NCLEX Nutrition Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

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Questions

1. Which nutrient is most critical for a patient recovering from a serious illness?

A. Carbohydrates

B. Vitamins

C. Protein

D. Fats

2. What type of feeding route is used in the administration of parenteral nutrition when the GI tract cannot be used?

A. Enteral feeding

B. Oral feeding

C. Parenteral feeding

D. Nasogastric feeding

3. What are the water-soluble vitamins?

A. A and K

B. C and B-complex

C. D and E

D. A and D

4. Which foodborne illness is characterized by symptoms of projectile vomiting, fever, and diarrhea with an onset of 24-48 hours after consuming contaminated food or water?

A. Listeria

B. E. coli

C. Norovirus

D. Salmonella

5. What is the term for the energy required to maintain life-sustaining activities while at rest?

A. Water-soluble vitamins

B. Trace elements

C. Basal metabolic rate

D. Amino acid

6. What is one of the major actions of Vitamin C?

A. Bone health

B. Blood clotting

C. Antioxidant activity

D. Energy production

7. What characteristic is true for fat-soluble vitamins?

A. They are easily excreted in urine.

B. They can build up to toxic levels in the body.

C. They are primarily absorbed through water.

D. They require less dietary intake than water-soluble vitamins.

8. How often should patients receiving intermittent tube feeding be fed?

A. Once daily

B. 4-6 times daily

C. 8-10 times daily

D. Every hour

9. What is NOT an example of "spoon-thick" liquid consistency?

A. Pudding

B. Custard

C. Hot cereals

D. Tomato sauce

10. Which symptom is NOT associated with dysphagia?

A. Drooling

B. Pocketing food

C. Increased appetite

D. Choking

Answers

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

Explanations

1. Which nutrient is most critical for a patient recovering from a serious illness?

A. Carbohydrates

B. Vitamins

C. Protein

D. Fats

Protein is the most critical nutrient for a patient recovering from a serious illness due to its pivotal role in tissue repair and immune function. During recovery, the body requires increased protein intake to facilitate the healing of damaged tissues and to support the synthesis of new cells. Protein also plays a vital part in the production of antibodies and other immune system components, which are essential for combating infections and promoting overall recovery. In addition to these roles, protein helps maintain muscle mass, which can be particularly important after an illness that may lead to muscle wasting. The presence of adequate protein in the diet can also help prevent complications such as delayed wound healing and malnutrition. While carbohydrates, vitamins, and fats are all important for overall health and can contribute to recovery, they do not have the same critical role in the direct healing processes as protein does. Carbohydrates provide energy, vitamins support various bodily functions, and fats are important for overall health and hormone production, but none of these nutrients directly contribute to tissue regeneration and immune defense as effectively as protein.

2. What type of feeding route is used in the administration of parenteral nutrition when the GI tract cannot be used?

A. Enteral feeding

B. Oral feeding

C. Parenteral feeding

D. Nasogastric feeding

Parenteral feeding is the correct answer because it refers to the delivery of nutrients directly into the bloodstream, bypassing the gastrointestinal (GI) tract entirely. This method is essential for patients who are unable to use their GI tract due to conditions such as severe gastrointestinal disorders, surgeries, or other medical issues that prevent normal digestion and absorption of nutrients. Parenteral nutrition provides all the necessary macronutrients and micronutrients through an intravenous solution, ensuring that the patient receives the required nutrition for growth, healing, and recovery, even when oral or enteral routes are not an option. This is particularly crucial in maintaining nutritional status in critically ill patients or those with malabsorption syndromes. In contrast, enteral feeding involves delivering nutrients directly to the GI tract, oral feeding utilizes the mouth for nutrition intake, and nasogastric feeding also relies on the GI tract, as it delivers food via a tube inserted through the nose into the stomach. Therefore, these options do not address situations where the GI tract cannot be utilized, making parenteral feeding the appropriate choice.

