

NEW MEXICO DENTAL ASSISTING LICENSE PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



**SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE
WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS**

**VISIT US ONLINE FOR
THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE**

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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. How many extraoral photographs are standard for orthodontic diagnosis?**
 - A. One
 - B. Two
 - C. Three
 - D. Four

- 2. Which of the following is considered a radiosensitive organ?**
 - A. Salivary glands
 - B. Liver
 - C. Bone marrow
 - D. Nerve tissue

- 3. What type of wire is often placed within a bracket for orthodontic treatment?**
 - A. Elastic wire
 - B. Preformed wire
 - C. Arch wire
 - D. Bonded wire

- 4. What does a field block refer to?**
 - A. Injection directly into the nerve trunk
 - B. Injection into a small, isolated area
 - C. Injection near a larger terminal nerve branch
 - D. Injection for local infiltration

- 5. What characteristic does polysiloxane elastomeric material NOT have?**
 - A. High dimensional stability
 - B. Low tear resistance
 - C. Strong odor
 - D. No taste

- 6. What does orthodontics specialize in?**
 - A. Restoration of decayed teeth
 - B. Diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of dental and facial irregularities
 - C. Oral surgery procedures
 - D. Periodontal disease treatment

- 7. What should be used to polish a tooth before etching for a bracket?**
- A. Prophyl paste
 - B. Pumice
 - C. Fluoride gel
 - D. Neutral Sodium Bicarbonate
- 8. What is the primary method used for polishing teeth in dental assisting?**
- A. Air polishing
 - B. Rubber cup polishing
 - C. Diamond polishing
 - D. Handpiece polishing
- 9. Which of the following is a function of a perio pack?**
- A. Helps whiten teeth
 - B. Holds flaps in place
 - C. Enhances flavor
 - D. Increases sensitivity
- 10. What stage of anesthesia is characterized by respiratory failure and cardiac arrest?**
- A. General
 - B. Excitement
 - C. Analgesia
 - D. Respiratory failure and cardiac arrest

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. How many extraoral photographs are standard for orthodontic diagnosis?

- A. One
- B. Two**
- C. Three
- D. Four

For orthodontic diagnosis, the standard practice typically includes taking two extraoral photographs. These photographs serve specific purposes in assessing the patient's dental and facial structures. One common photograph is the frontal view, which provides a clear perspective of the patient's facial symmetry and features. The second photograph often taken is a profile view, which assists in evaluating the relationship between the teeth and jaws, as well as the profile's overall aesthetic balance. These two photographs together enable orthodontists to gather sufficient information for formulating a comprehensive treatment plan. While there may be instances where more photographs could be beneficial for specific cases, two remains the standard for initial orthodontic assessments, creating a strong foundation for diagnosis and treatment planning.

2. Which of the following is considered a radiosensitive organ?

- A. Salivary glands
- B. Liver
- C. Bone marrow**
- D. Nerve tissue

Bone marrow is considered a radiosensitive organ because it contains a large number of highly proliferative cells that are crucial for blood cell production. When exposed to radiation, these actively dividing cells are more susceptible to damage, which can disrupt the normal function of the bone marrow and lead to serious health issues such as anemia and increased risk of infection due to the impact on red and white blood cell production. In contrast, salivary glands, liver, and nerve tissue, while still having some sensitivity to radiation, do not exhibit the same level of radiosensitivity as bone marrow. Salivary glands can be affected by radiation exposure as well, but they are less critical for survival than the hematopoietic functions of bone marrow. The liver has regenerative capabilities and can often recover from radiation damage over time. Nerve tissue is relatively resistant to radiation, as neurons do not divide like the cells found in bone marrow. This difference in responsiveness to radiation is key in understanding the implications of radiation exposure to various organs in the body.

