

NCLEX HIV/AIDS 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. Which of the following is NOT an adaptive coping behavior?**
 - A. Seeking advice**
 - B. Overeating**
 - C. Oversleeping**
 - D. Drinking alcohol**

- 2. The rationale for assessing every client to determine if stress reduction interventions should be part of the plan of care is that:**
 - A. There are more persons experiencing mental illness now than in the past.**
 - B. Life is so much more stressful than it has ever been.**
 - C. The occurrence of stress in clients is unpredictable.**
 - D. Clients often develop maladaptive coping strategies.**

- 3. A co-worker snaps at the nurse and hurls papers onto the desk before the shift. Why might this occur?**
 - A. Hostility and resentment of the late nurse**
 - B. Depression related to something occurring outside the workplace**
 - C. Anger due to being reprimanded earlier in the day**
 - D. Anxiety about information they just received regarding their health**

- 4. What occurs during Exhaustion in GAS?**
 - A. Energy is depleted, cannot adapt, and dies**
 - B. Hormone levels remain elevated**
 - C. Immune function improves**
 - D. The body returns to normal**

- 5. During the general adaptation syndrome, which stage follows the alarm stage and involves attempts to cope and adapt?**
 - A. Alarm**
 - B. Resistance**
 - C. Exhaustion**
 - D. Recovery**

- 6. Which coping approach would best empower a patient to participate in treatment decisions after a cancer diagnosis?**
- A. Go away for a few days to forget about the situation.**
 - B. Talk to family and friends about negative feelings.**
 - C. Seek information about the cancer and treatment options.**
 - D. Wait to see what the oncologist recommends for treatment.**
- 7. What are Ego Defense Mechanisms?**
- A. Unconscious psychological adaptive mechanisms**
 - B. Conscious coping strategies**
 - C. Hormonal changes**
 - D. Somatic responses**
- 8. Which theory describes stress as a process including internal and external demands and resources?**
- A. Stress as stimulus (Holmes and Rahe)**
 - B. Stress as response (Selye)**
 - C. Stress as transaction (Lazarus)**
 - D. Stress as a process including internal and external demands and resources (Pearlin)**
- 9. Which statement best defines stress according to the material?**
- A. Any disturbance in a person's normal balanced state**
 - B. Unique response by each person to a stressor**
 - C. Can be harmful or motivating**
 - D. All of the above**
- 10. Which term describes the act of making excuses to justify behavior?**
- A. Compensation**
 - B. Excuses**
 - C. Minimization**
 - D. Rationalization**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following is NOT an adaptive coping behavior?

- A. Seeking advice**
- B. Overeating**
- C. Oversleeping**
- D. Drinking alcohol**

Coping with stress in the moment should reduce distress without creating new problems. An adaptive coping strategy helps you handle the situation constructively and supports long-term well-being. Seeking advice fits this pattern because it involves reaching out for guidance, gathering information, and problem-solving, which can lead to real solutions and added support. Overeating and oversleeping might offer temporary relief or a distraction, but they often don't address the underlying issue and can become patterns that harm health, energy, and functioning over time. They may feel helpful in the short term, yet they're not effective long-term strategies. Drinking alcohol, on the other hand, tends to provide a quick sense of relief but typically worsens stress, can lead to health and safety problems, and interferes with coping effectiveness. It masks the problem rather than solving it, making it not an adaptive coping behavior.

2. The rationale for assessing every client to determine if stress reduction interventions should be part of the plan of care is that:

- A. There are more persons experiencing mental illness now than in the past.**
- B. Life is so much more stressful than it has ever been.**
- C. The occurrence of stress in clients is unpredictable.**
- D. Clients often develop maladaptive coping strategies.**

Stress affects health and how a person responds to illness, so identifying it early helps tailor interventions that support coping and recovery. The main reason for assessing every client is that stress can occur unpredictably in anyone, regardless of current diagnosis or appearance, so you can't rely on factors like history or symptoms alone to decide who needs help. By screening for stress, you can introduce stress-reduction strategies—such as relaxation techniques, coping skills, and social support—before problems escalate, potentially improving outcomes, adherence, and quality of life. While some clients may indeed have maladaptive coping, you can't assume who will need help, so universal assessment ensures no one is missed.