3. What are the water-soluble vitamins?

A. A and K

B. C and B-complex

C. D and E

D. A and D

Water-soluble vitamins are essential nutrients that dissolve in water and are easily absorbed into the bloodstream. They include vitamin C and the B-complex vitamins, which play vital roles in various bodily functions. Vitamin C, for instance, is an antioxidant that supports immune function, collagen production, and iron absorption. The B-complex vitamins, which consist of several distinct vitamins including B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), B5 (pantothenic acid), B6 (pyridoxine), B7 (biotin), B9 (folate), and B12 (cobalamin), are crucial for energy metabolism, red blood cell production, and maintaining healthy brain function. When water-soluble vitamins are consumed, any excess that the body does not need is typically excreted through urine, which is why these vitamins need to be replenished regularly through diet. This understanding of their solubility characteristics differentiates them from fat-soluble vitamins, which include vitamins A, D, E, and K. The fat-soluble vitamins are stored in body fat and can accumulate to toxic levels if taken in excess. Recognizing this key difference can help highlight the importance of maintaining an adequate

4. Which foodborne illness is characterized by symptoms of projectile vomiting, fever, and diarrhea with an onset of 24-48 hours after consuming contaminated food or water?

A. Listeria

B. E. coli

C. Norovirus

D. Salmonella

Norovirus is frequently associated with the symptoms described, which include projectile vomiting, fever, and diarrhea that typically present 24 to 48 hours after exposure to contaminated food or water. This virus is highly contagious and often spreads in environments such as cruise ships, nursing homes, and schools, making it a common cause of outbreaks. The rapid onset of symptoms following consumption of contaminated items highlights its virulence and the significant health impact it can have on affected individuals. In the context of foodborne illnesses, understanding the specific symptoms and timelines of onset is crucial for effective identification and management of outbreaks. Given the nature of norovirus, it's important to emphasize food safety and hygiene practices to prevent its spread. Recognizing symptoms like projectile vomiting as particularly indicative of norovirus, alongside the timing of symptom onset, aids in appropriate diagnosis and treatment.

5. What is the term for the energy required to maintain life-sustaining activities while at rest?

A. Water-soluble vitamins

B. Trace elements

C. Basal metabolic rate

D. Amino acid

The term that refers to the energy required to maintain life-sustaining activities while at rest is the basal metabolic rate (BMR). BMR represents the number of calories your body needs to perform essential functions such as breathing, circulation, cell production, and nutrient processing when the body is at rest and in a post-absorptive state (not actively digesting food). It reflects the minimum energy expenditure necessary for survival and is influenced by factors such as age, sex, body composition, and hormonal levels. Understanding BMR is crucial for nutrition and health, as it forms the basis for calculating total daily energy expenditure (TDEE), which includes energy expended through physical activity and thermogenesis after eating. This helps in planning dietary needs and weight management goals. The other terms listed in the options refer to different concepts related to nutrition and do not pertain to energy expenditure while at rest.

6. What is one of the major actions of Vitamin C?

A. Bone health

B. Blood clotting

C. Antioxidant activity

D. Energy production

Vitamin C, also known as ascorbic acid, plays several crucial roles in the body, one of which is its significant antioxidant activity. Antioxidants are compounds that help neutralize harmful free radicals in the body, which can cause oxidative stress and damage to cells, proteins, and DNA. This characteristic of Vitamin C is important for maintaining overall health and can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases and aging-related issues by protecting against cellular damage. In addition to its antioxidant properties, Vitamin C also contributes to the synthesis of collagen, an essential protein for skin, cartilage, and bone health, but the primary action highlighted within the context of this question focuses on its role as an antioxidant. This protective action supports overall immune function, skin health, and may play a role in reducing inflammation. Understanding the antioxidant function of Vitamin C emphasizes the importance of including this vitamin in the diet, as it can be found in various fruits and vegetables, like citrus fruits, strawberries, and bell peppers.