3. What type of wire is often placed within a bracket for orthodontic treatment?

- A. Elastic wire
- B. Preformed wire
- C. Arch wire**
- D. Bonded wire

The correct choice is arch wire, which plays a crucial role in orthodontic treatment. Arch wire is a flexible metal wire that connects all the brackets on a patient's teeth. Its primary function is to guide the movement of the teeth into their desired positions by applying continuous pressure. The arch wire is designed to fit the shape of the dental arch and is carefully selected based on the individual treatment plan and the specific needs of the patient. In orthodontics, arch wires are typically made from various alloys and can be found in different sizes and shapes to accommodate various treatment modalities. They are essential for creating the necessary force to align the teeth and are adjusted periodically as treatment progresses. The use of arch wires is fundamental in ensuring effective and efficient tooth movement, making them a vital component in any orthodontic appliance system. Other types of wires, such as elastic, preformed, and bonded wires, serve different specific functions in dental practices. For example, elastic wires may refer to materials used for ligating brackets or springs, while preformed wires are often used in specific shapes but do not have the same capacity for adjustment and manipulation as arch wires. Bonded wires can be used for retaining teeth or stabilizing them but are not integral to the active movement process that arch

4. What does a field block refer to?

- A. Injection directly into the nerve trunk
- B. Injection into a small, isolated area
- C. Injection near a larger terminal nerve branch**
- D. Injection for local infiltration

A field block refers to an injection that targets a larger terminal nerve branch to block sensation in a specific area. This technique involves injecting anesthetic near the nerve that supplies the region, thereby preventing sensory transmission from that location. It differs from local infiltration, which absorbs directly into the tissue to numb a smaller area, and from a nerve trunk injection, which would be aimed directly at the nerve itself. The purpose of a field block is to create a broader area of anesthesia by strategically placing the anesthetic close to the nerve branches, making it particularly effective during dental procedures in specific regions of the mouth.

5. What characteristic does polysiloxane elastomeric material NOT have?

- A. High dimensional stability
- B. Low tear resistance
- C. Strong odor**
- D. No taste

Polysiloxane elastomeric materials are known for their numerous advantageous properties, which is why the correct answer highlights a characteristic that is not associated with them. These materials typically exhibit high dimensional stability, allowing them to retain their shape and form under varying conditions, making them ideal for dental applications. Additionally, they possess high tear resistance, ensuring durability and longevity in their use. Polysiloxane materials are also recognized for having no significant taste, which is crucial in dental products to ensure patient comfort and acceptance. In contrast, a strong odor is not a typical feature of polysiloxane elastomers; most are formulated to be low in odor, contributing to a more pleasant experience during dental procedures and applications. Thus, the characteristic of having a strong odor does not align with the expected properties of polysiloxane elastomeric materials.

6. What does orthodontics specialize in?

- A. Restoration of decayed teeth
- B. Diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of dental and facial irregularities**
- C. Oral surgery procedures
- D. Periodontal disease treatment

Orthodontics is the branch of dentistry that focuses specifically on the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of dental and facial irregularities. This area of specialization primarily deals with issues related to teeth alignment, bite correction, and jaw positioning. Orthodontists use various devices such as braces, aligners, and retainers to guide teeth into their proper positions and to enhance both aesthetic appearances and functional capabilities of the teeth and jaw. In contrast, restoration of decayed teeth pertains to general dentistry practices, which focus on repairing and restoring teeth affected by decay or damage rather than correcting irregularities in the alignment. Oral surgery is a different specialty that involves surgical intervention to address conditions such as impacted teeth or jaw abnormalities, while periodontal disease treatment centers on managing diseases affecting the gums and supporting structures of teeth, rather than the alignment of teeth and jaws.

