

NWCA Medical Assistant 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

- 1. The use of psychoactive drugs for months or years in ways that harm the user or others is best described as which option?**
 - A. A transient, non-harmful experiment with substances.**
 - B. A mood disorder unrelated to substance use.**
 - C. A brain injury resulting from trauma.**
 - D. The use of psychoactive drugs for months or years in ways that harm the user or others.**

- 2. Which age group has a resting pulse range of 50-70 BPM?**
 - A. Newborns: 130-160 BPM**
 - B. Infants: 110-130 BPM**
 - C. Over 7 years: 80-90 BPM**
 - D. Elderly adults: 50-70 BPM**

- 3. Which option best describes therapeutic touch?**
 - A. A conventional medical procedure using medications to reduce pain.**
 - B. An alternative therapy that involves using one's hands to consciously direct an energy exchange from the practitioner to the patient to facilitate healing or pain relief.**
 - C. A diagnostic imaging technique to visualize energy fields.**
 - D. A surgical technique to realign energy pathways in the body.**

- 4. Which item is essential when collecting a urine sample from a newborn?**
 - A. Sterile gloves**
 - B. Non-sterile towels**
 - C. Glass container**
 - D. Non-sterile cleansing wipes**

- 5. Which security measure should be implemented at the end of each day in a workplace?**
 - A. Leave doors unlocked to save time.**
 - B. Leave prescription pads out on the desk.**
 - C. Share security codes widely among all staff.**
 - D. Lock doors and windows at the end of each day.**

- 6. Which condition is caused by overproduction of parathyroid hormone leading to hypercalcemia?**
- A. Hyperparathyroidism**
 - B. Hypoparathyroidism**
 - C. Insulinoma**
 - D. Pancreatitis**
- 7. Which term refers to nourishment or energy obtained from food consumed?**
- A. Basic Nutrition**
 - B. Jaundice**
 - C. Hepatitis**
 - D. Cirrhosis**
- 8. The dermis contains which types of tissue?**
- A. Keratin, melanin**
 - B. Bone, cartilage**
 - C. Collagen, elastic tissue, reticular fibers**
 - D. Smooth muscle**
- 9. When charting a paper chart, which action is correct?**
- A. Verify the patient's name and birth date.**
 - B. Date only.**
 - C. Use any color ink without restrictions.**
 - D. Erase mistakes with correction fluid.**
- 10. Greenstick fracture is best described as:**
- A. A complete break with the bone separated.**
 - B. A bending and incomplete break of a bone; most often seen in children.**
 - C. A fracture caused by twisting forces.**
 - D. A fracture that only affects soft tissue.**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. The use of psychoactive drugs for months or years in ways that harm the user or others is best described as which option?

- A. A transient, non-harmful experiment with substances.**
- B. A mood disorder unrelated to substance use.**
- C. A brain injury resulting from trauma.**
- D. The use of psychoactive drugs for months or years in ways that harm the user or others.**

Chronic, harmful use of psychoactive drugs signals a substance use disorder, often called addiction. This means the person continues using despite negative effects on health, safety, or relationships, and typically involves patterns such as craving, tolerance, withdrawal, and impairment in functioning. The description given precisely captures this ongoing, self-defeating behavior that harms the user or others. The other options don't fit because a brief, non-harmful experiment isn't ongoing or damaging; a mood disorder unrelated to substances isn't caused by or explained by drug use; and a brain injury from trauma is a physical injury, not a pattern of substance misuse.

2. Which age group has a resting pulse range of 50-70 BPM?

- A. Newborns: 130-160 BPM**
- B. Infants: 110-130 BPM**
- C. Over 7 years: 80-90 BPM**
- D. Elderly adults: 50-70 BPM**

Resting heart rate tends to be higher in infancy and gradually lowers with age, often settling into lower ranges for older adults. The 50-70 bpm range is typical for many elderly adults, reflecting this age-related decline in resting heart rate. The other options show higher ranges common in younger groups: newborns are around 130-160 bpm, infants about 110-130 bpm, and children over seven years about 80-90 bpm. So, elderly adults best fit the 50-70 bpm resting pulse.

3. Which option best describes therapeutic touch?

- A. A conventional medical procedure using medications to reduce pain.**
- B. An alternative therapy that involves using one's hands to consciously direct an energy exchange from the practitioner to the patient to facilitate healing or pain relief.**
- C. A diagnostic imaging technique to visualize energy fields.**
- D. A surgical technique to realign energy pathways in the body.**

Therapeutic touch is a form of energy-based care where the practitioner uses deliberate hand movements or a light, held position near the patient to influence a supposed energy field, with the aim of promoting healing or relieving pain. It falls under complementary or alternative medicine rather than standard medical care, and it is not about using medications, imaging techniques, or surgical procedures. In practice, the practitioner may hover hands above the body or place them lightly on the skin, focusing on directing energy to support comfort and well-being. While some people report benefits, the scientific evidence is mixed, and it is usually offered as part of integrative care rather than as a replacement for conventional treatments.

