

NCLEX Neurologic and Sensory Systems Practice Exam (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. What should the nurse do immediately if a client shows progressive hypotension after a right carotid endarterectomy?**
 - A. Notify the healthcare provider**
 - B. Increase the intravenous (IV) flow rate**
 - C. Raise the head of the bed**
 - D. Place the client in the Trendelenburg position**
- 2. What sleep promotion technique should a nurse advise an older adult who has trouble sleeping at night?**
 - A. Exercise daily**
 - B. Read in bed before sleeping**
 - C. Avoid naps during the daytime**
 - D. Have a hot cup of tea at bedtime**
- 3. What is the normal range for ICP readings?**
 - A. 5 to 15 mmHg**
 - B. 20 to 35 mmHg**
 - C. 60 to 100 mmHg**
 - D. 5 to 25 mmHg**
- 4. What is a common outcome for individuals with a traumatic brain injury?**
 - A. Quick recovery without assistance**
 - B. Permanent cognitive deficits**
 - C. Improved memory function**
 - D. Increased motivation**
- 5. Which assessment tool is used to evaluate a patient's level of consciousness?**
 - A. Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE)**
 - B. Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS)**
 - C. Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA)**
 - D. Beck Depression Inventory**

6. What condition is characterized by a progressive loss of memory and cognitive function?

- A. Parkinson's disease**
- B. Dementia**
- C. Alzheimer's disease**
- D. Multiple sclerosis**

7. What is the function of sensory receptors?

- A. To generate electrical impulses**
- B. To detect stimuli and convert them into electrical signals**
- C. To process information in the brain**
- D. To release hormones**

8. What visual field defects are commonly caused by lesions in the occipital lobe?

- A. Monocular blindness**
- B. Homonymous hemianopia and quadrantanopia**
- C. Scotomas and night blindness**
- D. Peripheral vision loss**

9. On what principle should client education be based to reestablish regular defecation?

- A. Sedentary activities produce muscle atony.**
- B. Increased fluid promotes ease of evacuation.**
- C. Peristalsis is initiated by the gastrocolic reflex.**
- D. Increased potassium is needed for normal neuromuscular irritability.**

10. Which neurological evaluation would best assess limb coordination?

- A. Heel-to-shin test**
- B. Finger-to-nose test**
- C. Romberg test**
- D. Deep tendon reflex test**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What should the nurse do immediately if a client shows progressive hypotension after a right carotid endarterectomy?

- A. Notify the healthcare provider**
- B. Increase the intravenous (IV) flow rate**
- C. Raise the head of the bed**
- D. Place the client in the Trendelenburg position**

The appropriate immediate action for the nurse in the situation of progressive hypotension following a right carotid endarterectomy is to notify the healthcare provider. This is vital because progressive hypotension can indicate potential complications such as bleeding, thrombosis, or other cardiovascular concerns that require urgent evaluation and intervention by a healthcare provider. Timely communication with the healthcare provider ensures that the client receives appropriate and swift further assessment and treatment. While other measures such as adjusting IV fluid rates or positioning the client could be considerations, they do not address the underlying cause or provide the necessary expert evaluation that may be crucial in managing potential complications from the surgical procedure. Prompt notification allows for the possibility of timely intervention, which is essential in preventing further deterioration of the client's condition.

2. What sleep promotion technique should a nurse advise an older adult who has trouble sleeping at night?

- A. Exercise daily**
- B. Read in bed before sleeping**
- C. Avoid naps during the daytime**
- D. Have a hot cup of tea at bedtime**

Advising an older adult to exercise daily is a highly effective sleep promotion technique. Regular physical activity can help regulate the sleep-wake cycle and improve overall sleep quality. Exercise has been shown to decrease the time it takes to fall asleep, enhance sleep duration, and increase the time spent in deep sleep, which is vital for restorative rest. When considering the context of older adults, engaging in moderate exercise can also help mitigate some of the common sleep disturbances associated with aging, such as insomnia or sleep apnea. Encouraging daily exercise, such as walking, swimming, or yoga, fosters not only physical health but also mental well-being, which can contribute to better sleep hygiene and patterns. Although other options may seem appealing, they do not promote sleep as effectively. For instance, reading in bed may lead to increased wakefulness if the materials are too engaging, while the consumption of caffeine, even in tea, can interfere with the ability to fall asleep. Avoiding naps during the day may work for some individuals, but for others, short naps can be beneficial without significantly affecting nighttime sleep—this varies from person to person. Thus, emphasizing regular physical activity stands out as the most beneficial advice for promoting better sleep among older adults.

