

NCCAOM HERBAL BOARD PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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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. Fu Shen is best quality wild-crafted from which region?**
 - A. Guangdong Province
 - B. Zhejiang Province
 - C. Sichuan Province
 - D. Yunnan Province
- 2. What describes Gou Teng good quality?**
 - A. Fragile bundles with many hooks; dull surface
 - B. Solid, anchor-shaped twin hooks and many stems with hooks
 - C. No hooks; dull brown surface
 - D. Solid, anchor-shaped twin hooks and a small number of thin stems without hooks; surface purplish-brown or reddish-brown and glossy
- 3. Which herb is noted for raising blood pressure and promoting qi by raising SP yang?**
 - A. Zhi Shi (correct)
 - B. Mai Ya
 - C. Mang Xiao
 - D. Tong Cao
- 4. Which herb is best for acute cough with yellow phlegm and nausea?**
 - A. Zhu Ru
 - B. Jie Geng
 - C. Xing Ren
 - D. Bai Jie Zi
- 5. In the formula Ge Gen Huang Lian Huang Qin Tang, which herb is present at 15-24 (units)?**
 - A. Huang Qin
 - B. Zhi Gan Cao
 - C. Ge Gen
 - D. Huang Lian

6. Shi Hu enters which channels?

- A. LU, HT
- B. ST, KD
- C. LV, KD
- D. ST, SP

7. Which topical herb could you apply for oozing sores?

- A. Ru Xiang
- B. Di Yu
- C. Mo Yao
- D. Bai Zhi

8. Know flavor to use to treat diabetes?

- A. Sour
- B. Sweet
- C. Bitter
- D. Pungent

9. What is the dosage range of Huang Lian in Bai Tou Weng Tang?

- A. 9-12 g
- B. 6-9 g
- C. 12-18 g
- D. 3-6 g

10. Which herb is incompatible with Ren Shen?

- A. Da Huang
- B. Li Lu
- C. Gan Cao
- D. Ma Huang

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Fu Shen is best quality wild-crafted from which region?

- A. Guangdong Province
- B. Zhejiang Province
- C. Sichuan Province
- D. Yunnan Province**

Regional origin helps determine the potency and overall quality of wild-crafted herbs. Yunnan offers a unique combination of high elevation, rugged natural forests, and long growing periods that promote vigorous root development and richer chemical content. This environment tends to produce Fu Shen with stronger resinous constituents and a more robust profile, which practitioners associate with better calming and damp-dispelling effects. In contrast, sources from the other regions are more often cultivated or grown in conditions that don't foster the same level of natural maturation, so their wild-harvested material may be less potent. For these reasons, Fu Shen from Yunnan is considered the best quality wild-crafted option.

2. What describes Gou Teng good quality?

- A. Fragile bundles with many hooks; dull surface
- B. Solid, anchor-shaped twin hooks and many stems with hooks
- C. No hooks; dull brown surface
- D. Solid, anchor-shaped twin hooks and a small number of thin stems without hooks; surface purplish-brown or reddish-brown and glossy**

Gou Teng is judged by a combination of its distinctive hooks and overall appearance. The best quality shows solid, anchor-shaped twin hooks, which are the defining feature that confirms the material is Gou Teng rather than a similar plant. These hooks should be sturdy and intact, not broken or fragile, signaling proper harvesting and processing. In good quality Gou Teng, there are a small number of thin stems, rather than a dense bundle of stems with many hooks. This reflects proper selection and reduces adulteration risk, while keeping the material recognizable by its hooked ends. The surface color should be purplish-brown or reddish-brown and glossy, indicating appropriate drying and storage. A dull surface or other color typically points to aging, improper processing, or inferior material. So, the combination of solid, anchor-shaped twin hooks, a limited number of thin stems without hooks on most of the stems, and a purplish-brown to reddish-brown glossy surface best describes Gou Teng of good quality.

3. Which herb is noted for raising blood pressure and promoting qi by raising SP yang?

- A. Zhi Shi (correct)**
- B. Mai Ya
- C. Mang Xiao
- D. Tong Cao

The herb being tested is one that primarily moves and uplifts qi, especially in the middle burner, to restore the SP's function and promote overall qi flow. Zhi Shi has a strong qi-moving action that breaks up stagnation and guides qi upward, which helps the spleen's qi rise and function more effectively. When SP qi is constrained by stagnation, lifting and directing qi upward can improve the body's energetic tone and, in patterns where deficient qi affects circulation, can manifest as a rise in energy and blood pressure. This upward-qi effect is why Zhi Shi is noted for promoting qi and supporting SP yang. Mai Ya mainly aids digestion and reduces food stagnation but doesn't have the same pronounced qi-moving and upward-raising action as Zhi Shi. Mang Xiao is a purgative that softens hard stools and drains dampness, not about elevating SP qi. Tong Cao tonifies and harmonizes, including aiding SP qi, but its primary role is milder tonification and harmonization rather than the strong qi-upward movement seen with Zhi Shi.

