

NCLEX Archer Pharmacology 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. When administering ear drops to a six-year-old, what action should the nurse take?**
 - A. Pull the ear pinna down and back**
 - B. Pull the ear pinna up and back**
 - C. Keep the child upright during administration**
 - D. Place cotton directly into the ear after administration**
- 2. Donepezil is prescribed to treat which of the following conditions?**
 - A. Guillain Barré syndrome**
 - B. Parkinson's disease**
 - C. Alzheimer's disease**
 - D. Meniere's disease**
- 3. After administering insulin, which finding is most indicative of effective glycemic control?**
 - A. Increased energy levels**
 - B. Consistent fasting blood sugar levels**
 - C. Stable weight**
 - D. Normal appetite**
- 4. What is the primary treatment for a client diagnosed with pernicious anemia?**
 - A. Thiamine**
 - B. Vitamin B12**
 - C. Iron dextran**
 - D. Folic acid**
- 5. Which finding would indicate a therapeutic response in a client taking risperidone?**
 - A. A reduction in weight**
 - B. Increased mood lability**
 - C. An appropriate gait pattern**
 - D. Decreased thoughts of persecution**

6. What indicates a therapeutic effect in a client receiving buspirone?

- A. "I am less depressed and able to spend time with my friends."**
- B. "My anxiety has lessened, and I have started going out more."**
- C. "I noticed an improvement in my concentration."**
- D. "I have been able to fall asleep without any problem."**

7. When monitoring a patient receiving IV cisplatin, what potential adverse effect should the nurse be most vigilant for?

- A. Irreversible heart failure**
- B. Bone marrow suppression**
- C. Cardiac toxicity**
- D. Peripheral neuropathy**

8. What clinical finding suggests hypoglycemia after administering regular insulin?

- A. Rapid, labored breathing**
- B. Increased appetite**
- C. Cold sweats**
- D. Increased urination**

9. Which of the following medications requires serum levels to be monitored regularly?

- A. Digoxin**
- B. Metformin**
- C. Amoxicillin**
- D. Levothyroxine**

10. What serious side effect should the nurse monitor for in a client taking lamotrigine?

- A. Abnormal dreams**
- B. Skin blistering**
- C. Dyspepsia**
- D. Xerostomia**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. When administering ear drops to a six-year-old, what action should the nurse take?

- A. Pull the ear pinna down and back**
- B. Pull the ear pinna up and back**
- C. Keep the child upright during administration**
- D. Place cotton directly into the ear after administration**

When administering ear drops to a six-year-old, the appropriate action is to pull the ear pinna up and back. This technique is specifically recommended for children older than three years, as it allows for a straighter pathway to the eardrum, ensuring that the medication reaches the intended area more effectively. In contrast, pulling the ear pinna down and back is the recommended technique for infants and younger children. Keeping the child upright during administration is important for comfort, but it does not specifically influence the effectiveness of the medication delivery. Placing cotton directly into the ear after administration is not a standard practice, as it can create pressure or block the ear canal, potentially preventing the ear drops from being absorbed properly. Therefore, the correct technique of pulling the pinna up and back is essential for administering ear drops effectively in a six-year-old.

2. Donepezil is prescribed to treat which of the following conditions?

- A. Guillain Barré syndrome**
- B. Parkinson's disease**
- C. Alzheimer's disease**
- D. Meniere's disease**

Donepezil is primarily prescribed for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. It is an acetylcholinesterase inhibitor that works by increasing the levels of acetylcholine in the brain, which is important for learning and memory. Alzheimer's disease is characterized by the degeneration of neurons and a decline in cognitive function, and the use of donepezil can help improve symptoms or slow their progression, providing some symptomatic relief for patients. The other conditions mentioned do not involve a similar mechanism or underlying pathology that would make donepezil an appropriate choice. For instance, Guillain Barré syndrome is an autoimmune disorder affecting the peripheral nervous system, Parkinson's disease primarily involves dopamine deficiencies, and Meniere's disease is related to inner ear issues affecting balance and hearing. Thus, donepezil's role is specifically tailored to manage cognitive decline associated with Alzheimer's disease, making it the correct choice in this context.

