

Geriatric Nurse Aide (GNA) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	16

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. When assisting with mouth care, which action should the nurse aide take?**
 - A. Brush the teeth vigorously**
 - B. Floss between the teeth by moving the floss up and down**
 - C. Use mouthwash exclusively**
 - D. Skip flossing altogether**
- 2. When taking an oral temperature, where should the thermometer be placed?**
 - A. Under the tongue**
 - B. In the armpit**
 - C. In the ear**
 - D. On the forehead**
- 3. What is the first step in responding to a medical emergency involving a patient?**
 - A. Call for help without assessing**
 - B. Assess the situation for safety**
 - C. Immediately provide first aid without thinking**
 - D. Check if the patient is awake before acting**
- 4. What is the primary goal of a nurse aide when assisting clients with daily living activities?**
 - A. To promote independence.**
 - B. To complete tasks quickly.**
 - C. To ensure the clients do as they are told.**
 - D. To maintain all clients within facility guidelines.**
- 5. Which aspects of nutrition should GNAs focus on for their patients?**
 - A. Caloric intake and physical activity**
 - B. Balanced meals and food preferences**
 - C. Caloric intake, balance of nutrients, and specific dietary restrictions**
 - D. Protein intake and snack frequency**

- 6. How can GNAs help manage the risk of falls in elderly patients?**
- A. Encouraging the patients to walk quickly**
 - B. By providing clear pathways and assessing assistive devices**
 - C. By allowing clutter in the hallways for comfort**
 - D. By ensuring only a few devices are used**
- 7. Which statement describes an effective way to engage elderly patients during care?**
- A. Avoiding conversations about their interests**
 - B. Involving them in decision-making regarding their care**
 - C. Only discussing medical facts and figures**
 - D. Maintaining a distant demeanor**
- 8. What is the purpose of physical therapy for elderly patients?**
- A. To improve social interactions**
 - B. To restore function, improve mobility, and reduce pain**
 - C. To enhance cognitive abilities**
 - D. To increase nutritional intake**
- 9. What is the protocol for handling a choking emergency?**
- A. Administer constant throat massages**
 - B. Administer back blows and abdominal thrusts**
 - C. Encourage the patient to drink water**
 - D. Wait for the patient to cough it out**
- 10. Why is hydration important for elderly patients?**
- A. It provides energy for daily activities**
 - B. It helps maintain bodily functions and prevents complications**
 - C. It enhances the taste of food**
 - D. It is not particularly important**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. When assisting with mouth care, which action should the nurse aide take?

- A. Brush the teeth vigorously**
- B. Floss between the teeth by moving the floss up and down**
- C. Use mouthwash exclusively**
- D. Skip flossing altogether**

When providing mouth care, the correct approach is to floss between the teeth by moving the floss up and down. This technique effectively helps remove food particles and plaque lodged between the teeth, promoting overall oral hygiene. Flossing is essential, especially for individuals who may have difficulty maintaining their oral health due to mobility issues or cognitive impairments. In contrast, brushing the teeth vigorously can cause gum irritation and damage, particularly for older adults who may have sensitive gums. Relying exclusively on mouthwash does not substitute for the mechanical cleaning provided by brushing and flossing, as it does not remove plaque effectively from the surfaces of the teeth. Additionally, skipping flossing entirely would allow plaque and food particles to remain between the teeth, potentially leading to periodontal disease and tooth decay, which are more prevalent in geriatric populations. Therefore, proper technique in flossing is crucial for effective mouth care, making it the most appropriate action for a nurse aide to take.

2. When taking an oral temperature, where should the thermometer be placed?

- A. Under the tongue**
- B. In the armpit**
- C. In the ear**
- D. On the forehead**

The thermometer should be placed under the tongue when taking an oral temperature. This method is commonly used because it provides a reliable and accurate measurement of the body's core temperature. The sublingual area, located under the tongue, is rich in blood vessels, allowing for effective heat exchange, which results in a precise reading. Oral temperature measurements are favored for their convenience and ease of use in many settings, particularly for individuals who are able to cooperate and keep their mouths closed during the reading. This approach is typically not used for individuals who may have difficulty maintaining the thermometer in place, such as those with certain medical conditions or cognitive impairments. Other methods, such as placing a thermometer in the armpit, ear, or forehead, are generally used as alternatives in specific situations but do not provide the same level of accuracy as oral measurements. Each of these methods has its own appropriate context and timing, depending on the needs of the patient and the clinical setting.

