

Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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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

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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 recommended rate of delivering breaths after an advanced airway is placed in a pediatric patient?**
 - A. 1 breath every 5 seconds**
 - B. 1 breath every 10 seconds**
 - C. 1 breath every 8 seconds**
 - D. 1 breath every 6 seconds**
- 2. What is an essential aspect of clinical assessment regarding tidal volume in children?**
 - A. Always measure directly**
 - B. Use mechanical ventilation for accuracy**
 - C. Clinical assessment is mostly important**
 - D. Determine tidal volume using age prediction charts**
- 3. What is the next step in the PALS systematic approach if a child is unresponsive?**
 - A. Check for breathing**
 - B. Activate emergency response**
 - C. Start CPR**
 - D. Give oxygen**
- 4. Which characteristics are evaluated when checking for pupil response during a neurological assessment?**
 - A. Size, shape, and response strength**
 - B. Size, equality, and response to light**
 - C. Shape, color, and pulsation**
 - D. Size, color, and symmetry**
- 5. In emergency situations, what is vital to do if signs of respiratory arrest are observed?**
 - A. Call 911 immediately**
 - B. Activate the emergency response**
 - C. Start the patient on oxygen**
 - D. Begin CPR**

6. Which mnemonic is used for assessing mental status?

- A. ABCDE
- B. AVPU
- C. FLACC
- D. PQRST

7. In a situation where a child is unresponsive and pulseless after receiving CPR and intubation, what should the focus be next?

- A. Administer additional medications
- B. Identify and treat reversible causes
- C. Increase the rate of compressions
- D. Perform defibrillation

8. What is a common effect of proper CPR technique?

- A. Immediate return of spontaneous circulation
- B. Improved blood flow to vital organs
- C. Reduced risk of airway obstruction
- D. Instant stabilization of heart rhythm

9. In pediatric cardiac arrest, what are the two most common initial rhythms?

- A. Ventricular fibrillation and PEA
- B. Asystole and PEA
- C. Sinus bradycardia and tachycardia
- D. Atrial arrhythmias

10. When is it appropriate to begin CPR if you do not feel a pulse in a child?

- A. After checking for breathing
- B. Within 10 seconds
- C. After assessing for signs of shock
- D. Only upon reaching the emergency room

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the recommended rate of delivering breaths after an advanced airway is placed in a pediatric patient?

- A. 1 breath every 5 seconds**
- B. 1 breath every 10 seconds**
- C. 1 breath every 8 seconds**
- D. 1 breath every 6 seconds**

When an advanced airway is placed in a pediatric patient, the recommended rate for delivering breaths is 1 breath every 6 seconds. This rate allows for adequate ventilation while preventing hyperventilation, which can lead to reduced cardiac output and other complications. In pediatric patients, the focus is on providing sufficient oxygenation without inducing a high level of pressure in the lungs, which can occur if breaths are delivered too quickly. The emphasis is on maintaining a balance between effective ventilation and avoiding overinflation of the lungs. The timing of 1 breath every 6 seconds translates to a rate of about 10 breaths per minute, which is consistent with guidelines aimed at providing necessary respiratory support while allowing for sufficient time between breaths for the lungs to deflate appropriately. This ensures that the patient is receiving the oxygen they need while minimizing the risk of adverse effects associated with rapid ventilations.

2. What is an essential aspect of clinical assessment regarding tidal volume in children?

- A. Always measure directly**
- B. Use mechanical ventilation for accuracy**
- C. Clinical assessment is mostly important**
- D. Determine tidal volume using age prediction charts**

In a clinical assessment of tidal volume in children, the emphasis is on the importance of performing a thorough clinical evaluation rather than relying solely on quantitative methods. Clinical assessment encompasses a wide range of observations, including the child's respiratory effort, rate, and overall clinical status, which can provide valuable insights into their tidal volume needs. While direct measurement of tidal volume or the use of mechanical ventilation might provide precise figures, these methods do not always align with the child's individual circumstances or underlying conditions. For example, the child's response to illness, underlying pathologies, and overall clinical picture is crucial for appropriate management. Furthermore, age prediction charts can serve as general guidelines but may not accurately capture the specific needs of an individual child, as variations in anatomy, disease processes, and developmental stages can affect tidal volume requirements. Therefore, recognizing the significance of clinical assessment allows healthcare providers to make informed decisions tailored to the unique needs of each child, ensuring they receive the most appropriate care in critical situations.