3. After administering insulin, which finding is most indicative of effective glycemic control?

- A. Increased energy levels**
- B. Consistent fasting blood sugar levels**
- C. Stable weight**
- D. Normal appetite**

Consistent fasting blood sugar levels are a key indicator of effective glycemic control after administering insulin. Maintaining blood glucose levels within a targeted range is crucial for preventing both short-term complications, such as hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, as well as long-term complications associated with diabetes management. When fasting blood sugar levels are stable and within the normal range, it signifies that the insulin dosage has effectively managed blood glucose levels. This should be monitored regularly, as inconsistent or high levels would suggest inadequate glycemic control. Other factors like increased energy levels, stable weight, and normal appetite can be influenced by multiple other factors including diet, lifestyle, and individual metabolism, making them less direct indicators of effective glycemic control. Therefore, monitoring for consistent fasting blood sugar levels provides a clear measure of how well the insulin therapy is functioning.

4. What is the primary treatment for a client diagnosed with pernicious anemia?

- A. Thiamine**
- B. Vitamin B12**
- C. Iron dextran**
- D. Folic acid**

The primary treatment for pernicious anemia is Vitamin B12. This condition arises due to a deficiency of Vitamin B12, which is often linked to a lack of intrinsic factor, a protein necessary for the absorption of this vitamin in the intestine. Individuals with pernicious anemia cannot effectively absorb Vitamin B12 from the diet, leading to a significant decrease in red blood cell production and resulting symptoms such as fatigue, weakness, and neurological issues. Administering Vitamin B12, often through intramuscular injections, directly addresses the deficiency and helps in replenishing the body's stores. This treatment not only resolves hematological symptoms but also plays a crucial role in preventing neurological complications associated with prolonged deficiency. Regular monitoring and lifelong supplementation are typically required for those diagnosed with pernicious anemia. Other treatments like thiamine, iron dextran, and folic acid do not specifically correct the underlying issue of Vitamin B12 deficiency, which makes Vitamin B12 the most appropriate and effective treatment for this condition.

5. Which finding would indicate a therapeutic response in a client taking risperidone?

- A. A reduction in weight**
- B. Increased mood lability**
- C. An appropriate gait pattern**
- D. D. Decreased thoughts of persecution**

A therapeutic response in a client taking risperidone is indicated by a decrease in symptoms associated with psychotic disorders, such as paranoia or delusions. The drug is an atypical antipsychotic that primarily works by blocking dopamine receptors in the brain, which can help reduce delusional thoughts and improve overall mental clarity. When patients experience decreased thoughts of persecution, it implies that the medication is effectively addressing symptoms of paranoia, which is a common manifestation in conditions like schizophrenia or severe bipolar disorder. This reduction in paranoia is a positive sign that the medication is working as intended. In contrast, other options do not align with the primary objectives of risperidone therapy. While weight change can occur during treatment, it is not a direct indicator of therapeutic efficacy related to the symptoms the medication is meant to treat. Increased mood lability suggests instability in mood, which may signal that the treatment is inadequate or that the patient's condition is not being effectively managed. An appropriate gait pattern might be a sign of overall physical health or coordination but does not directly correlate with the therapeutic goals for psychotic symptoms.

6. What indicates a therapeutic effect in a client receiving buspirone?

- A. "I am less depressed and able to spend time with my friends."**
- B. "My anxiety has lessened, and I have started going out more."**
- C. "I noticed an improvement in my concentration."**
- D. "I have been able to fall asleep without any problem."**

Buspirone is an anxiolytic medication primarily used for the treatment of anxiety disorders. It works differently from benzodiazepines by acting as a serotonin receptor agonist and does not have the sedative properties associated with many other anti-anxiety medications. The statement that indicates a therapeutic effect relates directly to the primary purpose of buspirone: the reduction of anxiety. When a client reports that their anxiety has lessened and they have started engaging in social activities, it clearly shows that the medication is effectively managing their anxiety symptoms. This improvement reflects how buspirone aims to alleviate anxiety and enhance the client's ability to participate in everyday life. In contrast, the other options, while they may represent positive changes in mood or well-being, do not directly indicate the effectiveness of buspirone in treating anxiety. While feeling less depressed or having improved concentration and sleep may contribute to overall mental health, they do not specifically showcase the therapeutic target of buspirone, which is primarily focused on anxiety relief. Therefore, the reduction of anxiety symptoms is the hallmark indication of a therapeutic effect from buspirone.