3. What is the normal range for ICP readings?

- A. 5 to 15 mmHg**
- B. 20 to 35 mmHg**
- C. 60 to 100 mmHg**
- D. 5 to 25 mmHg**

The normal range for intracranial pressure (ICP) readings is typically considered to be from 5 to 15 mmHg. ICP is an important measurement in assessing neurological health, particularly in patients with conditions that may affect brain function or structure, such as traumatic brain injury, stroke, or brain tumors. Maintaining ICP within this normal range is crucial as elevated ICP can lead to reduced cerebral perfusion, brain herniation, and other life-threatening complications. Readings above this range could indicate increased intracranial hypertension, which requires immediate medical intervention. Similarly, values below the normal range may also reflect compromised intracranial conditions. Understanding the normal ICP range is vital for healthcare professionals in monitoring and managing patients with potential or known neurological impairments.

4. What is a common outcome for individuals with a traumatic brain injury?

- A. Quick recovery without assistance**
- B. Permanent cognitive deficits**
- C. Improved memory function**
- D. Increased motivation**

Individuals with a traumatic brain injury often face a range of outcomes, with permanent cognitive deficits being one of the most common effects. This can result from damage to specific areas of the brain responsible for cognitive functions such as memory, attention, problem-solving, and executive functioning. The extent of these deficits can vary widely depending on the severity and location of the injury, but many individuals experience challenges in these areas even after rehabilitation efforts. In contrast, the notion of a quick recovery without assistance is generally unrealistic for many traumatic brain injury patients, as recovery can be a lengthy and complex process. While some may show improvements in certain aspects of function over time, complete recovery is not typical, especially for more severe injuries. Similarly, significant improvement in memory function or increased motivation may occur in some individuals, but these are not standard outcomes for all. Each patient's experience and recovery trajectory can differ markedly, emphasizing the prevalence of cognitive deficits as a significant consequence of brain injuries.

5. Which assessment tool is used to evaluate a patient's level of consciousness?

- A. Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE)**
- B. Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS)**
- C. Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA)**
- D. Beck Depression Inventory**

The Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) is specifically designed to objectively assess a patient's level of consciousness and neurological status following an injury or medical event. It evaluates three aspects: eye opening, verbal response, and motor response. Each of these components is scored individually, with the total score providing a clear indication of the patient's consciousness level, which ranges from fully alert to deep unconsciousness. Using the GCS allows healthcare professionals to monitor changes in a patient's level of consciousness over time, making it crucial in emergency and critical care settings. The higher the total score (which can range from 3 to 15), the better the level of consciousness. Thus, when evaluating neurological function, the GCS is the preferred and standardized tool, emphasizing its importance in clinical practice for assessing consciousness. In contrast, other options like the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) and the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) focus primarily on cognitive function and screen for conditions like dementia rather than directly measuring consciousness. The Beck Depression Inventory is a tool for assessing depression, further indicating that it does not relate to consciousness evaluation.

6. What condition is characterized by a progressive loss of memory and cognitive function?

- A. Parkinson's disease**
- B. Dementia**
- C. Alzheimer's disease**
- D. Multiple sclerosis**

The condition characterized by a progressive loss of memory and cognitive function is Alzheimer's disease. This neurodegenerative disorder specifically leads to a decline in cognitive abilities, including memory, reasoning, and language skills. As it progresses, individuals with Alzheimer's may experience confusion, mood swings, and difficulty with daily tasks. While dementia is a broader term that refers to a group of symptoms affecting memory and cognitive function, Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for a significant proportion of cases. Therefore, while both dementia and Alzheimer's disease involve progressive loss of cognitive functions, the specific label of "Alzheimer's disease" denotes the fundamental pathology associated with the condition. In contrast, Parkinson's disease primarily affects movement and is characterized by motor symptoms like tremors and rigidity, although some individuals may develop dementia later in the disease progression. Multiple sclerosis involves the immune system attacking the central nervous system, leading to a variety of neurological symptoms, some of which may include cognitive dysfunction, but it is not primarily defined by progressive memory loss like Alzheimer's disease is.

