

CERTIFIED SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIST (CST) PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



Prepare with structure. Pass with confidence



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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

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- 1. The mumps may be diagnosed by finding inflammation in which of the following glands?**
 - A. Sublingual
 - B. Thyroid
 - C. Parotid
 - D. Submandibular
- 2. Which of the following drapes is classified as non-fenestrated?**
 - A. U drape
 - B. Transverse
 - C. Craniotomy
 - D. Laparotomy
- 3. What type of hernia involves a direct and indirect inguinal hernia?**
 - A. Reducible
 - B. Umbilical
 - C. Epigastric
 - D. Pantaloon
- 4. What is the minimum Fahrenheit temperature required for sterilization in a prevacuum steam sterilizer?**
 - A. 249-255
 - B. 263-269
 - C. 270-276
 - D. 256-262
- 5. What is another name for the electrosurgical unit's patient return electrode?**
 - A. Cautery
 - B. Generator
 - C. Foot pedal
 - D. Grounding pad

- 6. Which portion of the ear is affected by Meniere's syndrome?**
- A. Inner
 - B. Middle
 - C. Eustachian tube
 - D. Auditory ossicles
- 7. What surgical tool is specifically designed for cutting fascia?**
- A. Scalpel
 - B. Curved Mayo scissors
 - C. Metzenbaum scissors
 - D. Left-handed scissors
- 8. Which instrument is typically used for making incisions in the skin during surgery?**
- A. Scalpel
 - B. Clamp
 - C. Scissors
 - D. Scissors
- 9. What type of surgical instrument is specifically designed for holding tissue during a procedure?**
- A. Scissors
 - B. Clamps
 - C. Scalpel
 - D. Needle holder
- 10. Which layer of the eye is responsible for absorbing light rays and nourishing the retina?**
- A. Iris
 - B. Choroid
 - C. Macula
 - D. Sclera

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. The mumps may be diagnosed by finding inflammation in which of the following glands?

- A. Sublingual
- B. Thyroid
- C. Parotid**
- D. Submandibular

The correct answer is the parotid gland, which is the largest salivary gland located near the ear. Mumps is a viral infection caused by the mumps virus, which is known to primarily affect the parotid glands, leading to their inflammation and swelling. This characteristic swelling is often one of the most recognizable symptoms of mumps, causing discomfort and a noticeable increase in size of the glands. Understanding the specific glands involved in infections like mumps is crucial for diagnosis and management. The sublingual and submandibular glands, while also salivary glands, are not typically associated with mumps. The thyroid gland is an endocrine gland responsible for hormone production and does not play a role in mumps infections. Recognizing the parotid gland's involvement helps in understanding the clinical presentation of mumps and is essential for medical professionals when evaluating patients with symptoms indicative of this illness.

2. Which of the following drapes is classified as non-fenestrated?

- A. U drape**
- B. Transverse
- C. Craniotomy
- D. Laparotomy

The U drape is characterized as a non-fenestrated drape because it does not have any openings or fenestrations designed for access to the surgical site. This type of drape is used in procedures where the entire area around the site needs to be covered while still allowing access to the surgical team. In contrast, fenestrated drapes like the craniotomy drape feature openings that allow for direct access to specific anatomical areas, making them suitable for targeted surgical interventions. Similarly, the laparotomy drape also has fenestrations to facilitate access to the abdominal cavity. The transverse drape, depending on its specific design, may also incorporate fenestrations. Therefore, the U drape stands out as the only option among the choices that does not have any such openings, making it non-fenestrated.

3. What type of hernia involves a direct and indirect inguinal hernia?

- A. Reducible
- B. Umbilical
- C. Epigastric
- D. Pantaloon**

The type of hernia that involves both a direct and an indirect inguinal hernia is known as a pantaloon hernia. This condition occurs when there are two protrusions of tissue through the inguinal canal—one that is direct (through the posterior wall of the inguinal canal) and one that is indirect (through the internal ring). The term "pantaloon" is derived from the appearance of the two hernial sacs resembling a pair of trousers. In contrast, reducible hernias can be pushed back into the abdomen, while umbilical hernias occur at the belly button and are unrelated to the inguinal canal. Epigastric hernias occur in the upper abdomen and don't involve the structures associated with the inguinal canal. Therefore, the pantaloon hernia is unique in that it specifically encompasses both types of inguinal hernias.

4. What is the minimum Fahrenheit temperature required for sterilization in a prevacuum steam sterilizer?

- A. 249-255
- B. 263-269
- C. 270-276**
- D. 256-262

The correct answer indicates that the minimum Fahrenheit temperature required for sterilization in a prevacuum steam sterilizer is between 270-276 degrees. This temperature range is critical because it ensures that all microorganisms, including bacterial spores, are effectively killed during the sterilization process. Prevacuum steam sterilizers operate by removing air from the chamber before introducing steam. This action enhances the penetration of steam and decreases the time required for sterilization. At temperatures of 270 degrees Fahrenheit and above, the steam's energy is sufficient to achieve the necessary lethality to ensure that all standard forms of microbial life are eradicated, which is crucial for maintaining the sterility of surgical instruments and other medical equipment. Other temperature ranges, while still relevant to sterilization processes, do not guarantee the same level of efficacy. Therefore, understanding the minimum heat threshold is essential for ensuring that sterilization protocols meet safety and effectiveness standards in surgical and medical settings.

