

NCFE Dental Nursing Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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SAMPLE

Questions

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- 1. What is the correct term for a yellow-coloured, hard deposit often visible in the oral cavity due to poor hygiene?**
 - A. Biofilm**
 - B. Plaque**
 - C. Subgingival calculus**
 - D. Supragingival calculus**
- 2. Which organism is usually associated with the onset of dental caries?**
 - A. Actinomyces**
 - B. Bacteroides**
 - C. Lactobacillus**
 - D. Streptococcus**
- 3. Which one of the following toothpaste ingredients has the most effect on removing some surface stains from the teeth?**
 - A. Biological enzymes**
 - B. Sodium fluoride**
 - C. Sodium saccharin**
 - D. Triclosan**
- 4. A periapical radiograph has been taken of the lower right second premolar tooth that is undergoing endodontic treatment and root filling, and the view has been coned so that just the crown of the tooth is missing from the radiograph. Which of the following is the most likely quality assurance rating for this view?**
 - A. Score 1**
 - B. Score 2**
 - C. Score 3**
 - D. Score 4**
- 5. What is the primary purpose of a dental crown?**
 - A. Enhance appearance of teeth**
 - B. Support dental bridges**
 - C. Protect a weak tooth**
 - D. Whiten discolored teeth**

- 6. When is it unlikely that a pair of Adams pliers will be needed at an orthodontic appointment?**
- A. Adjusting a functional appliance**
 - B. Debonding a fixed appliance**
 - C. Fitting a removable appliance**
 - D. Tightening a removable retainer**
- 7. Glass ionomer cements are a widely used dental material. Which one of the following options states the main advantage of this material over composites?**
- A. Adhesive to enamel**
 - B. Easily polished**
 - C. Releases fluoride**
 - D. Superior strength**
- 8. Which role can be carried out by all dental staff, including dental nurses?**
- A. IRMER practitioner**
 - B. Operator**
 - C. Radiation protection advisor**
 - D. Referrer**
- 9. Which one of the following is the usual retentive component present on a removable orthodontic appliance?**
- A. Adams crib**
 - B. Band**
 - C. Canine retractor**
 - D. Finger spring**
- 10. Which type of gloves is often recommended for use in infection control procedures?**
- A. Latex**
 - B. Powdered**
 - C. Vinyl**
 - D. Non-latex**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the correct term for a yellow-coloured, hard deposit often visible in the oral cavity due to poor hygiene?

- A. Biofilm**
- B. Plaque**
- C. Subgingival calculus**
- D. Supragingival calculus**

The term "supragingival calculus" refers to the hard yellowish deposit that often forms above the gum line due to inadequate oral hygiene. This type of calculus develops from mineralized dental plaque, which is composed of bacteria, food particles, and saliva. When plaque is not regularly removed through brushing and flossing, it can harden and become calculus. Supragingival calculus is typically found on the teeth, especially on the buccal surfaces of the molars and the lingual surfaces of the lower incisors, where saliva flows. Its presence is a visible indicator of poor oral hygiene practices, as it becomes more prominent when brushing and flossing are neglected. In contrast, biofilm refers to a thin, sticky film of bacteria that forms on teeth, but it is not specifically a hard deposit and can describe a wider range of microbial growth. Plaque is a soft, sticky accumulation of bacteria that can lead to the formation of calculus if not cleaned properly; however, it is not the hard deposit itself. Subgingival calculus forms below the gum line and may not be visible without clinical examination, distinguishing it from the supragingival type that is readily seen.

2. Which organism is usually associated with the onset of dental caries?

- A. Actinomyces**
- B. Bacteroides**
- C. Lactobacillus**
- D. Streptococcus**

Streptococcus, particularly *Streptococcus mutans*, plays a pivotal role in the development of dental caries. This organism is known for its ability to metabolize sugars and produce acid as a byproduct. The acid produced can de-mineralize tooth enamel, leading to the formation of cavities. *Streptococcus mutans* adheres to the tooth surface and contributes to the formation of dental plaque, which provides a conducive environment for caries development. The process begins when sugars are consumed, and the acid production by *Streptococcus mutans* lowers the pH around the teeth, leading to an imbalance in the enamel's mineralization and demineralization. Over time, this can result in the decay associated with caries. Thus, *Streptococcus* is central to the onset of dental caries due to its specific pathogenic attributes and its role in the oral ecosystem.

