

Galen Pharmacology Exam 1 Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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

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- 1. What is the atypical antipsychotic to know?**
 - A. Olanzapine**
 - B. Risperidone**
 - C. Aripiprazole**
 - D. Ziprasidone**

- 2. Which of the following is a category of CNS stimulants?**
 - A. Antihistamines**
 - B. Amphetamines**
 - C. Benzodiazepines**
 - D. Opioids**

- 3. Which of the following is NOT an appropriate nursing intervention for CNS stimulant therapy in children?**
 - A. Monitor vitals**
 - B. Record height, weight, and growth of children**
 - C. Monitor for adverse reactions**
 - D. Administer before bedtime**

- 4. The primary organ responsible for excretion is which?**
 - A. Lungs**
 - B. Liver**
 - C. Blood**
 - D. Kidneys**

- 5. If a patient is prescribed a TCA, which drug would that be?**
 - A. Desvenlafaxine**
 - B. Phenelzine**
 - C. Lithium**
 - D. Amitriptyline**

- 6. What is the secondary effect of a drug?**
 - A. The primary effect**
 - B. Side effects (can be desirable or undesirable)**
 - C. The therapeutic index**
 - D. The onset of action**

- 7. What is the primary use of phenytoin?**
- A. Prevents seizures**
 - B. Treats anxiety**
 - C. Lowers fever**
 - D. Controls blood pressure**
- 8. Which of the following is listed as a cardiovascular side effect of aripiprazole?**
- A. Photosensitivity**
 - B. Increased blood glucose**
 - C. Tachycardia**
 - D. Drowsiness**
- 9. Common adverse effects of allopurinol include which of the following?**
- A. Dizziness**
 - B. GI distress**
 - C. Liver or kidney damage**
 - D. Headache**
- 10. Which statement describes phenytoin interactions?**
- A. Decreased absorption of calcium and vitamin D**
 - B. Increases the effect of anticoagulants and oral contraceptives**
 - C. Increases absorption of calcium**
 - D. No interactions**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the atypical antipsychotic to know?

- A. Olanzapine
- B. Risperidone
- C. Aripiprazole**
- D. Ziprasidone

A key distinction among atypical antipsychotics is how they affect dopamine. Aripiprazole is unique because it is a partial agonist at D2 receptors, acting as a dopamine system stabilizer. This means it can boost dopamine signaling when it's too low and dampen it when it's too high, helping control symptoms while reducing the risk of movement disorders and prolactin elevation that come with full D2 antagonists. It also has 5-HT2A antagonism and 5-HT1A partial agonism, contributing to its overall profile. The other drugs listed are effective atypicals too, but they primarily block D2 receptors (antagonists) with 5-HT2A antagonism, which can lead to higher risks of EPS and hyperprolactinemia in some patients and have different metabolic effects. So, the atypical antipsychotic to know for its distinct mechanism is aripiprazole.

2. Which of the following is a category of CNS stimulants?

- A. Antihistamines
- B. Amphetamines**
- C. Benzodiazepines
- D. Opioids

CNS stimulants raise activity in the brain, boosting wakefulness, attention, and energy. Among the options, amphetamines fit this category because they increase dopamine and norepinephrine in the central nervous system by promoting release and blocking reuptake, which drives the heightened alertness and focus characteristic of stimulant drugs. Antihistamines are mainly sedating, not stimulants; benzodiazepines depress CNS activity by enhancing GABA signaling; and opioids act on opioid receptors to depress CNS function and relieve pain. So the stimulant category is represented by amphetamines.

3. Which of the following is NOT an appropriate nursing intervention for CNS stimulant therapy in children?

- A. Monitor vitals
- B. Record height, weight, and growth of children
- C. Monitor for adverse reactions
- D. Administer before bedtime**

CNS stimulants in children require careful timing and ongoing monitoring because they can affect sleep, growth, and cardiovascular status. Giving a dose before bedtime is not appropriate because stimulants can cause insomnia, restlessness, and sleep disruption, which defeats their therapeutic purpose and can worsen behavior and overall functioning. Monitoring vital signs is important since these meds can raise heart rate and blood pressure. Recording height, weight, and growth tracks potential growth suppression over time, a known concern with long-term stimulant use. Watching for adverse reactions—such as reduced appetite, insomnia, irritability, or mood changes—helps catch side effects early and adjust therapy as needed. So, administering before bedtime clashes with the goal of avoiding sleep disturbances, while the other interventions align with safe and effective pediatric stimulant therapy.