7. What is the function of sensory receptors?

- A. To generate electrical impulses
- B. To detect stimuli and convert them into electrical signals**
- C. To process information in the brain
- D. To release hormones

Sensory receptors play a crucial role in the nervous system by detecting stimuli from the environment, such as light, sound, temperature, and pressure. Their primary function is to convert these external stimuli into electrical signals, which can then be transmitted to the brain for processing. This conversion process is fundamental to sensory perception, allowing the body to respond appropriately to different environmental cues. For instance, photoreceptors in the eyes detect light and convert it into electrical signals that are sent to the brain, enabling vision. Similarly, mechanoreceptors in the skin respond to touch and pressure, transforming those sensory inputs into signals the nervous system can interpret. The other options mention processes related to sensory function but do not accurately describe the core role of sensory receptors. Generating electrical impulses is a part of the overall functioning of neurons, but it is not the primary role of sensory receptors themselves. Processing information in the brain pertains to what happens after the signals are transmitted from the receptors, not the function of the receptors. Releasing hormones is unrelated to the sensory function and involves a different system of communication in the body. Thus, the precise function of sensory receptors is best captured by the ability to detect stimuli and convert them into electrical signals.

8. What visual field defects are commonly caused by lesions in the occipital lobe?

- A. Monocular blindness
- B. Homonymous hemianopia and quadrantanopia**
- C. Scotomas and night blindness
- D. Peripheral vision loss

Lesions in the occipital lobe primarily affect the visual processing centers of the brain, which are responsible for interpreting visual information received from the eyes. When these areas are damaged, it leads to specific types of visual field defects. Homonymous hemianopia refers to the loss of half of the visual field in both eyes, where the same side is affected for each eye, typically resulting from lesions in the visual pathways that occur after the optic chiasm—often in the occipital lobe. Similarly, quadrantanopia is a loss of vision in a quarter of the visual field and can also arise from damage to the occipital lobe, as the processing of visual information is disrupted in these regions. This type of damage contrasts with other visual field defects, which have different underlying causes. For instance, monocular blindness reflects issues with the eye itself or the optic nerve before the optic chiasm, while scotomas represent localized vision loss that might result from conditions affecting the retina or visual pathways before reaching the occipital lobe. Peripheral vision loss is often associated with other types of neurological issues or eye diseases, which are not directly related to occipital lobe lesions. In summary, the correct answer emphasizes

9. On what principle should client education be based to reestablish regular defecation?

- A. Sedentary activities produce muscle atony.**
- B. Increased fluid promotes ease of evacuation.**
- C. Peristalsis is initiated by the gastrocolic reflex.**
- D. Increased potassium is needed for normal neuromuscular irritability.**

The principle that client education should be based on to reestablish regular defecation is grounded in the understanding that peristalsis is initiated by the gastrocolic reflex. This reflex involves the physiological response in which the stomach, upon filling with food, signals the colon to contract and facilitate the movement of stool through the intestines. Educating clients about this reflex underscores the importance of meal timing and regular eating habits as strategies to stimulate bowel movements. Encouraging clients to align their eating patterns with their bowel habits can help enhance the gastrocolic response, promoting more regular defecation. This understanding allows individuals to recognize that stimulating their digestive system through habitual meal schedules can be a key strategy in achieving more predictable and effective bowel functions. The other knowledge areas mentioned may contribute to overall bowel health—such as fluid intake for softening stool and the role of potassium in neuromuscular function—but the gastrocolic reflex directly pertains to the mechanics of peristalsis and the promotion of regularity in defecation.

10. Which neurological evaluation would best assess limb coordination?

- A. Heel-to-shin test**
- B. Finger-to-nose test**
- C. Romberg test**
- D. Deep tendon reflex test**

The finger-to-nose test is an effective assessment for limb coordination because it specifically evaluates the ability to perform smooth, controlled movements with the upper extremities. During the test, the individual is asked to alternately touch their nose and the examiner's finger, which requires precision and timing. An inability to accurately reach the target can indicate issues with coordination, which may be associated with various neurological conditions affecting the cerebellum or motor pathways. While the heel-to-shin test also assesses coordination, it is primarily focused on the lower limbs. The Romberg test evaluates balance and proprioception rather than limb coordination. The deep tendon reflex test examines the integrity of the reflex arcs and does not provide information about coordinated voluntary movement. Each of these options assesses different aspects of neurological function, making the finger-to-nose test particularly suitable for evaluating limb coordination.

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://nclexneurologicsensorysys.examzify.com>

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

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