3. What is the first step in responding to a medical emergency involving a patient?

- A. Call for help without assessing**
- B. Assess the situation for safety**
- C. Immediately provide first aid without thinking**
- D. Check if the patient is awake before acting**

The first step in responding to a medical emergency involving a patient is to assess the situation for safety. This ensures that both the caregiver and the patient are not in danger from the environment or the circumstances leading to the medical emergency. By prioritizing safety, the caregiver can determine whether it's safe to approach the patient, if there are potential hazards present, or if additional help is needed before proceeding with any actions. Assessing the situation also allows for a clearer understanding of the scenario, guiding the caregiver in making informed decisions regarding the next steps, such as calling for help or providing care. This systematic approach is fundamental in emergency response protocols, designed to prevent further harm and ensure effective assistance can be rendered. Other approaches, such as immediately providing first aid or acting without assessing the situation, may put both the patient and the responder at risk, failing to address any urgent safety concerns first. Ensuring that the area is secure is essential before taking further action or engaging with the patient.

4. What is the primary goal of a nurse aide when assisting clients with daily living activities?

- A. To promote independence.**
- B. To complete tasks quickly.**
- C. To ensure the clients do as they are told.**
- D. To maintain all clients within facility guidelines.**

Promoting independence is indeed the primary goal of a nurse aide when assisting clients with daily living activities. This focus is crucial in geriatric care, as many clients may be experiencing physical or cognitive limitations. By encouraging clients to perform tasks on their own, even if it means allowing them to do so at a slower pace, a nurse aide fosters self-esteem, dignity, and autonomy. This approach not only supports the physical well-being of clients by maintaining their strength and skills but also enhances their emotional and psychological health. Encouraging independence helps clients feel more in control of their lives, which can lead to increased satisfaction and overall quality of life. While completing tasks in a timely manner, ensuring compliance with directives, and adhering to facility guidelines are important aspects of caregiving, they do not prioritize the clients' personal growth and autonomy in the same way that promoting independence does.

5. Which aspects of nutrition should GNAs focus on for their patients?

- A. Caloric intake and physical activity**
- B. Balanced meals and food preferences**
- C. Caloric intake, balance of nutrients, and specific dietary restrictions**
- D. Protein intake and snack frequency**

Focusing on caloric intake, the balance of nutrients, and specific dietary restrictions is essential for Geriatric Nurse Aides (GNAs) because these factors directly impact the overall health and well-being of elderly patients. Caloric intake is critical, as older adults often have different caloric needs compared to younger individuals due to changes in metabolism, body composition, and activity levels. Meeting their caloric needs helps prevent weight loss, malnutrition, and related health issues. The balance of nutrients ensures that patients receive the necessary vitamins, minerals, proteins, fats, and carbohydrates to maintain their health. This is particularly important as older adults may have increased protein needs for muscle maintenance and recovery. Additionally, specific dietary restrictions are often prevalent in the elderly population due to chronic illnesses or conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, or food allergies. Understanding and accommodating these restrictions is crucial for preventing adverse health effects and ensuring that patients are following appropriate dietary guidelines. In contrast, while elements like balanced meals, food preferences, protein intake, and snack frequency are also important aspects of nutrition, they do not encompass the full range of critical nutritional considerations that GNAs must prioritize to support the complex needs of older adults.

6. How can GNAs help manage the risk of falls in elderly patients?

- A. Encouraging the patients to walk quickly**
- B. By providing clear pathways and assessing assistive devices**
- C. By allowing clutter in the hallways for comfort**
- D. By ensuring only a few devices are used**

The correct response focuses on the crucial role that GNAs play in maintaining a safe environment for elderly patients, which is fundamental in fall prevention. Providing clear pathways is essential because obstacles can lead to trip hazards. GNAs are trained to assess assistive devices, such as walkers or canes, ensuring that these items are in good condition and suitable for the patient's needs. Properly functioning, appropriately fitted assistive devices can significantly enhance stability and mobility, enabling patients to move safely throughout their living spaces. Maintaining clear pathways reduces the risk of falls, and by evaluating assistive devices, GNAs can support patients' independence while ensuring safety. This comprehensive approach to the environment directly addresses the factors that contribute to falls, demonstrating the proactive measures that GNAs can take in a care setting.