3. A co-worker snaps at the nurse and hurls papers onto the desk before the shift. Why might this occur?

- A. Hostility and resentment of the late nurse**
- B. Depression related to something occurring outside the workplace**
- C. Anger due to being reprimanded earlier in the day**
- D. Anxiety about information they just received regarding their health**

When someone arrives late and then vents by snapping at a colleague and throwing papers, it often reflects underlying hostility or resentment toward that person. The delay directly affects the team's workload, pace, and stress level, so the reaction targets the late teammate who disrupted the shift. This behavior is an outward sign of built-up frustration about the impact of the lateness on patient care and the work environment. Depression tied to something outside the workplace would more likely show as subdued mood or withdrawal rather than a sudden, pointed outburst toward a coworker. Anger from being reprimanded earlier in the day could happen, but the phrasing suggests the anger is directed at the late nurse as the trigger, not at the reprimand in general. Anxiety about personal health tends to show as worry or fear rather than direct aggression toward a coworker. If you're faced with this situation, approach calmly and consider addressing the behavior or involving a supervisor if it repeats, but the immediate interpretation of the action points to hostility and resentment toward the late nurse being the best explanation.

4. What occurs during Exhaustion in GAS?

- A. Energy is depleted, cannot adapt, and dies**
- B. Hormone levels remain elevated**
- C. Immune function improves**
- D. The body returns to normal**

During Exhaustion, the body's resources have been depleted by prolonged stress, and its ability to continue adapting is lost. The energy stores, hormonal regulation, and immune defenses that were mobilized in earlier stages become exhausted, making the organism highly vulnerable to illness and organ failure. If the stress persists, the body's compensatory mechanisms shut down, leading toward collapse and, in severe cases, death. That's why the description of energy being depleted, the capacity to adapt being lost, and death resulting best captures what happens in this stage. In contrast, staying in a state of prolonged high hormones isn't sustainable and isn't the defining feature of exhaustion; immune function generally becomes suppressed rather than improved; and the body does not spontaneously return to normal during exhaustion without recovery.

5. During the general adaptation syndrome, which stage follows the alarm stage and involves attempts to cope and adapt?

A. Alarm

B. Resistance

C. Exhaustion

D. Recovery

During the general adaptation syndrome, after the initial alarm reaction, the body enters a stage of resistance. In this phase the organism works to cope with the ongoing stressor by sustaining arousal and mobilizing energy and resources. Hormones like adrenaline and cortisol help keep the body prepared to deal with the threat, glucose is mobilized for energy, and physiological systems are kept in a heightened state to counteract the stressor. The goal is to adapt to the stress and return toward balance, even though the body remains alert and engaged with the challenge. If the stress continues and resources are continually taxed, the system may then move toward exhaustion, where defenses are depleted and vulnerability to illness increases. Recovery, in the sense of a return to baseline after adaptation, is more about returning to homeostasis rather than a separate stage in the sequence.

6. Which coping approach would best empower a patient to participate in treatment decisions after a cancer diagnosis?

A. Go away for a few days to forget about the situation.

B. Talk to family and friends about negative feelings.

C. Seek information about the cancer and treatment options.

D. Wait to see what the oncologist recommends for treatment.

Empowerment in care comes from obtaining information and using it to participate in decisions about treatment. When a patient actively seeks knowledge about the cancer, available therapies, and what those options involve, they can compare how each choice fits their goals, values, and lifestyle. This informed perspective lets the patient ask precise questions, weigh risks and benefits, and collaborate with the care team to select a plan that aligns with what matters most to them. That sense of agency and understanding is what most effectively supports ongoing engagement in care, adherence, and satisfaction with the treatment experience. The other approaches don't build this active, informed participation. Taking time away to forget the situation is avoidance and can delay needed decisions. Venting emotions to family or friends is valuable for coping, but it doesn't directly equip the patient to engage in treatment choices. Waiting for the oncologist's recommendation places the patient in a passive role and relinquishes personal preferences and values in the decision-making process.