4. Which item is essential when collecting a urine sample from a newborn?

- A. Sterile gloves**
- B. Non-sterile towels**
- C. Glass container**
- D. Non-sterile cleansing wipes**

Maintaining sterile technique during newborn urine collection is essential. Sterile gloves create a barrier between the caregiver's hands and the infant, preventing microbes from contaminating the sample and protecting both the baby and the healthcare worker from exposure to bodily fluids. Newborns have immature immune systems, so reducing contamination is crucial to get an accurate test result and to lower infection risk. Other items can help with cleanliness, but they don't provide the necessary sterile barrier: towels may carry contaminants, cleansing wipes alone don't establish a sterile field, and a glass container isn't inherently sterile or ideal for maintaining sterility in collection.

5. Which security measure should be implemented at the end of each day in a workplace?

- A. Leave doors unlocked to save time.**
- B. Leave prescription pads out on the desk.**
- C. Share security codes widely among all staff.**
- D. Lock doors and windows at the end of each day.**

Closing up securely is essential to protect people, property, and information. Locking doors and windows at the end of the day creates a physical barrier that helps prevent unauthorized entry, theft, and tampering, while also supporting safeguarding of patient records and medications. This practice reduces risk and aligns with typical workplace safety and security policies. Leaving doors unlocked invites risk, leaving prescription pads exposed can lead to misuse or theft, and sharing security codes widely defeats access control. Prioritizing secure exits at closing time keeps the workplace safer and compliant.

6. Which condition is caused by overproduction of parathyroid hormone leading to hypercalcemia?

- A. Hyperparathyroidism**
- B. Hypoparathyroidism**
- C. Insulinoma**
- D. Pancreatitis**

Overproduction of parathyroid hormone causes hypercalcemia because PTH raises blood calcium through three main actions: it increases calcium release from bone, enhances calcium reabsorption in the kidneys, and stimulates active vitamin D production to boost intestinal calcium absorption. When PTH is chronically elevated, calcium levels rise, which is the hallmark of hyperparathyroidism. This condition is usually due to a parathyroid adenoma or gland hyperplasia. Symptoms often relate to high calcium, such as fatigue, bone pain, kidney stones, increased urination, abdominal discomfort, and mood changes. The other conditions don't fit this scenario: hypoparathyroidism results in low calcium from insufficient PTH; insulinoma is a pancreatic tumor causing low blood sugar; pancreatitis is inflammation of the pancreas and isn't driven by excess PTH.

7. Which term refers to nourishment or energy obtained from food consumed?

A. Basic Nutrition

B. Jaundice

C. Hepatitis

D. Cirrhosis

Basic Nutrition describes nourishment or energy obtained from the food we eat. It covers how calories and nutrients from carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals support the body's functions, growth, and daily activities. The other terms relate to the liver or a disease process, not to nourishment: jaundice is a yellowing of the skin from bilirubin buildup; hepatitis is liver inflammation; cirrhosis is scarring of the liver.

8. The dermis contains which types of tissue?

A. Keratin, melanin

B. Bone, cartilage

C. Collagen, elastic tissue, reticular fibers

D. Smooth muscle

The dermis is a connective tissue layer, so its main components are fibers and the cells that support them. Collagen fibers provide strength and structure, elastic fibers give skin its ability to stretch and snap back, and reticular fibers form supportive networks that help hold things in place within the dermis. Keratin and melanin come from epidermal cells (keratinocytes and melanocytes), so they are associated with the epidermis, not the dermis. Bone and cartilage are tissues of the skeletal system, not skin, and while some smooth muscle (like the arrector pili) can be found in the dermis, the defining tissue type described for the dermis is connective tissue with collagen, elastic tissue, and reticular fibers.

9. When charting a paper chart, which action is correct?

A. Verify the patient's name and birth date.

B. Date only.

C. Use any color ink without restrictions.

D. Erase mistakes with correction fluid.

Verifying the patient's name and birth date is essential to ensure you're charting in the correct chart and attributing information to the right person. In paper records, mix-ups can happen if charts are misfiled or labeled with similar names, so confirming identifiers before logging any entry prevents errors that could affect treatment, billing, or legal records. Dating entries matters, but it doesn't confirm patient identity. Using any color ink without restrictions can violate facility policy and affect legibility or permanence. Erasing or using correction fluids destroys the audit trail and isn't an acceptable way to correct chart entries; proper practice is to cross out with a single line, then initial and date the correction.

10. Greenstick fracture is best described as:

- A. A complete break with the bone separated.**
- B. A bending and incomplete break of a bone; most often seen in children.**
- C. A fracture caused by twisting forces.**
- D. A fracture that only affects soft tissue.**

Greenstick fractures occur when a bone bends and cracks but does not break all the way through. This is common in children because their bones are more flexible. In this type of injury, one side of the bone cracks (the side under tension), while the other side may bend or remain intact, so the fracture is incomplete rather than a full break. It's often seen in the forearm bones of kids. Why this fits the description: it's not a complete separation of the bone, which would be a full fracture; it isn't caused by twisting forces (that would be a spiral fracture); and it isn't describing soft tissue injury.

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://nwcamedicalassistant.examzify.com>

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