

# CRCST Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

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- 1. What is the term for the process of sterilizing an item that is already packaged?**
  - A. Primary sterilization**
  - B. Initial sterilization**
  - C. Terminal sterilization**
  - D. Secondary sterilization**
- 2. In which inventory system are the items owned by the vendor but stored at the healthcare facility?**
  - A. Consignment**
  - B. Perpetual**
  - C. Just-In-Time**
  - D. Periodic**
- 3. Which of the following steam sterilization method uses series of vacuum and pressure pulse to remove air?**
  - A. Orthopedics**
  - B. Prevacuum**
  - C. Ultrasonic cleaners**
  - D. OSHA**
- 4. Which of the following is a common chemical used for high-level disinfection?**
  - A. Hydrogen peroxide**
  - B. Chlorine bleach**
  - C. Ethylene oxide**
  - D. Glutaraldehyde**
- 5. What do tissue, body fat, and blood substances collectively refer to as in sterilization context?**
  - A. Biohazardous waste**
  - B. Gross soil**
  - C. Infectious pathogens**
  - D. Contaminants**

- 6. What type of indicator changes color to signify that items have been exposed to heat during sterilization?**
- A. Biological indicator**
  - B. Physical indicator**
  - C. Chemical indicator**
  - D. Mechanical indicator**
- 7. Which agency requires use of personal protective equipment in the decontamination area?**
- A. CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)**
  - B. WHO (World Health Organization)**
  - C. APIC (Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology)**
  - D. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration)**
- 8. What does contamination refer to in the context of sterile processing?**
- A. The presence of sterilization indicators**
  - B. The absence of harmful bacteria**
  - C. The presence of bacteria or harmful substances**
  - D. The degradation of packaging materials**
- 9. At the completion of the test cycle, Bowie Dick test pack showed a uniform color. What does it mean?**
- A. The test was positive**
  - B. The test was inconclusive**
  - C. The test was negative**
  - D. The test needs to be repeated**
- 10. What is the recommended chloride level in tap water?**
- A. 50 PPM**
  - B. 75 PPM**
  - C. 100 PPM**
  - D. 150 PPM**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What is the term for the process of sterilizing an item that is already packaged?**

- A. Primary sterilization**
- B. Initial sterilization**
- C. Terminal sterilization**
- D. Secondary sterilization**

The term you are looking for is terminal sterilization. This process refers specifically to the sterilization of items that are already packaged and is typically performed just before the items are delivered for use. Terminal sterilization is critical in ensuring that the contents of the package remain sterile, thus reducing the risk of contamination and infection when the instruments or devices are later unpacked for clinical use. In terminal sterilization, approaches such as steam sterilization, ethylene oxide, or hydrogen peroxide gas plasma may be employed based on the materials of the packaging and the specific instruments being sterilized. This method is essential for maintaining sterility over the packaging duration and until the point of use. The other options do not accurately represent the process of sterilizing packaged items. For instance, primary sterilization is not a standardized term in sterile processing, while initial sterilization would imply the first attempt at sterilization before the item is packaged. Secondary sterilization suggests a follow-up process, which does not accurately depict the typical sterilization techniques applied to packaged items.

**2. In which inventory system are the items owned by the vendor but stored at the healthcare facility?**

- A. Consignment**
- B. Perpetual**
- C. Just-In-Time**
- D. Periodic**

In a consignment inventory system, the items are owned by the vendor but stored at the healthcare facility. This means that the healthcare facility does not have to pay for the items until they are used, which can help with cash flow and reduce the risk of holding onto excess inventory. This option aligns with the definition of consignment inventory. The other options: - Perpetual inventory system involves continuously updating records for each transaction, such as purchases, sales, and returns of inventory items. - Just-In-Time inventory system aims to have materials delivered just as they are needed in the production process, minimizing the need for storage space and excess inventory. - Periodic inventory system involves taking a physical count of inventory on a regular basis rather than continuously updating records for each transaction.

**3. Which of the following steam sterilization method uses series of vacuum and pressure pulse to remove air?**

- A. Orthopedics**
- B. Prevacuum**
- C. Ultrasonic cleaners**
- D. OSHA**

The other options are incorrect because they are not methods of steam sterilization. Orthopedics is a branch of medicine, Prevacuum is a type of steam sterilization method, Ultrasonic cleaners use sonic vibrations to clean instruments, and OSHA is a government agency that regulates workplace safety.

**4. Which of the following is a common chemical used for high-level disinfection?**

- A. Hydrogen peroxide**
- B. Chlorine bleach**
- C. Ethylene oxide**
- D. Glutaraldehyde**

Glutaraldehyde is widely recognized as a common chemical used for high-level disinfection. This is primarily due to its effectiveness as a cold sterilant and high-level disinfectant for heat-sensitive medical and surgical instruments. It works by interacting with proteins in microorganisms, leading to their inactivation. In the context of sterile processing, glutaraldehyde is particularly valuable for instruments that cannot withstand heat-based sterilization methods, making it a critical component in maintaining the safety and efficacy of healthcare procedures. While other options such as hydrogen peroxide, chlorine bleach, and ethylene oxide are also used in disinfection processes, they serve different purposes or are classified differently. For instance, hydrogen peroxide is effective as a disinfectant but is not typically categorized as a high-level chemical agent like glutaraldehyde. Chlorine bleach is more often associated with general disinfection rather than high-level disinfection in sterile environments. Ethylene oxide is primarily used for gas sterilization rather than as a specific high-level disinfectant. Thus, glutaraldehyde stands out in the context of high-level disinfection due to its targeted action and application in sterile processing.