7. What characteristic is true for fat-soluble vitamins?

A. They are easily excreted in urine.

B. They can build up to toxic levels in the body.

C. They are primarily absorbed through water.

D. They require less dietary intake than water-soluble vitamins.

Fat-soluble vitamins, which include vitamins A, D, E, and K, are characterized by their ability to dissolve in fats and oils. This characteristic allows them to be stored in the body's fatty tissues and liver, leading to the potential for accumulation. Because they are not readily excreted in urine like water-soluble vitamins, which dissolve in water and get excreted more easily, excess consumption over time can result in toxic levels in the body. The risk of toxicity is particularly notable with vitamins A and D, as they can lead to serious health issues when consumed in excessive amounts. Understanding this characteristic is important for both dietary planning and monitoring vitamin intake, especially in individuals who take supplements or have dietary preferences that may lead to high levels of these vitamins. Other answer choices highlight aspects that do not align with the properties of fat-soluble vitamins, reinforcing the understanding of their unique characteristics.

8. How often should patients receiving intermittent tube feeding be fed?

A. Once daily

B. 4-6 times daily

C. 8-10 times daily

D. Every hour

Patients receiving intermittent tube feeding should be fed 4-6 times daily to ensure they receive adequate nutrition while also allowing the body to effectively digest and absorb the nutrients. This method mimics more natural eating patterns, thus supporting better gastrointestinal function and reducing the risk of complications such as gastric residual volume issues or aspiration. Feeding 4-6 times daily also helps in providing a steady supply of nutrients, minimizing the risk of overloading the stomach at one time, which can happen with less frequent feedings, such as once daily. This frequency strikes a balance between providing nourishment and allowing periods of rest for digestive processes, critical for patients who may be critically ill or have altered gastrointestinal function. Additionally, feeding every hour or more frequently can overwhelm the digestive system, while once daily feeding is generally insufficient to meet nutritional needs adequately. Therefore, 4-6 times daily is the most appropriate regimen for maintaining nutrition in patients requiring intermittent tube feedings.

9. What is NOT an example of "spoon-thick" liquid consistency?

A. Pudding

B. Custard

C. Hot cereals

D. Tomato sauce

Spoon-thick liquid consistency refers to liquids that are thick enough to hold their shape when a spoon is dipped into them, yet still pourable. This consistency is typically recommended for individuals who have difficulty swallowing, as it can help prevent aspiration and choking. Tomato sauce does not fit the criteria for spoon-thick consistency because it is generally thinner and more fluid than the other options. While it may have some viscosity, it does not hold its shape when spooned, thus being more appropriate for a thinner liquid classification. In contrast, pudding, custard, and hot cereals are thicker and can maintain a defined shape when scooped with a spoon, aligning perfectly with the characteristics of spoon-thick liquids. Each of these items has a consistency that allows them to sit up on a spoon without runniness but still provides enough moisture to consume comfortably.

10. Which symptom is NOT associated with dysphagia?

A. Drooling

B. Pocketing food

C. Increased appetite

D. Choking

Dysphagia, or difficulty swallowing, is associated with various symptoms that indicate problems in the swallowing process. Increased appetite is not a symptom of dysphagia because dysphagia typically leads to difficulty in consuming food, which can result in decreased food intake and potential weight loss rather than increased appetite. When individuals experience challenges with swallowing, their ability to consume food and nutrients can be compromised, often leading to a lack of hunger, discomfort during meals, or fear of eating, rather than an increase in appetite. In contrast, symptoms like drooling, pocketing food, and choking are directly linked to the challenges faced by individuals with dysphagia. Drooling can occur when a person has difficulty managing saliva due to impaired swallowing. Pocketing food refers to the accumulation of food in the cheeks or around the gums, which may happen if a person struggles to properly manipulate food in their mouth before swallowing. Choking is a serious risk in dysphagia, as it can occur when food or liquids obstruct the airway.