

NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (NICU) NURSING PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

VISIT US ONLINE FOR
THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE

<https://nicunursing.examzify.com>



Copyright © 2026 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain accurate, complete, and timely information about this product from reliable sources.

SAMPLE

Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	16

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

- 1. Which lab test helps assess the risk of infection in neonates?**
 - A. Complete blood count (CBC)
 - B. C-Reactive protein (CRP)
 - C. Bacterial cultures
 - D. Blood glucose levels
- 2. Which intravenous fluid is commonly used for maintenance in neonates?**
 - A. Sodium chloride 0.9%
 - B. Dextrose 10% in water (D10W)
 - C. Lactated Ringer's solution
 - D. Normal saline
- 3. What is a common clinical feature of congenital pneumonia in neonates?**
 - A. Decreased feeding
 - B. Bilateral wheezing
 - C. Chest wall retraction
 - D. Increased appetite
- 4. Which condition is ECMO primarily used to support?**
 - A. Chronic kidney disease
 - B. Reversible profound respiratory and/or cardiac failure
 - C. Post-surgical recovery
 - D. Stable congenital heart defects
- 5. Why is monitoring neonates with NAS crucial for the first week of life?**
 - A. To reduce hospital costs
 - B. To ensure quicker discharge
 - C. To assess the severity of withdrawal symptoms
 - D. To limit parental visits
- 6. How does the nursing care plan evolve as a neonate grows in the NICU?**
 - A. It remains static throughout the NICU stay
 - B. It is adjusted continually based on developmental milestones, health status, and family input
 - C. It is only revised after the neonate reaches a certain weight
 - D. It is based solely on the physician's directives

- 7. What is a common risk factor that increases the likelihood of NICU admission?**
- A. High birth weight
 - B. Gestational diabetes
 - C. Prematurity
 - D. Low maternal age
- 8. What should nurses periodically assess regarding families in the NICU?**
- A. The family's financial resources
 - B. The family's understanding of the care process
 - C. The family's social status
 - D. The family's career backgrounds
- 9. Which of the following can be a cause of apnea in neonates?**
- A. Increased weight gain
 - B. Maternal hypertension
 - C. Prematurity
 - D. Normal gestational development
- 10. What dietary consideration is important for neonates with galactosemia?**
- A. Increased protein intake
 - B. Avoidance of lactose-containing formulas
 - C. Supplementation with amino acids
 - D. Inclusion of whole milk

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. Which lab test helps assess the risk of infection in neonates?

A. Complete blood count (CBC)

B. C-Reactive protein (CRP)

C. Bacterial cultures

D. Blood glucose levels

The complete blood count (CBC) is an essential diagnostic tool that helps assess the risk of infection in neonates. A CBC provides crucial information about the components of blood, including white blood cell (WBC) count, hemoglobin levels, and platelet counts. In the context of infection, one of the key indicators assessed in a CBC is the WBC count. An elevated WBC count, particularly the count of neutrophils, can indicate an ongoing infection or an inflammatory response within the body. Moreover, immature neutrophils (known as "left shift") may also be present during infections, suggesting that the body is actively fighting an infection. This information is vital for clinicians to make timely decisions regarding the need for further diagnostic testing or the initiation of antibiotic therapy in neonates, who are particularly vulnerable to infections. Although C-reactive protein (CRP) can be a useful marker for inflammation and may indicate the presence of infection, it is not specific to infection risk alone and may be elevated in other inflammatory conditions as well. Bacterial cultures are the definitive method for diagnosing an actual infection but do not serve as a risk assessment tool prior to identifying an active infection. Blood glucose levels are important for monitoring metabolic status but do not provide information

2. Which intravenous fluid is commonly used for maintenance in neonates?

A. Sodium chloride 0.9%

B. Dextrose 10% in water (D10W)

C. Lactated Ringer's solution

D. Normal saline

Dextrose 10% in water (D10W) is commonly used for maintenance fluid therapy in neonates because it provides a source of both hydration and calories, which are crucial for this population. Neonates have specific nutritional needs as they are rapidly growing and have limited glycogen stores. D10W delivers necessary dextrose to help maintain blood glucose levels while also offering sterile water to ensure adequate hydration. In contrast, sodium chloride 0.9% (normal saline) is isotonic and primarily provides sodium and chloride without any caloric content, making it less suitable as a maintenance fluid alone for neonates. Lactated Ringer's solution, while it provides electrolytes and is often used in larger children and adults for rehydration and maintenance, is also not typically the first choice for maintenance in this age group due to its complex electrolyte composition which may not align with the more straightforward nutritional requirements of neonates. Normal saline, like sodium chloride, lacks the caloric component essential for maintaining energy balance in neonates, making D10W the more appropriate option.