7. What should be used to polish a tooth before etching for a bracket?

- A. Prophyl paste
- B. Pumice**
- C. Fluoride gel
- D. Neutral Sodium Bicarbonate

Pumice is the correct choice for polishing a tooth before etching for a bracket. Pumice is a naturally occurring volcanic ash that is often used in dentistry because of its abrasive quality, which allows it to effectively clean and polish tooth surfaces. This step is crucial as it removes surface debris, biofilm, and stains, creating a smooth and clean enamel surface that ensures optimal bonding of the orthodontic brackets. Polishing the tooth with pumice also minimizes the risk of contamination from saliva or plaque, which could interfere with the etching process and subsequently affect the adhesive bond strength. By preparing the enamel appropriately with pumice, a better environment is created for the etching agent to work effectively, leading to a more successful bonding of the brackets. Using prophyl paste, fluoride gel, or neutral sodium bicarbonate would not yield as effective results. Prophyl paste is typically used in routine cleanings and may leave behind a residue that could compromise the bonding process. Fluoride gel, while beneficial for cavity prevention, does not serve the purpose of cleaning the tooth for etching and can alter the enamel surface. Neutral sodium bicarbonate is primarily used for mild abrasive cleaning, often in a less effective manner compared to pumice for this specific pre-etch

8. What is the primary method used for polishing teeth in dental assisting?

- A. Air polishing
- B. Rubber cup polishing**
- C. Diamond polishing
- D. Handpiece polishing

The primary method used for polishing teeth in dental assisting is rubber cup polishing. This technique involves using a rubber cup attached to a dental handpiece, along with a polishing paste, to smooth and shine the surfaces of teeth after procedures such as scaling. Rubber cup polishing is effective in removing surface stains and biofilm, leaving the teeth with a clean, polished appearance. Rubber cup polishing is favored for its ability to be gentle on dental surfaces while achieving effective results. The flexibility of the rubber cup allows it to reach various contours of the teeth, which is beneficial for thorough polishing. While air polishing is a method that uses a jet of air and a bicarbonate powder to remove stains and debris, it is not as commonly used for routine polishing due to its more abrasive nature and the potential for over-spraying. Diamond polishing, on the other hand, typically refers to techniques used for more specific restoration procedures rather than general tooth polishing. Finally, handpiece polishing could encompass various methods but is generally used in conjunction with other polishing techniques and does not specifically designate the rubber cup method as a preferred choice. This is why rubber cup polishing stands out as the primary method in dental assisting.

9. Which of the following is a function of a perio pack?

- A. Helps whiten teeth
- B. Holds flaps in place**
- C. Enhances flavor
- D. Increases sensitivity

A perio pack, also known as a periodontal dressing, serves an essential role in dental procedures, particularly after surgical interventions in the periodontal area. The primary function of a perio pack is to hold the flaps of tissue securely in place after surgery. This stabilization helps to protect the surgical site from trauma, prevents displacement of the tissue, and aids in the healing process by allowing optimal tissue adaptation and healing. While it is true that enhancements in flavor or sensitivity are not associated with the functions of a perio pack, those aspects do not contribute to its role in dental treatments. Whitening teeth is a goal with other dental treatments and products, but it is not relevant in the context of the functions of a perio pack. Thus, the distinction of holding flaps in place clearly identifies the correct answer, as it highlights the critical role of a perio pack in ensuring proper healing after periodontal surgery.

10. What stage of anesthesia is characterized by respiratory failure and cardiac arrest?

- A. General
- B. Excitement
- C. Analgesia
- D. Respiratory failure and cardiac arrest**

The stage of anesthesia characterized by respiratory failure and cardiac arrest refers to a critical phase where the patient's vital functions are severely compromised, often due to an overdose of anesthetic agents or other complications during the surgical procedure. In the context of anesthesia, there are typically defined stages. The general stage of anesthesia encompasses the entire process from the induction to the recovery phases. Within this broader category, a stage characterized by respiratory failure and cardiac arrest signifies an extreme and life-threatening scenario where vital systems are failing. This is not a typical stage one would aim for during anesthesia; rather, it indicates a serious issue that requires immediate medical intervention. It is crucial for dental assistants and other practitioners involved in anesthesia to recognize signs of respiratory distress and cardiac compromise, as timely action can be life-saving. Understanding this stage emphasizes the importance of monitoring patients closely and being prepared to respond to emergencies that can arise due to various factors such as dosage errors, patient reactions, or underlying health conditions. Anesthetic procedures carry inherent risks, and knowledge of these critical stages helps practitioners provide safer care.

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://nmdentalassisting.examzify.com>

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

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