4. Which herb is best for acute cough with yellow phlegm and nausea?

- A. Zhu Ru**
- B. Jie Geng
- C. Xing Ren
- D. Bai Jie Zi

acute cough with yellow phlegm points to phlegm-heat in the lungs, while nausea signals heat in the stomach. An herb that can clear heat in the stomach and simultaneously transform phlegm to relieve cough addresses both symptoms at once. Zhu Ru, bamboo shavings, is traditionally used to clear stomach heat and stop vomiting, and it also helps transform phlegm to ease coughing. That dual action makes it the most fitting choice when both yellow phlegm and nausea are present. Jie Geng primarily helps with coughing and phlegm by guiding Lung qi and opening the throat, but it doesn't address nausea. Xing Ren is mainly for cough and wheeze due to LU cold or dryness, not the heat/phlegm pattern here. Bai Jie Zi transforms phlegm and helps with coughing, but similarly it doesn't tackle the nausea component.

5. In the formula Ge Gen Huang Lian Huang Qin Tang, which herb is present at 15-24 (units)?

- A. Huang Qin
- B. Zhi Gan Cao
- C. Ge Gen**
- D. Huang Lian

Ge Gen is the principal ingredient here—the herb that does the main work in the formula. In this combination, Ge Gen is used in the largest dose, 15-24 units, which signals its leading role in releasing the exterior and guiding the other herbs to work on the body's surface. The other two heat-clearing herbs are added in smaller amounts to clear interior heat and support the exterior release, while the licorice would typically harmonize, though that one isn't among the listed options. So the herb present at 15-24 units is Ge Gen.

6. Shi Hu enters which channels?

- A. LU, HT
- B. ST, KD**
- C. LV, KD
- D. ST, SP

Channel entry reflects where the herb's therapeutic effects are most directly felt. Shi Hu is prized for nourishing yin and generating fluids, with a focus on the stomach and kidney yin. Entering the Stomach channel ties it to stomach yin deficiency symptoms and helps replenish stomach fluids, while entering the Kidney channel supports overall yin balance by tonifying kidney yin. This combination explains why, in this context, the primary channels associated with Shi Hu are the Stomach and Kidney.

7. Which topical herb could you apply for oozing sores?

- A. Ru Xiang
- B. Di Yu**
- C. Mo Yao
- D. Bai Zhi

When a sore oozes, the problem is damp-heat with discharge from the skin, so the best topical approach is something that dries dampness and stops the discharge while supporting healing. Di Yu has strong astringent and cooling properties that clear heat and dry dampness in skin lesions, making it particularly effective for oozing ulcers and damp, weeping sores when applied externally. It helps seal the lesion and reduce exudate, which is exactly what you want in this scenario. Other wound-health herbs like Ru Xiang (frankincense) and Mo Yao (myrrh) promote healing, reduce swelling, and improve blood flow, but they're not as specifically targeted to stopping persistent discharge. Bai Zhi is more about addressing wind-heat and superficial lesions rather than controlling damp-heat with ongoing oozing. So Di Yu fits the goal of stopping the oozing while supporting healing.

8. Know flavor to use to treat diabetes?

- A. Sour
- B. Sweet**
- C. Bitter
- D. Pungent

In Chinese medicine, flavors guide how you address patterns like diabetes. Diabetes (Xiao Ke) often reflects yin and fluid deficiency, with dryness and a need for nourishment. Sweet tonifies and nourishes, moistens dryness, and helps generate and preserve body fluids, while also supporting the Spleen to transform and move fluids. Because the goal in this pattern is to replenish yin and fluids, Sweet is the best-fitting flavor. The other flavors emphasize clearing heat (Bitter), moving qi (Pungent), or binding and astringing (Sour), which don't align as directly with replenishing yin and fluids in this context.

9. What is the dosage range of Huang Lian in Bai Tou Weng Tang?

- A. 9-12 g
- B. 6-9 g**
- C. 12-18 g
- D. 3-6 g

Bai Tou Weng Tang targets dysentery caused by heat toxin in the intestines, and Huang Lian serves to clear that heat and resolve toxin, supporting the formula's action on the intestinal tract. The usual dose of Huang Lian in this recipe is a medium range—about 6 to 9 grams—striking a balance between strong heat-clearing effect and avoiding excessive drying or harshness. Doses lower than this may not adequately clear the toxin when the condition is more pronounced, while higher doses can be too strong for some patients and may lead to undesirable drying or constipating effects. So the standard range for Huang Lian in Bai Tou Weng Tang is 6–9 g.

10. Which herb is incompatible with Ren Shen?

A. Da Huang

B. Li Lu

C. Gan Cao

D. Ma Huang

Ren Shen acts as a qi tonic, nourishing and strengthening the body's energy, especially in the lungs and spleen. Li Lu is a powerful, harsh herb with toxic purgative actions that strongly drains and disrupts the body's fluids. When these two are combined, the intense draining/toxic effect of Li Lu counteracts the nourishing, tonifying action of Ren Shen, and can provoke adverse reactions such as stomach upset, diarrhea, dizziness, or weakness. Because the actions oppose and the risk of toxicity is increased, this pairing is avoided.

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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://nccaomherbalboard.examzify.com>

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

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