

NHA Patient Care Technician (PCT) 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 is the primary role of a Patient Care Technician in patient care?**
 - A. To perform complex medical procedures**
 - B. To provide direct patient care and support**
 - C. To administer medication independently**
 - D. To manage patient records**

- 2. What should a Patient Care Technician do when encountering an unconscious patient?**
 - A. Immediately leave to get assistance**
 - B. Check for responsiveness and seek emergency help**
 - C. Utilize lifting techniques to reposition them**
 - D. Attempt to revive them with verbal commands**

- 3. How can a PCT ensure patient safety during transportation?**
 - A. By allowing patients to walk unassisted**
 - B. By using a wheelchair or stretcher as needed**
 - C. By delaying transport until a nurse arrives**
 - D. By instructing patients to hold onto the rails**

- 4. What action should a PCT take before removing a peripheral IV catheter?**
 - A. Don sterile gloves prior to removing the catheter**
 - B. Turn the infusion clamp to the "on" position**
 - C. Hold gauze over the site when removing the catheter**
 - D. Clean the area with saline before removing the catheter**

- 5. What is the lithotomy position?**
 - A. Patient lying on back with feet and legs supported by stirrups**
 - B. Patient reclining at a 45° angle**
 - C. Patient sitting with knees bent**
 - D. Patient lying on side with legs flexed**

- 6. Which nutrient deficiencies can lead to issues in wound healing?**
- A. Iron and folic acid deficiencies**
 - B. Protein, vitamin C, and zinc deficiencies**
 - C. Calcium and magnesium deficiencies**
 - D. Fiber and carbohydrate deficiencies**
- 7. If a PCT deflates the BP cuff too quickly and fails to get an accurate reading, what should they do?**
- A. Partially deflate the cuff and then reinflate it**
 - B. Release all of the air from the cuff before retesting**
 - C. Measure the blood pressure using the left arm**
 - D. Measure the blood pressure using a different cuff**
- 8. If a patient with diabetes asks how to give insulin injections, what should the technician inform them?**
- A. Inform the nurse about the request**
 - B. Wait for the family to learn about the injection**
 - C. The best time to get the injection is before breakfast**
 - D. Look for information online about administering the injection**
- 9. What is the main purpose of CLIA in laboratory testing?**
- A. To protect patient information**
 - B. To establish quality standards for laboratory testing on human specimens**
 - C. To provide clinical laboratory education**
 - D. To create and promote clinical and laboratory practices**
- 10. Which type of tube should be collected first for dermal blood samples?**
- A. Lavender top**
 - B. Green top**
 - C. Red top**
 - D. Light blue top**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the primary role of a Patient Care Technician in patient care?

- A. To perform complex medical procedures**
- B. To provide direct patient care and support**
- C. To administer medication independently**
- D. To manage patient records**

The primary role of a Patient Care Technician in patient care is to provide direct patient care and support. This encompasses a wide range of responsibilities aimed at assisting patients with their daily activities and ensuring their comfort and well-being. PCTs often perform essential tasks such as monitoring vital signs, assisting with personal hygiene, feeding, and helping patients move around. Their focus is on delivering compassionate care and support to patients, facilitating a positive experience in a healthcare setting. While the other roles mentioned are important within a healthcare environment, they do not accurately describe the core responsibilities of a Patient Care Technician. Performing complex medical procedures typically falls under the purview of licensed healthcare professionals such as nurses or physicians. Administering medication independently is also outside the scope of a PCT's responsibilities, as this task usually requires specific training and certification. Managing patient records is generally the responsibility of administrative staff or medical coders, rather than a hands-on role that PCTs take on in their day-to-day interactions with patients.

2. What should a Patient Care Technician do when encountering an unconscious patient?

- A. Immediately leave to get assistance**
- B. Check for responsiveness and seek emergency help**
- C. Utilize lifting techniques to reposition them**
- D. Attempt to revive them with verbal commands**

When encountering an unconscious patient, the appropriate action is to check for responsiveness and seek emergency help. This involves assessing the patient's level of consciousness by gently shaking them and calling out to see if they respond. If there is no response, it is critical to activate emergency protocols, which may include calling for assistance or initiating CPR if the situation warrants. Acting promptly allows for necessary interventions to be initiated quickly, which can be vital in situations of cardiac arrest or other life-threatening conditions. Ensuring that help is on the way is essential in managing the patient's care effectively. Furthermore, while being trained, the Patient Care Technician should maintain a safe environment for both the patient and themselves until professional help arrives. This response not only prioritizes patient safety but also aligns with established protocols in emergency care.