5. What is another name for the electrosurgical unit's patient return electrode?

- A. Cautery
- B. Generator
- C. Foot pedal
- D. Grounding pad**

The patient return electrode in an electrosurgical unit is known as the grounding pad. This component is pivotal in the electrosurgical process as it serves to complete the electrical circuit during surgical procedures that utilize electrical current to cut or coagulate tissue. The grounding pad is placed on the patient's skin away from the surgical site, allowing the electrical current to return safely back to the electrosurgical generator. This is crucial for patient safety; if the grounding pad isn't applied properly or is not functioning, it could result in burns or other injuries due to electrical current concentration in certain areas. The grounding pad, therefore, ensures that the electrosurgical unit operates effectively and safely by providing a pathway for the current to return to the generator without causing harm to the patient. The other options, such as cautery, generator, and foot pedal, refer to different components or functions within the electrosurgical system but do not describe the patient return electrode specifically. Cautery generally pertains to the process of burning tissue to achieve hemostasis, the generator is the machine that produces the electrical energy, and the foot pedal is used to activate the generator, not to return the current from the patient.

6. Which portion of the ear is affected by Meniere's syndrome?

- A. Inner
- B. Middle
- C. Eustachian tube
- D. Auditory ossicles

Meniere's syndrome specifically affects the inner ear. This condition is characterized by episodes of vertigo, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), a feeling of fullness or pressure in the ear, and hearing loss. The inner ear houses the cochlea and the vestibular system, which are crucial for both hearing and balance. The dysfunction in the fluid balance of the inner ear contributes to the symptoms experienced by those with Meniere's syndrome. The middle ear and its components, such as the Eustachian tube and auditory ossicles, are not directly involved in Meniere's syndrome. The middle ear helps conduct sound waves and equalizes pressure but does not influence the fluid dynamics that are central to this syndrome. Consequently, the focus in Meniere's syndrome is entirely on the inner ear structures and their function.

7. What surgical tool is specifically designed for cutting fascia?

- A. Scalpel
- B. Curved Mayo scissors
- C. Metzenbaum scissors
- D. Left-handed scissors

The choice of curved Mayo scissors as the correct answer is appropriate because these scissors are specifically designed for cutting tougher tissues, including fascia. The curvature allows for optimal maneuvering and control when cutting through dense fibrous connective tissues, making them ideal for surgical procedures involving the fascia. Mayo scissors come with a robust design that provides the necessary strength to cut through thick tissues that require a more substantial cutting force, such as fascia. The curved blades can also help in reaching areas that might be difficult to access with straight scissors, enhancing their utility in the surgical field. Other tools like the scalpel primarily serve the function of incising skin and softer tissues rather than the tougher fascia. Metzenbaum scissors, although versatile, are more suited for delicate tissue dissection and may not be as effective in cutting through the denser fascia. Left-handed scissors cater to a specific user's needs and do not have a unique design aimed at cutting fascia specifically. Thus, curved Mayo scissors stand out as the optimal choice for this particular function.

8. Which instrument is typically used for making incisions in the skin during surgery?

- A. Scalpel
- B. Clamp
- C. Scissors
- D. Scissors

The scalpel is the instrument specifically designed for making incisions in the skin during surgical procedures. Its sharp blade allows for precise cuts, which are essential for opening the skin and accessing underlying tissues with minimal trauma. The scalpel comes in various sizes and blade types to accommodate different surgical techniques and anatomical considerations, making it a versatile tool for surgeons. While clamps are used to occlude blood vessels or tissues, and scissors are utilized for cutting sutures or tissues, they do not provide the fine control and sharpness required for initial skin incisions. The scalpel's design and intended purpose make it the go-to instrument for this critical step in surgical procedures.

9. What type of surgical instrument is specifically designed for holding tissue during a procedure?

- A. Scissors
- B. Clamps**
- C. Scalpel
- D. Needle holder

The correct choice identifies clamps as instruments specifically designed to hold tissue during surgical procedures. Clamps can be used to grasp and control bleeding by occluding blood vessels or to hold tissue out of the way to provide better visibility and access to the surgical site. They come in various shapes and sizes, allowing surgical teams to manage different types of tissue and situations effectively. Scissors are primarily used for cutting tissues and sutures, while scalpels are designed for making incisions. A needle holder is utilized for grasping and controlling needles when suturing but is not meant for holding larger tissue masses like clamps. Understanding the specific functions of these instruments is crucial for ensuring efficiency and safety in the surgical environment.

10. Which layer of the eye is responsible for absorbing light rays and nourishing the retina?

- A. Iris
- B. Choroid**
- C. Macula
- D. Sclera

The choroid is the layer of the eye that plays a crucial role in absorbing light rays and providing nourishment to the retina. It is located between the retina and the sclera and is rich in blood vessels. The primary function of the choroid is to supply nutrients and oxygen to the outer layers of the retina and to absorb excess light, thus preventing it from scattering within the eye. This ability to minimize light scatter is vital for clear vision. The other layers of the eye, while important, do not have the same primary functions. The iris regulates the amount of light that enters the eye by adjusting the size of the pupil, but it does not nourish the retina. The macula is a small central area of the retina responsible for sharp central vision, especially for activities like reading and driving, but it does not play a role in light absorption or nourishment. The sclera, known as the white part of the eye, serves mainly as protective outer covering, offering structural support but lacking the vascular properties necessary for nourishing the retina. Thus, the choroid is specifically tailored to absorb light and support the retinal health.

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://cst.examzify.com>

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

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