3. Which one of the following toothpaste ingredients has the most effect on removing some surface stains from the teeth?

A. Biological enzymes

B. Sodium fluoride

C. Sodium saccharin

D. Triclosan

The ingredient that has the most effect on removing surface stains from teeth is biological enzymes. These enzymes work by breaking down the proteins associated with dental stains, particularly from substances like coffee, tea, and tobacco. When incorporated into toothpaste, they can help to gently lift stains from the enamel surface without being abrasive, making them particularly effective for maintaining a bright, clean appearance of teeth. Sodium fluoride is primarily included in toothpaste for its ability to strengthen tooth enamel and prevent decay rather than for cleaning or stain removal. Sodium saccharin is a sweetening agent used in some dental products to improve flavor but does not serve any role in stain removal. Triclosan is an antibacterial agent that targets plaque and gingivitis, but again, it is not specifically effective for removing surface stains. Thus, while all these ingredients play a role in oral hygiene, biological enzymes specifically focus on addressing surface stains, making them the best choice for this purpose.

4. A periapical radiograph has been taken of the lower right second premolar tooth that is undergoing endodontic treatment and root filling, and the view has been coned so that just the crown of the tooth is missing from the radiograph. Which of the following is the most likely quality assurance rating for this view?

A. Score 1

B. Score 2

C. Score 3

D. Score 4

The scenario describes a periapical radiograph of a lower right second premolar that is undergoing endodontic treatment, where the view has been restricted to exclude the crown of the tooth. In dental radiography, quality assurance ratings are typically based on the completeness and diagnostic utility of the radiograph. In this case, a score of 2 suggests that the radiograph has some diagnostic value despite the missing crown. It indicates that while the view is not ideal for assessing all aspects of the tooth, it still provides necessary information about the root structure and any potential periapical issues, which are critical in endodontic treatment. A score of 2 would reflect that while there is a limitation, the radiograph can still aid in the evaluation and management of the tooth's condition during treatment. Higher scores would indicate a more complete and diagnostic view of the tooth, while a lower score would suggest that the radiograph lacks substantial diagnostic value. Thus, a score of 2 is a reasonable assessment for a radiograph that is partially coned but retains significant information for the endodontic assessment.

5. What is the primary purpose of a dental crown?

- A. Enhance appearance of teeth**
- B. Support dental bridges**
- C. Protect a weak tooth**
- D. Whiten discolored teeth**

The primary purpose of a dental crown is to protect a weak tooth. Crowns are designed to encase the entire tooth structure above the gum line, providing strength and support to teeth that have been compromised due to decay, trauma, or large fillings. By covering the tooth, crowns help prevent further damage and reduce the risk of fracture, effectively maintaining the tooth's functionality. While enhancing the appearance of teeth, supporting dental bridges, and whitening discolored teeth are important aspects of dental treatments and procedures, they do not capture the primary function of a crown. Crowns can certainly improve tooth aesthetics and work in conjunction with bridges, but their essential role lies in protecting and preserving the integrity of weakened teeth.

6. When is it unlikely that a pair of Adams pliers will be needed at an orthodontic appointment?

- A. Adjusting a functional appliance**
- B. Debonding a fixed appliance**
- C. Fitting a removable appliance**
- D. Tightening a removable retainer**

The use of Adams pliers is primarily associated with the manipulation and adjustment of orthodontic appliances. During debonding, especially with fixed appliances, the focus is on safely removing brackets and other components from the teeth without needing the specialized capabilities of Adams pliers. This process typically requires different tools, such as debonding pliers or a scaler, to efficiently detach the bonding material and brackets from the tooth surface. In contrast, the other scenarios involve tasks where Adams pliers would be relevant. Adjusting a functional appliance and fitting a removable appliance may require bending or shaping wires, which Adams pliers are well-suited for. Similarly, tightening a removable retainer often necessitates using pliers to properly adjust the fit and ensure comfort. Therefore, debonding a fixed appliance stands out as the occasion where Adams pliers are least likely to be required.

7. Glass ionomer cements are a widely used dental material. Which one of the following options states the main advantage of this material over composites?