3. How can a PCT ensure patient safety during transportation?

- A. By allowing patients to walk unassisted
- B. By using a wheelchair or stretcher as needed**
- C. By delaying transport until a nurse arrives
- D. By instructing patients to hold onto the rails

Using a wheelchair or stretcher as needed is an appropriate and effective way for a Patient Care Technician (PCT) to ensure patient safety during transportation. This method provides the necessary support and stability for patients who may have limited mobility, are in pain, or are otherwise at risk of falling or injuring themselves. Transporting patients in wheelchairs or stretchers minimizes the chance of accidents, helps to maintain their comfort, and allows for proper monitoring of their condition during the move. This practice is especially crucial for patients who may be disoriented, weak, or recovering from surgery, as they may struggle to walk unaided and could easily fall or overexert themselves. By using mobility aids such as wheelchairs and stretchers, the PCT is able to prioritize the patient's safety, support their needs, and facilitate a smooth transportation process.

4. What action should a PCT take before removing a peripheral IV catheter?

- A. Don sterile gloves prior to removing the catheter**
- B. Turn the infusion clamp to the "on" position
- C. Hold gauze over the site when removing the catheter
- D. Clean the area with saline before removing the catheter

Before removing a peripheral IV catheter, it is essential for a Patient Care Technician to don sterile gloves to maintain aseptic technique and minimize the risk of infection. The use of sterile gloves is a standard practice in healthcare settings, especially when dealing with invasive procedures or sites that have been exposed to potential contaminants. Using sterile gloves helps in protecting both the patient and the healthcare worker from possible pathogens present on the skin or in the environment. This practice is crucial in ensuring that any bacteria or other microorganisms are not introduced into the bloodstream during the removal of the catheter. In contrast, the other options do not align with standard protocols for catheter removal. Turning the infusion clamp to the "on" position would not be appropriate, as it could lead to fluid leakage or bleeding at the insertion site. Holding gauze over the site when removing the catheter is prudent for managing any potential bleeding but is done after the catheter is withdrawn, rather than being a preparatory step. Cleaning the area with saline prior to removal is also not necessary, as the focus is on maintaining a sterile field during the procedure rather than cleansing the site right before the catheter is removed. Thus, wearing sterile gloves is the most critical step in ensuring safety and cleanliness during this procedure.

5. What is the lithotomy position?

- A. Patient lying on back with feet and legs supported by stirrups**
- B. Patient reclining at a 45° angle**
- C. Patient sitting with knees bent**
- D. Patient lying on side with legs flexed**

The lithotomy position is defined as a patient lying on their back with their feet and legs supported by stirrups. This position is commonly used during various medical examinations and surgical procedures, particularly during gynecological examinations and childbirth. The stirrups provide support for the legs, allowing the healthcare provider easier access to the pelvic region. In contrast, reclining at a 45° angle typically refers to an elevated semi-sitting position that is not specific to any of the positions mentioned. Sitting with knees bent does not describe the lithotomy position either; instead, it generally refers to a more relaxed seating posture without the specific support structure required in lithotomy. Lastly, lying on the side with legs flexed describes the lateral position, which is distinct from the lithotomy position and is often used for different types of examinations or procedures. Thus, the correct identification of the lithotomy position directly aligns with its standard medical definition and usage.

6. Which nutrient deficiencies can lead to issues in wound healing?

- A. Iron and folic acid deficiencies**
- B. Protein, vitamin C, and zinc deficiencies**
- C. Calcium and magnesium deficiencies**
- D. Fiber and carbohydrate deficiencies**

Nutrient deficiencies play a crucial role in the body's ability to heal wounds effectively. Protein, vitamin C, and zinc are particularly important for this process. Protein is essential for tissue repair and regeneration, as it provides the necessary building blocks (amino acids) for new cell formation. Without adequate protein intake, the body may struggle to synthesize new tissues, which is vital for healing wounds. Vitamin C is vital for collagen synthesis, a key component of connective tissue that helps to provide structure and support to wounds as they heal. Additionally, vitamin C has antioxidant properties that help reduce oxidative stress, which can impede healing. Zinc supports various aspects of the immune response, and it is involved in cell division and proliferation. A deficiency in zinc can lead to delayed wound healing due to impaired immune function and reduced collagen synthesis. In contrast, while iron and folic acid are important for overall health, their deficiencies are more commonly associated with anemia rather than direct impacts on wound healing. Calcium and magnesium deficiencies affect bone health and metabolic processes but are not as directly linked to wound healing as the nutrients mentioned in the correct choice. Fiber and carbohydrate deficiencies, while important for overall nutrition, do not have a direct correlation with the body's wound healing capabilities. Therefore,