7. Which statement describes an effective way to engage elderly patients during care?

- A. Avoiding conversations about their interests**
- B. Involving them in decision-making regarding their care**
- C. Only discussing medical facts and figures**
- D. Maintaining a distant demeanor**

Engaging elderly patients in their care is crucial for fostering a sense of autonomy and dignity. Involving them in decision-making regarding their care can significantly enhance their comfort and cooperation during medical procedures. This collaborative approach respects their preferences and encourages them to express their opinions about their health, which can lead to better health outcomes and improved patient satisfaction. When patients feel valued and part of the decision-making process, they are more likely to adhere to treatment plans and participate actively in their own care. This practice not only empowers the elderly but also builds trust and rapport between the patient and the caregiver. Creating an open dialogue allows for better communication and understanding of the patient's unique needs and wishes, ultimately leading to a more holistic approach to their care.

8. What is the purpose of physical therapy for elderly patients?

- A. To improve social interactions**
- B. To restore function, improve mobility, and reduce pain**
- C. To enhance cognitive abilities**
- D. To increase nutritional intake**

The purpose of physical therapy for elderly patients is primarily to restore function, improve mobility, and reduce pain. As individuals age, they often experience a decline in physical abilities due to various factors such as chronic conditions, injuries, or the natural aging process. Physical therapy aims to address these issues by using exercises, manual therapy, and interventions tailored to the specific needs of elderly individuals. Through physical therapy, patients can regain strength, enhance balance, and improve their overall physical function, which is crucial in maintaining independence and quality of life. Additionally, effective management of pain through targeted physical therapy interventions allows elderly patients to engage more actively in their daily activities and reduces the risk of further complications or immobility. While enhancing social interactions, cognitive abilities, and nutritional intake are important aspects of overall health and well-being, they are not the primary goals of physical therapy. Instead, focusing on mobility and functional restoration is essential for helping elderly patients maintain their independence and improve their daily living activities.

9. What is the protocol for handling a choking emergency?

- A. Administer constant throat massages
- B. Administer back blows and abdominal thrusts**
- C. Encourage the patient to drink water
- D. Wait for the patient to cough it out

In a choking emergency, administering back blows and abdominal thrusts is the appropriate protocol because these techniques are designed to expel the obstruction from the airway. Back blows involve striking the person between the shoulder blades with the heel of one hand while the person bends forward slightly. Abdominal thrusts, often referred to as the Heimlich maneuver, require the caregiver to position their hands in the middle of the abdomen and thrust inward and upward to increase pressure in the abdomen, which can help dislodge an object blocking the airway. Both techniques work by creating sufficient force to expel the foreign object that is causing the choking and are considered immediate interventions for clearing an obstructed airway. Effective execution of these techniques can be life-saving and should be carried out promptly in such emergencies. It is essential for caregivers to be trained in these methods as they are expected to act quickly and efficiently in critical situations involving choking.

10. Why is hydration important for elderly patients?

- A. It provides energy for daily activities
- B. It helps maintain bodily functions and prevents complications**
- C. It enhances the taste of food
- D. It is not particularly important

Hydration is essential for elderly patients primarily because it helps maintain bodily functions and prevents complications. As individuals age, their bodies may undergo several changes that affect their ability to regulate fluids. Dehydration can lead to serious health issues such as urinary tract infections, constipation, kidney stones, and even cognitive impairments. Adequate hydration supports various bodily functions, including temperature regulation, joint lubrication, nutrient transport, and waste elimination. Older adults are often at a higher risk for dehydration due to factors like decreased thirst sensation, potential side effects of medications, and chronic health conditions that may increase fluid needs. Maintaining proper hydration levels can significantly contribute to overall health and well-being, leading to a lower risk of hospitalizations and improved quality of life.

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://geriatricnurseaide.examzify.com>

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