

# Certified Veterinary Assistant (CVA) Level I Practice Test (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

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- 1. What commonly overlooked area should be included in cleaning procedures?**
  - A. The waiting room**
  - B. The reception desk**
  - C. The parking lot**
  - D. The consultation room**
- 2. What can be a serious consequence of untreated dental disease in pets?**
  - A. Improved overall health**
  - B. Behavioral changes**
  - C. Systemic infections**
  - D. Weight loss**
- 3. How can dehydration affect a pet's health?**
  - A. It can improve digestion**
  - B. It can lead to kidney damage, decreased organ function, and in severe cases, death**
  - C. It has no significant effect on health**
  - D. It can enhance energy levels**
- 4. What is the proper way to dispose of biohazard waste in a veterinary clinic?**
  - A. Throwing it in regular trash**
  - B. Following local regulations for hazardous waste**
  - C. Burning it in a safe area**
  - D. Flushing it down the toilet**
- 5. What should you never do while a centrifuge is running?**
  - A. Open it**
  - B. Cover it**
  - C. Stop it**
  - D. Check the samples**

- 6. What symptoms might indicate distemper in a dog?**
- A. Discharge from eyes and nose, vomiting, and fever**
  - B. Itching and skin inflammation**
  - C. Weight loss and lethargy**
  - D. Severe abdominal pain and diarrhea**
- 7. What should you do before opening an autoclave unit's door?**
- A. Turn it off**
  - B. Let it vent**
  - C. Allow it to cool**
  - D. Check the pressure gauge**
- 8. What should be done immediately if a dog is suspected of having ingested a toxic substance?**
- A. Take the dog for a walk**
  - B. Monitor the pet at home**
  - C. Contact a veterinarian or an emergency animal poison control hotline**
  - D. Wait for the symptoms to appear**
- 9. What is the common name for the condition known as "canine distemper"?**
- A. Parvovirus infection**
  - B. Feline distemper**
  - C. Canine distemper virus infection**
  - D. Kennel cough**
- 10. Which of the following describes the proper handling of sharps containers?**
- A. They should be transported without closure to allow monitoring.**
  - B. They should be closed to prevent spillage.**
  - C. They should be left open for easy access.**
  - D. They must only be used when handling sharp objects solely.**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What commonly overlooked area should be included in cleaning procedures?**

- A. The waiting room**
- B. The reception desk**
- C. The parking lot**
- D. The consultation room**

The parking lot is often an overlooked area in cleaning procedures for veterinary facilities. While many focus on high-traffic and visible indoor areas such as the waiting room, reception desk, and consultation rooms, the exterior of the facility, including the parking lot, plays a crucial role in maintaining a clean and safe environment. Cleaning the parking lot can prevent the accumulation of debris, waste, and spills that could pose health risks and create poor impressions for clients and visitors. A clean parking lot reflects the overall standards of the veterinary practice, affecting client perception and comfort even before they enter the building. It is essential that cleaning protocols encompass every area of the facility, including outdoor spaces, to ensure the health and safety of pets, clients, and staff alike. This comprehensive approach demonstrates professionalism and a commitment to hygiene in all areas of the veterinary facility.

**2. What can be a serious consequence of untreated dental disease in pets?**

- A. Improved overall health**
- B. Behavioral changes**
- C. Systemic infections**
- D. Weight loss**

Untreated dental disease in pets can lead to serious health consequences, particularly systemic infections. The bacteria that accumulate in the mouth due to periodontal disease can enter the bloodstream and affect various organs, such as the heart, liver, and kidneys. This can result in conditions like endocarditis, which is an infection of the heart's inner lining, or can exacerbate existing health problems. While behavioral changes and weight loss can also be consequences of untreated dental issues, they are typically secondary effects. Pets may experience discomfort or pain from dental disease, leading to changes in their behavior, such as withdrawal or aggression, and they may avoid eating due to pain, resulting in weight loss. However, these are not as immediate or potentially life-threatening as systemic infections, which directly pose significant risks to overall health and can lead to severe complications. Improved overall health, of course, is not a possible consequence of untreated dental disease, as the condition generally leads to a decline in health instead. Thus, systemic infections stand out as the most serious consequence of neglecting dental care in pets.