3. What is a common clinical feature of congenital pneumonia in neonates?

- A. Decreased feeding
- B. Bilateral wheezing
- C. Chest wall retraction**
- D. Increased appetite

A common clinical feature of congenital pneumonia in neonates is chest wall retraction. This occurs because the neonate's lungs are compromised and are not fully expanding, leading to increased effort in breathing. As the baby struggles to draw in air, the intercostal muscles pull in the ribs, resulting in visible retractions of the chest wall. This sign indicates respiratory distress and is an important observation in assessing the respiratory status of a neonate with pneumonia. Additionally, retractions may vary in severity based on the extent of lung involvement and the neonate's overall condition. Close monitoring of these symptoms is crucial in a NICU setting, as they can guide timely interventions to support respiratory function. While decreased feeding may occur as a result of respiratory distress, it is not as directly indicative of pneumonia as chest wall retraction. Bilateral wheezing could suggest various respiratory issues but is not the primary feature associated with congenital pneumonia. Increased appetite is not consistent with this condition, as respiratory issues often lead to reduced feeding due to increased energy expenditure and discomfort during feeding.

4. Which condition is ECMO primarily used to support?

- A. Chronic kidney disease
- B. Reversible profound respiratory and/or cardiac failure**
- C. Post-surgical recovery
- D. Stable congenital heart defects

ECMO, or Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation, is primarily utilized to provide temporary support for patients experiencing reversible profound respiratory and/or cardiac failure. This sophisticated technique allows for oxygenation and removal of carbon dioxide from the blood when the patient's lungs or heart cannot perform these functions sufficiently on their own. Essentially, ECMO acts as a bridge to recovery, giving the vital organs time to heal or allowing for other treatments to take place. While chronic kidney disease, post-surgical recovery, and stable congenital heart defects may involve complex medical management, these conditions do not directly align with the specific utility of ECMO, which is designed to manage acute, life-threatening situations involving severe failure of the respiratory or circulatory systems. In cases of chronic kidney disease, for example, alternative therapies such as dialysis are typically employed. Understanding the primary purpose of ECMO in the context of severe, reversible organ failure is crucial for effective patient care in the intensive care setting.

5. Why is monitoring neonates with NAS crucial for the first week of life?

- A. To reduce hospital costs
- B. To ensure quicker discharge
- C. To assess the severity of withdrawal symptoms**
- D. To limit parental visits

Monitoring neonates with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) during the first week of life is crucial primarily to assess the severity of withdrawal symptoms. Infants with NAS can experience a range of withdrawal symptoms that vary in intensity, timing, and duration. These symptoms can include irritability, feeding difficulties, vomiting, diarrhea, tremors, and seizures. By closely monitoring these infants during the first week, healthcare providers can accurately assess the severity of withdrawal, allowing for timely interventions and appropriate management strategies, which may include pharmacologic treatment or supportive care. Early identification and management of withdrawal symptoms are vital to improve outcomes and reduce complications associated with NAS. Additionally, understanding the severity of symptoms can help inform decisions about length of hospital stay and follow-up care, ensuring that the infant receives the most appropriate support for their needs.

6. How does the nursing care plan evolve as a neonate grows in the NICU?

- A. It remains static throughout the NICU stay
- B. It is adjusted continually based on developmental milestones, health status, and family input**
- C. It is only revised after the neonate reaches a certain weight
- D. It is based solely on the physician's directives

The nursing care plan in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is dynamic and evolves continually based on several important factors. As the neonate grows and develops, nurses assess the infant's health status, developmental milestones, and any changes in the clinical scenario. This ongoing assessment allows for timely and relevant adjustments to be made to the care plan to meet the unique and changing needs of each infant. Incorporating family input is also crucial in this process, as families play an essential role in the infant's care and have insights that can significantly influence care decisions. The collaborative approach that includes input from the family ensures that the care plan is not only effective but also aligned with the family's preferences and knowledge about their child. Static plans or those that are only adjusted after specific criteria, such as a certain weight, could lead to inappropriate care and missed opportunities for supporting the neonate's developmental progress. Furthermore, a care plan based solely on physician directives neglects the holistic approach needed in NICU nursing, which should incorporate the multidisciplinary team's input, including nursing assessments and family interactions. Thus, the continual adjustment based on multiple factors is crucial for providing optimal care in the NICU setting.