7. When monitoring a patient receiving IV cisplatin, what potential adverse effect should the nurse be most vigilant for?

- A. Irreversible heart failure**
- B. Bone marrow suppression**
- C. Cardiac toxicity**
- D. Peripheral neuropathy**

Cisplatin is a platinum-based chemotherapy agent commonly used to treat various cancers. One of the most significant adverse effects associated with cisplatin is bone marrow suppression. This can lead to a decrease in the production of blood cells, specifically red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets, resulting in anemia, increased susceptibility to infections, and increased risk of bleeding. Monitoring for signs of bone marrow suppression is crucial, as these complications can significantly impact the patient's overall health and complicate cancer treatment. Regular blood counts are typically performed to assess the levels of these cells throughout therapy. While cisplatin can lead to other adverse effects, such as nausea, renal toxicity, ototoxicity, and peripheral neuropathy, the most immediate and significant concern in the context of monitoring during treatment is the risk of bone marrow suppression.

8. What clinical finding suggests hypoglycemia after administering regular insulin?

- A. Rapid, labored breathing**
- B. Increased appetite**
- C. Cold sweats**
- D. Increased urination**

Cold sweats are a clinical finding that suggests hypoglycemia after administering regular insulin. When blood glucose levels drop too low, the body activates mechanisms to raise blood sugar, which includes the release of adrenaline (epinephrine). This hormone triggers sweating, especially on the palms and forehead, leading to the characteristic cold sweats. This response is a part of the autonomic nervous system's reaction to hypoglycemia. Symptoms of hypoglycemia can also include shakiness, irritability, confusion, and in more severe cases, loss of consciousness or seizures. Recognizing cold sweats as a sign can help prompt timely intervention to prevent further complications from low blood sugar levels. The other options describe symptoms associated with different conditions. Rapid, labored breathing typically indicates respiratory distress or metabolic issues. Increased appetite may occur as the body attempts to compensate for energy loss but is not a definitive sign of hypoglycemia. Increased urination is more often associated with hyperglycemia or diabetes-related conditions rather than hypoglycemia, as the body tends to retain fluid and reduce urination when glucose levels are low.

9. Which of the following medications requires serum levels to be monitored regularly?

- A. Digoxin**
- B. Metformin**
- C. Amoxicillin**
- D. Levothyroxine**

Digoxin is a cardiac glycoside used primarily to treat heart failure and certain arrhythmias. Regular monitoring of serum digoxin levels is crucial due to its narrow therapeutic index. This narrow therapeutic index means that the difference between a therapeutic dose and a toxic dose is very small, making patients susceptible to toxicity even with slight deviations in dosage or when interacting medications are introduced. Furthermore, factors such as renal function can significantly affect digoxin levels, as the drug is primarily excreted through the kidneys. Monitoring these serum levels helps ensure that patients receive an effective dose while minimizing the risk of toxicity, which can lead to serious complications such as cardiac arrhythmias, gastrointestinal symptoms, and neurological effects. In comparison, while other medications listed may require monitoring for different reasons—such as monitoring kidney function in patients on metformin, or thyroid function tests for levothyroxine—these do not typically necessitate the regular serum level checks associated with digoxin. Amoxicillin, an antibiotic, generally does not require such monitoring in standard practice.

10. What serious side effect should the nurse monitor for in a client taking lamotrigine?

- A. Abnormal dreams**
- B. Skin blistering**
- C. Dyspepsia**
- D. Xerostomia**

When caring for a client taking lamotrigine, it is essential for the nurse to monitor for skin blistering, which is indicative of a serious side effect known as Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS). Lamotrigine is an anticonvulsant medication frequently used to manage seizures and mood stabilization in bipolar disorder, but it carries the risk of severe dermatologic reactions. Stevens-Johnson syndrome is a potentially life-threatening condition characterized by extensive skin detachment, painful blistering, and mucosal lesions. Early symptoms can include flu-like signs, followed by rapid progression to skin involvement. As such, immediate recognition and management are critical to minimize complications, including possible hospitalization or discontinuation of the drug. While the other options may present as side effects or symptoms associated with various medications, they do not carry the same level of risk for serious complications as skin blistering does in the context of lamotrigine therapy. Monitoring for signs of skin blistering is paramount to ensuring patient safety and responding promptly to any signs of this severe reaction.

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://nclexarcherpharmacology.examzify.com>

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

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