### 3. How can dehydration affect a pet's health?

- A. It can improve digestion
- B. It can lead to kidney damage, decreased organ function, and in severe cases, death**
- C. It has no significant effect on health
- D. It can enhance energy levels

Dehydration can have serious and detrimental effects on a pet's health, and the correct answer highlights the gravity of this condition. When an animal becomes dehydrated, their body is unable to maintain the necessary balance of fluids required for optimal physiological function. This can lead to kidney damage, as the kidneys are highly dependent on adequate hydration to filter waste and maintain fluid balance. Additionally, dehydration can impair the function of electrolytes, which are crucial for overall cellular and organ function. In severe cases of dehydration, the lack of fluids can result in hypovolemic shock, where the heart is unable to pump enough blood to the body due to a decrease in blood volume. This can then lead to organ failure and, if not addressed, the condition can progress to a point where it is life-threatening, ultimately leading to death if appropriate intervention is not rendered in time. Therefore, recognizing the signs of dehydration and ensuring adequate hydration is critical for the health and well-being of pets.

### 4. What is the proper way to dispose of biohazard waste in a veterinary clinic?

- A. Throwing it in regular trash
- B. Following local regulations for hazardous waste**
- C. Burning it in a safe area
- D. Flushing it down the toilet

The proper way to dispose of biohazard waste in a veterinary clinic is to follow local regulations for hazardous waste. These regulations are established to ensure that potential risks to human health and the environment are minimized. Biohazard waste can include materials such as contaminated surgical instruments, used gloves, and any other items that may pose a risk due to blood, bodily fluids, or pathogens. Local regulations dictate the protocols for handling, storing, and disposing of such waste, often requiring it to be placed in specific containers that are clearly labeled as biohazard and designated for this purpose. This method ensures that the waste is handled safely and effectively, typically leading to incineration or treatment at a specialized facility designed to manage hazardous materials. Other disposal methods, such as throwing it in regular trash, burning it in a non-regulated manner, or flushing it down the toilet, do not comply with health and safety standards and can lead to significant legal and health repercussions. Adhering to the appropriate regulations is essential for maintaining public safety and environmental integrity.

**5. What should you never do while a centrifuge is running?**

- A. Open it**
- B. Cover it**
- C. Stop it**
- D. Check the samples**

When using a centrifuge, it is imperative that safety protocols are followed closely to prevent accidents and maintain the integrity of the samples being processed. One critical rule is that you should never open the centrifuge while it is running. This is because the high-speed rotation creates a significant risk if the lid is opened. The centrifuge can throw its contents violently, potentially causing them to spill or, even worse, injure someone. Centrifuges are designed to contain the samples within a sealed lid while they operate at high speeds. Opening the lid disrupts this contained environment and can lead to dangerous situations where a lab technician or assistant could be harmed by flying debris, liquid samples, or sharp instruments. Moreover, stopping a centrifuge while it is in operation can be dangerous as well, but opening it while running poses immediate and direct threats not just to the operator but also to the entire laboratory environment. Covering the centrifuge does not prevent accidents either; it's the act of opening it that poses the greatest risk. Checking the samples should only be done after the centrifuge has completely stopped and the lid is safely opened.

**6. What symptoms might indicate distemper in a dog?**

- A. Discharge from eyes and nose, vomiting, and fever**
- B. Itching and skin inflammation**
- C. Weight loss and lethargy**
- D. Severe abdominal pain and diarrhea**

The symptoms that indicate distemper in a dog primarily include discharge from the eyes and nose, vomiting, and fever. Canine distemper is a viral disease that affects various body systems and is often accompanied by respiratory signs, neurological symptoms, and gastrointestinal issues. The presence of discharge from the eyes and nose suggests an infection or illness, which is a common symptom of distemper due to its effect on the respiratory system. Vomiting is another symptom that occurs due to the virus affecting the gastrointestinal tract. Fever often accompanies infections, marking the body's response to the viral presence. In contrast, the other options present symptoms that are associated with other conditions. Itching and skin inflammation more commonly indicate allergies or parasitic infections. Weight loss and lethargy can result from various chronic diseases or conditions but are not specific to distemper. Severe abdominal pain and diarrhea may indicate gastrointestinal issues or infections but do not specifically point towards distemper as the primary concern. Understanding these specifics helps in recognizing the signs of distemper more effectively.