7. What is a common risk factor that increases the likelihood of NICU admission?

- A. High birth weight
- B. Gestational diabetes
- C. Prematurity**
- D. Low maternal age

Prematurity is a significant risk factor for NICU admission because infants born preterm (before 37 weeks of gestation) are more likely to face various medical complications that require specialized care. Preterm infants often have underdeveloped organs, particularly their lungs, heart, and brain, which can lead to respiratory distress syndrome, apnea, and difficulties in thermoregulation. They are also at a higher risk for infections, feeding intolerance, and jaundice due to immature liver function. The need for close monitoring and support in a NICU setting arises from these complications, as preterm infants can require interventions such as continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) for breathing support or intravenous fluids for feeding and hydration. Consequently, the higher the degree of prematurity, the greater the likelihood of being admitted to the NICU for care to improve their chances of survival and healthy development.

8. What should nurses periodically assess regarding families in the NICU?

- A. The family's financial resources
- B. The family's understanding of the care process**
- C. The family's social status
- D. The family's career backgrounds

Assessing the family's understanding of the care process in the NICU is crucial for several reasons. First, it ensures that caregivers are fully informed about the condition of their infant, including the potential complications and treatments involved. This understanding fosters effective communication between the healthcare team and the family, enabling parents to ask pertinent questions, express concerns, and make informed decisions about their child's care. Moreover, when families comprehend the care process, they are more likely to be engaged participants in their infant's treatment. This engagement can enhance adherence to medical recommendations, improve emotional well-being, and contribute to better overall outcomes for the newborn. By periodically assessing their understanding, nurses can identify areas where additional education or resources may be needed, helping to support the family's emotional and psychological needs during such a challenging time. In contrast, focusing solely on financial resources, social status, or career backgrounds may provide some insight into the family's situation but would not directly address the immediate and critical need for informed participation in the NICU care process. Thus, assessing the family's understanding of their baby's care directly impacts the quality of care and the family's experience during their NICU stay.

9. Which of the following can be a cause of apnea in neonates?

- A. Increased weight gain
- B. Maternal hypertension
- C. Prematurity**
- D. Normal gestational development

Prematurity is a well-known risk factor for apnea in neonates. This condition is characterized by episodes of interrupted breathing that can last for more than 20 seconds or be associated with bradycardia or oxygen desaturation. Infants born prematurely, particularly those under 28 weeks of gestation, often have immature respiratory system development, including underdeveloped respiratory control centers in the brain. This immaturity can result in irregularities in breathing patterns, leading to apnea. Neonates who are premature may also have other contributing factors such as respiratory distress syndrome or insufficient surfactant production, which can exacerbate the incidence of apnea. Understanding the association between prematurity and apnea is critical for nursing care, as it guides monitoring and intervention strategies in the NICU setting.

10. What dietary consideration is important for neonates with galactosemia?

- A. Increased protein intake
- B. Avoidance of lactose-containing formulas**
- C. Supplementation with amino acids
- D. Inclusion of whole milk

For neonates diagnosed with galactosemia, it is crucial to avoid lactose-containing formulas because galactosemia is a metabolic disorder that affects the body's ability to break down galactose, a sugar found in lactose. When an infant with galactosemia consumes lactose, it is converted into galactose, which can lead to toxic buildup and serious health issues, including liver damage, intellectual disability, and cataracts. Therefore, using formula that is lactose-free is essential in managing this condition and ensuring the neonate's health and development. The other dietary options do not align with the needs of neonates with galactosemia. Increased protein intake and supplementation with amino acids are not specifically indicated for this condition, as the primary concern is managing carbohydrate intake—specifically galactose. Including whole milk is also inappropriate since it is derived from lactose, which would exacerbate the problem for a neonate with galactosemia. Thus, avoiding lactose-containing formulas is not just a recommendation but a necessary dietary consideration for these infants.

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://nicunursing.examzify.com>

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

SAMPLE