- A. Adhesive to enamel**
- B. Easily polished**
- C. Releases fluoride**
- D. Superior strength**

Glass ionomer cements are distinguished in dental materials primarily due to their ability to release fluoride, which contributes to the therapeutic benefits for both the tooth structure and surrounding tissues. This release of fluoride helps to prevent caries and can even promote the remineralization of early carious lesions. The fluoride release from glass ionomer cements promotes both short-term and long-term oral health, making it particularly advantageous in settings like pediatric dentistry or for patients at higher risk for cavities. Other materials, such as composite resins, do not typically offer the same level of fluoride release, focusing instead on their aesthetic qualities and strength. In addition, glass ionomer cements also bond chemically to both enamel and dentin, which can enhance their performance in certain clinical situations. While considerations of polishability, adherence to enamel, and strength are important in the choice of dental materials, the unique fluoride-releasing property stands out as a key advantage of glass ionomer cements over composite materials.

8. Which role can be carried out by all dental staff, including dental nurses?

- A. IRMER practitioner**
- B. Operator**
- C. Radiation protection advisor**
- D. Referrer**

The operator role in a dental setting is one that can be carried out by all dental staff, including dental nurses. Operators are involved in performing various clinical tasks on patients and are essential to the daily functioning of a dental practice. In this context, an operator is typically directly involved in patient care, which can include taking radiographs, assisting in procedures, and providing initial assessments under the supervision of a dentist or dental hygienist. This role is pivotal because it revolves around the direct provision of care and support to patients, showcasing the vital contribution of dental nurses alongside dentists and hygienists. In contrast, the other roles mentioned have requirements or limitations regarding who can perform them. For instance, only qualified practitioners can act as an IRMER practitioner, as it involves a deeper understanding of radiation regulations and patient safety concerning x-rays. Similarly, a radiation protection advisor carries specialized knowledge and expertise in radiation safety regulations, which may limit this role to those with specific training. Lastly, while referring patients for further treatment is a crucial aspect of dental care, it typically falls within the purview of registered dental professionals rather than dental nurses. By understanding the distinction between these roles, one can appreciate the versatility of dental nurses and the importance of their contributions to the dental team.

9. Which one of the following is the usual retentive component present on a removable orthodontic appliance?

A. Adams crib

B. Band

C. Canine retractor

D. Finger spring

The Adams crib is a commonly used retentive component on removable orthodontic appliances, particularly in the context of holding the appliance securely in the patient's mouth. This component is specifically designed to engage with the anatomy of the teeth, providing stabilization and preventing the appliance from dislodging during normal oral functions. The Adams crib typically wraps around the posterior teeth, allowing it to latch onto existing dental structures for retention. This feature is essential for ensuring that the orthodontic appliance remains in place while facilitating tooth movement or maintaining dental alignment. While other components like bands can also have a role in orthodontic appliances, they are usually fixed components that are not integral to removable appliances. Canine retractors are typically used in fixed orthodontic systems and are not relevant in this context. Finger springs are used for specific movements and adjustments in orthodontic treatment but do not primarily serve as a retentive mechanism for removable appliances. Thus, the Adams crib is definitively the retentive component that is most commonly found in removable orthodontic appliances.

10. Which type of gloves is often recommended for use in infection control procedures?

A. Latex

B. Powdered

C. Vinyl

D. Non-latex

Latex gloves are often recommended for use in infection control procedures due to their excellent barrier protection against pathogens. They provide a snug fit, which enhances dexterity and tactile sensitivity, making them ideal for tasks that require a high level of precision, such as dental procedures. The natural elasticity of latex also ensures that these gloves conform well to the hand, reducing the risk of accidental tears or punctures that could compromise infection control. However, it's important to note that while latex gloves are highly effective, some individuals may have latex allergies, which can lead to serious allergic reactions. As a result, alternatives that offer similar protection, like non-latex gloves, have gained popularity in healthcare settings, especially for those who are sensitive to latex. Infection control guidelines favor the use of personal protective equipment that minimizes the risk of cross-contamination, and latex gloves have historically been a strong choice in this regard. Other types of gloves, such as vinyl, may not provide the same level of barrier protection and durability, especially in high-risk environments.