**7. What should you do before opening an autoclave unit's door?**

- A. Turn it off**
- B. Let it vent**
- C. Allow it to cool**
- D. Check the pressure gauge**

Before opening an autoclave unit's door, it is essential to let it vent. Venting allows the steam or heat to release gradually, ensuring that the internal pressure drops to a safe level. This process helps to prevent burns or other injuries that might occur if the autoclave is opened while still under pressure. When an autoclave operates, it utilizes heat and pressure to sterilize instruments or materials. After the sterilization cycle is complete, the unit must not be opened immediately. It is crucial to allow the unit to vent properly, which is done by allowing steam to escape from the chamber. This not only ensures safety but also contributes to the effectiveness of the sterilization cycle, as the process needs to be complete and stable before the door is opened. Though checking the pressure gauge, allowing the autoclave to cool, and turning it off are important practices in handling the autoclave, venting is the necessary step immediately before opening the door. It directly addresses the safety concerns associated with handling pressurized steam equipment.

**8. What should be done immediately if a dog is suspected of having ingested a toxic substance?**

- A. Take the dog for a walk**
- B. Monitor the pet at home**
- C. Contact a veterinarian or an emergency animal poison control hotline**
- D. Wait for the symptoms to appear**

In the case of suspected ingestion of a toxic substance by a dog, contacting a veterinarian or an emergency animal poison control hotline is the most appropriate immediate action. This step is crucial because trained professionals can provide specific guidance based on the type of toxin, the amount ingested, and the dog's weight and health status. Addressing the situation promptly allows for a quicker response, which can be vital in preventing further harm. The experts may suggest induced vomiting, administering activated charcoal, or bringing the dog in for urgent evaluation and treatment depending on that assessment. Given that some toxins can cause rapid and severe reactions, waiting for symptoms to appear might result in unnecessary suffering or even loss. Meanwhile, the other approaches—taking the dog for a walk, monitoring the pet at home, or waiting to see if symptoms develop—delay critical intervention and can lead to detrimental outcomes. Seeking veterinary assistance ensures that the dog receives the necessary care as soon as possible.

**9. What is the common name for the condition known as "canine distemper"?**

- A. Parvovirus infection**
- B. Feline distemper**
- C. Canine distemper virus infection**
- D. Kennel cough**

The condition commonly referred to as "canine distemper" is appropriately identified as "canine distemper virus infection." This viral disease affects a wide range of animals but is primarily seen in dogs. The virus is highly contagious and can cause serious respiratory, gastrointestinal, and neurological symptoms. The name emphasizes both the species affected—canine—and the specific virus causing the illness. In scientific and veterinary contexts, using the full term "canine distemper virus infection" helps clarify that it is caused by a specific virus (the canine distemper virus), which is critical for understanding the disease's nature, its transmission, and potential treatments. This detailed nomenclature is essential for veterinary professionals when discussing disease prevention, vaccination protocols, and nutritional needs for affected animals. Other choices from the question refer either to different diseases (like parvovirus infection and kennel cough) or another species (feline distemper), which do not accurately represent canine distemper. Understanding that "canine distemper" specifically corresponds to the infection caused by the canine distemper virus aids in recognizing the unique challenges of treating this condition and ensuring proper care for dogs.

**10. Which of the following describes the proper handling of sharps containers?**

- A. They should be transported without closure to allow monitoring.**
- B. They should be closed to prevent spillage.**
- C. They should be left open for easy access.**
- D. They must only be used when handling sharp objects solely.**

The statement that sharps containers should be closed to prevent spillage is accurate and reflects the essential safety protocols in handling and disposing of sharp objects. A closed sharps container is designed to safely contain items such as needles, blades, or any other sharp instruments that could pose a risk of injury or infection. Keeping the container closed minimizes the risk of accidental needle sticks and ensures that the potentially hazardous contents do not spill out, thereby protecting both veterinary staff and the surrounding environment. Proper handling of sharps containers is critical in maintaining a safe working environment in veterinary practices. It is important that these containers are puncture-resistant, leak-proof, and sealed when full or being transported, to prevent any exposure to the sharp items contained inside. This principle is a fundamental part of infection control practices in the veterinary field.