4. The primary organ responsible for excretion is which?

- A. Lungs
- B. Liver
- C. Blood
- D. Kidneys**

The kidneys handle excretion. They filter the blood through tiny filtering units called nephrons, removing waste products like urea and creatinine, balancing electrolytes, and regulating fluid and acid-base status. The waste becomes urine and is eliminated from the body. While the lungs expel carbon dioxide and some water vapor, and the liver processes toxins and secretes bile, neither is the primary organ for excreting waste in the way the kidneys are. Blood is a circulating fluid, not an organ that excretes waste directly.

5. If a patient is prescribed a TCA, which drug would that be?

- A. Desvenlafaxine
- B. Phenelzine
- C. Lithium
- D. Amitriptyline**

Tricyclic antidepressants are an older class of antidepressants that mainly block the reuptake of norepinephrine and serotonin, often with anticholinergic and sedating effects. Amitriptyline is a classic example of a TCA. The other drugs listed belong to different classes: desvenlafaxine is an SNRI (serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor); phenelzine is an MAOI (monoamine oxidase inhibitor); lithium is a mood stabilizer used for bipolar disorder. So, when identifying a TCA, amitriptyline is the correct choice.

6. What is the secondary effect of a drug?

- A. The primary effect
- B. Side effects (can be desirable or undesirable)**
- C. The therapeutic index
- D. The onset of action

A drug often does more than just its intended therapeutic action. The additional effects that occur alongside the primary goal are called secondary effects, or side effects. These arise because the drug can interact with other receptors or systems beyond the target site, producing changes that are not part of the desired treatment. Some of these side effects can be helpful in certain situations, while others are unwanted or harmful. The primary effect is the intended therapeutic outcome, the onset of action is how quickly the drug starts to work, and the therapeutic index relates to the drug's safety margin. That's why the correct choice is side effects: it captures the idea of these secondary, potentially beneficial or detrimental, effects.

7. What is the primary use of phenytoin?

- A. Prevents seizures**
- B. Treats anxiety**
- C. Lowers fever**
- D. Controls blood pressure**

Prevention of seizures is the primary purpose of phenytoin. It works as an anticonvulsant by stabilizing neuronal membranes through blockade of voltage-gated sodium channels, which reduces high-frequency firing during seizures. This mechanism makes it effective for long-term prophylaxis in epilepsy and for preventing recurrent seizures in certain at-risk situations. It is not used to treat anxiety, lower fever, or control blood pressure, which are managed with other types of medications.

8. Which of the following is listed as a cardiovascular side effect of aripiprazole?

- A. Photosensitivity**
- B. Increased blood glucose**
- C. Tachycardia**
- D. Drowsiness**

Tachycardia reflects a direct effect on the cardiovascular system. Aripiprazole can cause an increased heart rate in some patients, likely related to autonomic/adrenergic regulation or transient activation early in therapy. This makes tachycardia the cardiovascular side effect among the options. The other effects are not primarily cardiovascular: photosensitivity is a skin reaction, increased blood glucose is a metabolic issue more common with other antipsychotics, and drowsiness is a CNS-sedation effect.

9. Common adverse effects of allopurinol include which of the following?

- A. Dizziness**
- B. GI distress**
- C. Liver or kidney damage**
- D. Headache**

GI distress is a common adverse effect of allopurinol. This medicine can irritate the stomach and intestines, leading to nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal discomfort, especially when first starting therapy or if taken on an empty stomach. Taking the dose with meals or titrating slowly helps lessen these GI symptoms. Dizziness and headaches can occur with some medications, but they are not as typical for allopurinol as GI upset. Liver or kidney damage is not a common consequence; allopurinol can rarely cause hypersensitivity reactions that involve the liver or kidneys, but these events are uncommon. Therefore, GI distress best fits as the typical adverse effect.

10. Which statement describes phenytoin interactions?

- A. Decreased absorption of calcium and vitamin D**
- B. Increases the effect of anticoagulants and oral contraceptives**
- C. Increases absorption of calcium**
- D. No interactions**

Phenytoin acts as a strong inducer of hepatic drug-metabolizing enzymes, and this induction extends to nutrient metabolism as well. One important consequence is its effect on vitamin D metabolism, which in turn reduces calcium absorption from the gut. Over time this can lead to lower calcium and vitamin D levels, bone demineralization, and an increased risk of osteoporosis or osteomalacia. That's why describing phenytoin interactions as decreased absorption of calcium and vitamin D best captures the clinically relevant effect: it highlights the nutrient/metabolic impact that contributes to long-term bone health problems. In contrast, phenytoin tends to shorten the effect of many other drugs by increasing their metabolism (so it wouldn't increase the effect of anticoagulants or oral contraceptives), it does not increase calcium absorption, and it does have notable interactions rather than none.

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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://galenpharmacology1.examzify.com>

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

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