "it" stand for in drug administration?

A. Indeterminable

B. Intrathecal

C. Immediate

D. Both ears

In the context of drug administration, "it" stands for "intrathecal," which refers to the delivery of medication directly into the spinal canal or the cerebrospinal fluid. This route is used for certain treatments when medications need to bypass the blood-brain barrier or when higher concentrations are required in the central nervous system compared to systemic administration. Intrathecal administration is particularly significant for conditions like severe pain management, chemotherapy for central nervous system cancers, and certain neurological disorders. The other options do not represent valid interpretations of "it" in this context. For instance, "indeterminable" does not relate to any known administration route; "immediate" describes a concept of time rather than a method of administration; and "both ears" specifies a route for ear drops but does not fit the abbreviation "it" commonly used in pharmacology or drug administration contexts.

9. What is a vial used for in pharmacy?

A. Holding liquid beverage

B. Storing non-sterile powders

C. Containing medication in a sterile environment

D. Measuring dosages

A vial is specifically designed to contain medication in a sterile environment, making it an essential tool in the pharmacy setting, particularly for injectable drugs and other sterile products. Vials are generally made of glass or plastic and are equipped with a rubber stopper that allows for easy access to the medication while maintaining sterility. This is crucial in preventing contamination and ensuring that medications remain effective and safe for patient use. The sterile environment provided by vials is particularly important for medications that are sensitive to moisture or air, as well as those that are intended for parenteral (injectable) administration. By keeping the medication sterile, the vial helps to preserve the integrity of the drug and minimize the risk of infection when it is administered to patients. Additionally, vials can vary in size and may contain either liquids or powders that require reconstitution before use. Other options, while they may involve containment in some way, do not accurately reflect the primary purpose and functionality of a vial in pharmacy practice.

10. Which abbreviation is recognized as error-prone according to the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP)?

A. qod

B. daw

C. qid

D. mcg

The abbreviation "qod," which stands for "every other day," is recognized as error-prone by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP). This designation comes from the potential for confusion it can create, particularly when misread as "qid" (four times a day) or even as "every day." This misunderstanding can lead to significant medication errors, affecting patient safety. The concern around "qod" emphasizes the importance of writing clear and unambiguous medication orders. Healthcare providers are encouraged to avoid abbreviations that can be misinterpreted and instead use full terminology that clearly conveys the timing of medication administration. This practice ensures that both pharmacists and other healthcare professionals can accurately interpret the instructions without ambiguity. In contrast, the other abbreviations—"daw" (dispense as written), "qid" (four times a day), and "mcg" (microgram)—are not designated as error-prone by ISMP, as they are generally understood and less likely to be misinterpreted in typical usage. Understanding why certain abbreviations are considered problematic aids in fostering more precise communication in medication management and reinforces the necessity for caution in their application.

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!