7. What are Ego Defense Mechanisms?

- A. Unconscious psychological adaptive mechanisms**
- B. Conscious coping strategies**
- C. Hormonal changes**
- D. Somatic responses**

Ego defense mechanisms are unconscious psychological processes that protect the mind from anxiety or conflict by distorting reality or managing internal feelings. They operate without the person's awareness, helping to reduce distress when faced with threats to self-esteem, guilt, or unacceptable impulses. Because they happen automatically and shape behavior without deliberate intention, they're best described as unconscious psychological adaptive mechanisms. Many people use these mechanisms; for example, repression pushes distressing thoughts out of awareness, denial refuses to acknowledge painful reality, and projection attributes one's own unacceptable feelings to someone else. These differ from conscious coping strategies, which are deliberate, planned ways of dealing with stress. They also aren't about hormonal changes or physical body responses, which are physiological, not mental, processes.

8. Which theory describes stress as a process including internal and external demands and resources?

- A. Stress as stimulus (Holmes and Rahe)**
- B. Stress as response (Selye)**
- C. Stress as transaction (Lazarus)**
- D. Stress as a process including internal and external demands and resources (Pearlin)**

Stress is best understood as a process that unfolds over time, shaped by the ongoing interaction between what a person must handle and what they have available to cope with it. Pearlin's approach centers on this dynamic, looking at how external demands (like role strain, financial pressures, stigma, or caregiving responsibilities) combine with internal resources (such as self-efficacy, coping skills, and emotional regulation) and external supports (support from family, friends, or health services). The model highlights how these demands and resources influence appraisal, coping efforts, and ultimately health and functioning, with stress potentially spreading from one life domain to another over time (stress proliferation). This framework also emphasizes that resources can buffer the impact of demands, or, if lacking, amplify stress, which is especially relevant in chronic situations like HIV/AIDS where caregiving, treatment adherence, stigma, and social support dynamically interact. In contrast, viewing stress merely as a stimulus focuses on events that occur, and viewing stress as a physiological response emphasizes the body's reactions; while Lazarus' transactional view centers on appraisal and coping, Pearlin adds the broader social-contextual process and the role of resources in shaping how stress is experienced and managed.

9. Which statement best defines stress according to the material?

- A. Any disturbance in a person's normal balanced state**
- B. Unique response by each person to a stressor**
- C. Can be harmful or motivating**
- D. All of the above**

Stress is a process that begins when a disturbance disrupts a person's normal balance (homeostasis) and triggers an adaptive response. The best answer is all of the above because each statement captures a facet of stress: it is any disturbance to the normal balanced state; individuals respond to the same stressor in unique ways due to perception, past experiences, and coping resources; and stress can be harmful if excessive or chronic, yet it can also be motivating or protective in the short term. Together, these aspects reflect how stress operates in real life and in health care. In practice, assess how a patient perceives stress and what coping strategies they have, since this influences health outcomes and management, including approaches like relaxation, social support, and problem-solving, which can help reduce harm while supporting adaptive responses.

10. Which term describes the act of making excuses to justify behavior?

- A. Compensation**
- B. Excuses**
- C. Minimization**
- D. Rationalization**

Rationalization is the act of making excuses to justify behavior. It's a defense mechanism that lets a person mask the real motivation behind an action by offering plausible, but not truly accurate, reasons. The justification sounds reasonable on the surface, yet it doesn't address the underlying issue or responsibility. For example, a patient who misses an appointment might claim the clinic was too far away, when the deeper barrier could be fear of bad news or stigma. Recognizing rationalization helps clinicians address the true obstacles to adherence or behavior change, rather than accepting the surface justification.

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://nclexhivaidsexamzify.com>

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

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