

# Iowa Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Table of Contents

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

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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. Which of the following is NOT one of the five steps of accepting terminal illness?**

- A. Anger**
- B. Bargaining**
- C. Compromise**
- D. Acceptance**

**2. What does hematuria mean?**

- A. Scant amount of urine**
- B. Painful urination**
- C. Blood in urine**
- D. Involuntary urine loss**

**3. What is the medical term for high blood pressure?**

- A. Hypotension**
- B. Hypertension**
- C. Arrhythmia**
- D. Aneurysm**

**4. Which term describes a complete or partial inability to control urination?**

- A. Amnesia**
- B. Urinary incontinence**
- C. Overflow incontinence**
- D. Oliguria**

**5. Which of the following conditions is characterized by involuntary muscle contractions assisting digestion?**

- A. Peristalsis**
- B. Flatus**
- C. Fecal impaction**
- D. Hypoglycemia**

**6. What does anorexia indicate?**

- A. An increase in appetite**
- B. A loss of appetite**
- C. An eating disorder characterized by overconsumption**
- D. An uncontrollable hunger**

**7. What is the primary goal of surgical asepsis?**

- A. To reduce the number of microorganisms**
- B. To remove all microbes**
- C. To prevent infection through handwashing**
- D. To sterilize surgical instruments**

**8. What is a graduate used for?**

- A. Measuring temperature**
- B. Measuring the amount of fluid**
- C. Measuring weight**
- D. Measuring heart rate**

**9. What psychological condition may cause individuals to experience hallucinations?**

- A. Depression**
- B. Anxiety disorders**
- C. Schizophrenia**
- D. Bipolar disorder**

**10. What condition does cystitis refer to?**

- A. Kidney infection**
- B. Bladder infection or infection in any part of the urinary system**
- C. Gallbladder infection**
- D. Urinary stone blockage**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which of the following is NOT one of the five steps of accepting terminal illness?**

- A. Anger**
- B. Bargaining**
- C. Compromise**
- D. Acceptance**

The five stages of accepting terminal illness, commonly referred to in the context of grief and loss, are widely known as denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Compromise, while it may seem like a relevant emotional response, does not align with the established stages of terminal illness acceptance. The stages are designed to capture the typical emotional responses people may experience as they cope with a life-limiting diagnosis. Denial serves as an initial shock, anger reflects frustration and helplessness, bargaining involves trying to negotiate for more time or a different outcome, and acceptance is the final step of coming to terms with the reality of the situation. Since compromise lacks recognition as an official stage within this framework, understanding that it does not fit into the model of emotional responses typically associated with terminal illness highlights why it is the correct answer in this context. This helps solidify comprehension of how individuals cope with profound loss and the emotional journey they typically undergo.

**2. What does hematuria mean?**

- A. Scant amount of urine**
- B. Painful urination**
- C. Blood in urine**
- D. Involuntary urine loss**

Hematuria refers to the presence of blood in the urine. This condition can be indicative of various underlying health issues, such as infections, kidney stones, or more serious conditions like tumors. Understanding the term is essential for healthcare professionals and CNAs as it helps in assessing a patient's urinary health and determining what further actions may be needed, such as reporting the observation to a nurse or physician for further evaluation. Recognizing hematuria allows for timely intervention and appropriate patient care. The other options represent different urinary conditions but do not accurately define hematuria.

**3. What is the medical term for high blood pressure?**

- A. Hypotension
- B. Hypertension**
- C. Arrhythmia
- D. Aneurysm

The term for high blood pressure is hypertension. This condition occurs when the force of the blood against the artery walls is consistently too high, which can lead to various health issues such as heart disease, stroke, and kidney problems. Hypertension is often referred to as a "silent killer" because it typically has no symptoms, making it crucial for regular monitoring and management. Understanding hypertension is important in healthcare, especially for a Certified Nursing Assistant, as it helps in recognizing patients who may require further assessment and intervention. On the other hand, hypotension refers to low blood pressure, arrhythmia relates to irregular heartbeats, and aneurysm involves the abnormal bulging of a blood vessel. These terms represent different cardiovascular conditions that are distinct from hypertension.

**4. Which term describes a complete or partial inability to control urination?**

- A. Amnesia
- B. Urinary incontinence**
- C. Overflow incontinence
- D. Oliguria

The term that describes a complete or partial inability to control urination is urinary incontinence. This condition can manifest in various forms, where individuals may experience loss of urine control during different situations, such as when laughing, sneezing, or having a sudden urge. Understanding the distinction between different types of urinary incontinence is crucial in healthcare settings. For instance, overflow incontinence refers specifically to the leakage of urine due to overfilling of the bladder, rather than a blanket term for all incontinence issues. Amnesia pertains to memory loss and is unrelated to urination. Oliguria, on the other hand, is characterized by producing an abnormally small amount of urine, which is not connected to the control of urination. Therefore, urinary incontinence is the most comprehensive and accurate term for describing the inability to control urination, whether completely or partially.