7. If a PCT deflates the BP cuff too quickly and fails to get an accurate reading, what should they do?

- A. Partially deflate the cuff and then reinflate it**
- B. Release all of the air from the cuff before retesting**
- C. Measure the blood pressure using the left arm**
- D. Measure the blood pressure using a different cuff**

If a PCT deflates the blood pressure cuff too quickly and thus compromises the accuracy of the reading, the appropriate response is to partially deflate the cuff and then reinflate it. This method allows for a more accurate measurement without the risk of completely losing the assessment opportunity already created. When the cuff is deflated too quickly, it can cause a rapid drop in pressure that may skip over the precise moment of the systolic and diastolic readings. By partially deflating the cuff, the technician can regain some control over the readings and take another measurement to ensure accuracy. Simply releasing all of the air from the cuff before retesting would reset the process entirely, which might lead to further inaccuracies or require starting from scratch. Switching arms or using a different cuff could introduce variability unrelated to the patient's blood pressure, making it harder to obtain a reliable reading. Thus, the correct approach is to make adjustments with the existing setup to get the correct values.

8. If a patient with diabetes asks how to give insulin injections, what should the technician inform them?

- A. Inform the nurse about the request**
- B. Wait for the family to learn about the injection**
- C. The best time to get the injection is before breakfast**
- D. Look for information online about administering the injection**

The technician should inform the nurse about the patient's request for information on how to give insulin injections because it is essential to ensure that the patient receives accurate and safe guidance from a qualified healthcare professional. Nurses are trained to provide detailed instructions and monitor patients to ensure understanding and correct technique. Selecting this approach also allows the nurse to assess the patient's overall understanding of their diabetes management and tailor the education to their specific needs. It is particularly important for safety, as incorrect administration could lead to serious complications for the patient. While other options might seem useful or convenient, they do not provide the correct support necessary for patient education in this context. Relying on family members may lead to misinformation, looking for information online can result in unreliable or confusing guidance, and timing the injection without proper consultation may not align with the patient's personalized care plan. Therefore, engaging the nurse is the most effective and safest course of action.

9. What is the main purpose of CLIA in laboratory testing?

- A. To protect patient information**
- B. To establish quality standards for laboratory testing on human specimens**
- C. To provide clinical laboratory education**
- D. To create and promote clinical and laboratory practices**

The main purpose of CLIA, which stands for the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments, is to establish quality standards for laboratory testing on human specimens. This legislation was enacted to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of patient test results, which are critical for diagnosis and treatment. By setting these standards, CLIA helps to regulate laboratory testing performed on human specimens across the United States, thereby enhancing patient safety and maintaining the integrity of the results obtained. This focus on quality standards includes various aspects such as personnel qualifications, proficiency testing, and quality control, making it essential for laboratories to adhere to strict guidelines. By ensuring that all laboratories meet these established standards, CLIA significantly contributes to the overall effectiveness of healthcare and medical decisions based on lab results. Such regulation is paramount for fostering public trust in medical laboratory results and ultimately supporting improved patient outcomes.

10. Which type of tube should be collected first for dermal blood samples?

- A. Lavender top**
- B. Green top**
- C. Red top**
- D. Light blue top**

When collecting dermal blood samples, the appropriate first tube to fill is typically the lavender top tube. This tube contains EDTA, an anticoagulant that is essential for hematological tests, as it preserves the integrity of the blood samples by preventing clotting. Collecting this tube first ensures that the samples can be analyzed for various blood components, such as complete blood counts, without the interference of clotting factors. The order of draw in phlebotomy is important not only for minimizing contamination but also for ensuring the accuracy of the tests conducted on the blood samples. While other tubes serve different purposes (for example, the red top tube is often used for serum tests as it does not contain additives, and the light blue top tube is used for coagulation studies), initiating the collection with the lavender top tube is critical for maintaining proper test results for hematological analysis. Therefore, collecting the lavender top tube first aligns with best practices in blood specimen collection protocols.

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://nhapct.examzify.com>

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

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