**5. What do tissue, body fat, and blood substances collectively refer to as in sterilization context?**

- A. Biohazardous waste**
- B. Gross soil**
- C. Infectious pathogens**
- D. Contaminants**

Tissue, body fat, and blood substances are collectively referred to as gross soil in the context of sterilization. Gross soil is the visible organic and inorganic debris that must be removed before an item can be effectively sterilized. This type of soil is usually visible to the naked eye and includes materials like blood, tissue, and body fats. It is important to remove gross soil before sterilizing items to ensure the effectiveness of the sterilization process. The other options: A. Biohazardous waste refers to materials that are potentially infectious or harmful to human health. C. Infectious pathogens are disease-causing microorganisms that can be spread through contaminated items. D. Contaminants generally refer to any substances that make an object impure or unclean.

**6. What type of indicator changes color to signify that items have been exposed to heat during sterilization?**

- A. Biological indicator**
- B. Physical indicator**
- C. Chemical indicator**
- D. Mechanical indicator**

The correct choice is the type of indicator known as a chemical indicator. These indicators are designed to change color or otherwise visibly alter when they are exposed to specific conditions, such as heat, during the sterilization process. This color change provides immediate, visual verification that the items have been subjected to the appropriate temperature and time necessary for effective sterilization, which is crucial for ensuring patient safety. Chemical indicators are often used in conjunction with sterilization processes like steam sterilization or ethylene oxide sterilization. They may take the form of tape, labels, or strips that can be placed in or on the items being sterilized and are formulated to react to the parameters of the sterilization cycle. In contrast, biological indicators rely on living microorganisms to assess the sterility of the process, and physical indicators monitor specific physical conditions during sterilization—such as time, temperature, and pressure—without a color change per se. Mechanical indicators involve the equipment used to perform the sterilization and do not provide direct feedback about the exposure of items within the sterilization chamber. Understanding the role of each indicator type is essential for ensuring proper sterilization and maintaining infection control standards in healthcare settings.

**7. Which agency requires use of personal protective equipment in the decontamination area?**

- A. CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)**
- B. WHO (World Health Organization)**
- C. APIC (Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology)**
- D. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration)**

OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) is the correct answer because it is the agency responsible for ensuring safe and healthy working conditions for employees by enforcing standards and providing training, outreach, education, and assistance. OSHA requires the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in the decontamination area to protect healthcare workers from exposure to hazardous materials and infectious agents. CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) focuses on protecting public health and safety through the control and prevention of diseases. While the CDC provides guidelines and recommendations for infection control practices, OSHA has the authority to enforce the use of PPE in the workplace. WHO (World Health Organization) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. While the WHO provides global health guidance and standards, OSHA regulations apply specifically to workplaces in the United States. APIC (Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology) is a professional organization that provides resources and support for infection prevention and control professionals. While APIC may provide best practices and educational resources for infection control, OSHA is the regulatory agency that mandates the use of PPE in the decontamination area.

**8. What does contamination refer to in the context of sterile processing?**

- A. The presence of sterilization indicators**
- B. The absence of harmful bacteria**
- C. The presence of bacteria or harmful substances**
- D. The degradation of packaging materials**

In the context of sterile processing, contamination refers specifically to the presence of bacteria or harmful substances on medical instruments, supplies, or surfaces. This can occur at various stages, including during the preparation, handling, or storage of sterile items. The goal of sterile processing is to eliminate or control contamination to ensure that instruments and supplies are safe for use during medical procedures. The correct understanding of contamination is critical in maintaining patient safety. Health care professionals must ensure that any items intended for sterile environments are free from any microorganisms or hazardous materials that could lead to infections or complications. Thus, recognizing contamination as involving harmful agents is fundamental to the principles of infection control in healthcare settings.

**9. At the completion of the test cycle, Bowie Dick test pack showed a uniform color. What does it mean?**

- A. The test was positive**
- B. The test was inconclusive**
- C. The test was negative**
- D. The test needs to be repeated**

When a Bowie Dick test pack shows a uniform color at the completion of the test cycle, it indicates that the test was negative. This means that the test was successful and the conditions within the sterilizer were adequate to remove air and properly penetrate the steam, ensuring effective sterilization. Therefore, choice C is correct. Options A, B, and D are incorrect as they do not align with the interpretation of a Bowie Dick test showing a uniform color at the end of the cycle.

**10. What is the recommended chloride level in tap water?**

- A. 50 PPM**
- B. 75 PPM**
- C. 100 PPM**
- D. 150 PPM**

The recommended chloride level in tap water is 100 PPM (parts per million). This level is considered safe for various uses, including medical device reprocessing in healthcare facilities. Chloride levels lower than recommended might not effectively remove soil and debris from surgical instruments, while levels higher than recommended could potentially cause damage to the instruments. Therefore, it is crucial to adhere to the recommended chloride level to ensure proper instrument cleaning and maintenance.