**5. Which of the following conditions is characterized by involuntary muscle contractions assisting digestion?**

- A. Peristalsis**
- B. Flatus**
- C. Fecal impaction**
- D. Hypoglycemia**

Peristalsis is the correct choice because it specifically refers to the series of wave-like muscle contractions that move food through the digestive tract, assisting in the process of digestion. These involuntary contractions occur in the esophagus, stomach, and intestines, allowing the contents to move smoothly along the gastrointestinal system. This rhythmic movement is essential for proper digestion and absorption of nutrients as it ensures that food is mixed with digestive enzymes and propelled toward the intestines for further processing. The other conditions listed do not involve the same mechanism of muscle contractions for digestion. Flatus refers to gas in the digestive system, which does not involve involuntary muscle contractions shown in peristalsis. Fecal impaction is a condition where stool becomes hard and difficult to pass, leading to issues in bowel movement rather than the promotion of normal digestion. Hypoglycemia is a condition characterized by low blood sugar levels, which is unrelated to the muscular movements associated with digestion.

**6. What does anorexia indicate?**

- A. An increase in appetite**
- B. A loss of appetite**
- C. An eating disorder characterized by overconsumption**
- D. An uncontrollable hunger**

Anorexia refers specifically to a loss of appetite or desire to eat. This term is often used in clinical settings to describe a symptom of various underlying health conditions, such as mental health disorders, physical illnesses, or the side effects of medications.

Understanding anorexia is crucial for nursing assistants because it can indicate significant health issues that may need immediate attention or intervention. Recognizing this loss of appetite is important, as it can lead to weight loss, nutritional deficiencies, and other health problems if not addressed. Nurses and caregivers need to monitor dietary intake and report any changes, which can assist healthcare teams in developing appropriate treatment plans for patients experiencing this symptom.

## 7. What is the primary goal of surgical asepsis?

- A. To reduce the number of microorganisms
- B. To remove all microbes**
- C. To prevent infection through handwashing
- D. To sterilize surgical instruments

The primary goal of surgical asepsis is to remove all microbes, which is foundational in preventing infections during surgical procedures. Achieving a sterile environment is crucial because it eliminates any potential pathogens that might cause postoperative infections and complications. Surgical asepsis ensures that both the surgical field and instruments are free from any live microorganisms, thereby protecting the patient's health. While reducing the number of microorganisms, preventing infection through handwashing, and sterilizing surgical instruments are important practices in infection control, they do not alone guarantee a completely sterile environment necessary for surgical procedures. Surgical asepsis goes beyond these practices to ensure that every element involved in a surgical procedure is completely free of all microbial life. This comprehensive approach is what differentiates it from other less stringent methods of infection control.

## 8. What is a graduate used for?

- A. Measuring temperature
- B. Measuring the amount of fluid**
- C. Measuring weight
- D. Measuring heart rate

A graduate, also known as a graduated cylinder or measuring cup, is specifically designed for measuring the volume of liquids. It is marked with incremental lines, allowing for precise measurement of fluid quantities. This tool is commonly used in various healthcare settings, ensuring that precise volumes of medications or IV fluids can be administered safely and accurately. The other choices do not accurately describe the function of a graduate. For instance, temperature is measured with a thermometer, weight is measured with a scale, and heart rate is assessed using a stethoscope or heart rate monitor. Each of these tools serves a different purpose specific to their measurements, highlighting the specialized role of the graduate in measuring liquid volumes.

## 9. What psychological condition may cause individuals to experience hallucinations?

- A. Depression**
- B. Anxiety disorders**
- C. Schizophrenia**
- D. Bipolar disorder**

Schizophrenia is a severe mental health condition that is primarily characterized by disruptions in thought processes, perceptions, emotional responsiveness, and social interactions. One of the hallmark symptoms of schizophrenia is the presence of hallucinations, which can affect any of the senses but are most commonly auditory, such as hearing voices. These hallucinations are a direct result of the disorder's impact on the brain's ability to process information and perceive reality accurately. While depression, anxiety disorders, and bipolar disorder can also lead to a range of psychological symptoms and experiences, they do not typically present with hallucinations in the same way that schizophrenia does. For example, during severe episodes of bipolar disorder, individuals may experience psychotic symptoms, including hallucinations, but this is not as prevalent a symptom as it is in schizophrenia, where hallucinations are more core to the condition itself. Understanding these distinctions is crucial for recognizing the specific features associated with different psychological disorders.

## 10. What condition does cystitis refer to?

- A. Kidney infection**
- B. Bladder infection or infection in any part of the urinary system**
- C. Gallbladder infection**
- D. Urinary stone blockage**

Cystitis refers specifically to the inflammation of the bladder, and it is primarily caused by a bacterial infection, which is why the correct choice is that it refers to a bladder infection or an infection in any part of the urinary system. This condition results in symptoms such as painful urination, increased urgency to urinate, and lower abdominal discomfort. While cystitis is most commonly associated with bladder infections, it can also occur as a part of a urinary tract infection (UTI) that affects other regions of the urinary system, such as the urethra (urethritis) or, less frequently, the kidneys. Understanding this broader scope helps in identifying how it's classified within urinary tract infections. The other options describe different medical conditions. For instance, a kidney infection specifically refers to a more serious infection of the kidneys known as pyelonephritis, while a gallbladder infection involves the gallbladder and is unrelated to the urinary system. A urinary stone blockage refers to physical obstructions in the urinary tract but does not pertain to inflammation or infection. Therefore, the definition and scope of cystitis align most closely with bladder infection and related urinary system infections.

# 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](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://iowacna.examzify.com>**

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

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