3. What is the next step in the PALS systematic approach if a child is unresponsive?

- A. Check for breathing
- B. Activate emergency response**
- C. Start CPR
- D. Give oxygen

In the Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) systematic approach, if a child is found to be unresponsive, the immediate next step is to activate emergency response. This involves calling for emergency assistance to ensure that advanced medical interventions can be provided as quickly as possible. Prompt activation of emergency response is crucial because an unresponsive child may be experiencing a life-threatening condition that requires rapid intervention, such as cardiac arrest. By initiating this step, you ensure not only that emergency services are on their way, but also that you can focus on performing necessary life-saving measures without delay. The importance of this step cannot be overstated, as timely access to advanced care significantly improves outcomes in pediatric emergencies. Other steps, such as checking for breathing or starting CPR, are critical actions, but they should not occur until emergency response has been activated, especially in scenarios where external assistance is essential.

4. Which characteristics are evaluated when checking for pupil response during a neurological assessment?

- A. Size, shape, and response strength
- B. Size, equality, and response to light**
- C. Shape, color, and pulsation
- D. Size, color, and symmetry

When assessing pupil response during a neurological evaluation, the characteristics focused on are size, equality, and response to light. This is crucial in determining the health of the nervous system and can provide insights into possible neurological issues. Size refers to the diameter of the pupils; normal pupils typically range in size from about 2 to 6 mm. Equality means that both pupils are the same size, which is important for assessing neurological function. Anisocoria, or unequal pupil sizes, can indicate various neurological conditions. The response to light is evaluated by shining a light into each pupil and observing whether they constrict appropriately. A healthy eye will constrict in response to light, which demonstrates proper function of both the optic nerve (involved in the sensory aspect) and the oculomotor nerve (responsible for the motor response). Such assessments can help identify conditions like increased intracranial pressure, trauma, or certain types of brain injuries, highlighting the importance of these three characteristics in neurological assessments. The other options list factors that are not part of standard pupil response evaluations, such as shape and color, which do not typically provide relevant clinical information in this specific context.

5. In emergency situations, what is vital to do if signs of respiratory arrest are observed?

- A. Call 911 immediately**
- B. Activate the emergency response**
- C. Start the patient on oxygen**
- D. Begin CPR**

Activating the emergency response is critical when signs of respiratory arrest are observed because it ensures that advanced medical assistance is on its way. This action is essential in a situation where the patient's condition could rapidly deteriorate, as it allows for a timely response from professionals who can provide advanced life support and appropriate medical interventions. In the context of pediatric advanced life support, early activation of emergency services can significantly improve outcomes by allowing for immediate evaluation and care. While other actions such as calling 911 or starting CPR might seem appropriate, activating the emergency response ensures that the necessary resources and personnel are mobilized to assist in a coordinated manner. It is a foundational step in emergency care that prioritizes rapid access to critical resources that are often beyond the scope of basic life support performed by bystanders or immediate caregivers.

6. Which mnemonic is used for assessing mental status?

- A. ABCDE**
- B. AVPU**
- C. FLACC**
- D. PQRST**

The correct answer is B, AVPU, which is used to assess a patient's mental status in an emergency setting. AVPU is an acronym that stands for: - **A**: Alert - the patient is fully awake (though not necessarily oriented). - **V**: Verbal - the patient responds to verbal stimuli. - **P**: Pain - the patient responds to painful stimuli. - **U**: Unresponsive - the patient does not respond to any stimuli. Using the AVPU scale allows healthcare professionals to quickly gauge a patient's level of consciousness and make decisions regarding the urgency of care and necessary interventions. The other mnemonics represent different assessments or prioritizations but are not specifically designed for mental status evaluation. For instance, ABCDE typically refers to airway, breathing, circulation, disability, and exposure/evacuation, which focuses on primary assessment of a patient's immediate physical state rather than mental status. FLACC is a pain assessment tool specifically for children who cannot communicate their pain levels verbally, focusing on facial expressions, legs, activity, cry, and consolability. PQRST is a mnemonic commonly used in the assessment of pain, standing for Provocation, Quality, Radiation, Severity, and Time, which helps in understanding the

7. In a situation where a child is unresponsive and pulseless after receiving CPR and intubation, what should the focus be next?

- A. Administer additional medications**
- B. Identify and treat reversible causes**
- C. Increase the rate of compressions**
- D. Perform defibrillation**

In a scenario where a child is unresponsive and pulseless following CPR and intubation, shifting the focus to identifying and treating reversible causes is crucial. This approach aligns with the resuscitation guidelines, emphasizing that many causes of cardiac arrest in children can be reversible if addressed promptly. The "H's and T's" mnemonic is often used to recall the potential reversible causes: hypoxia, hypovolemia, hydrogen ion (acidosis), hyper-/hypokalemia, hypothermia, tension pneumothorax, cardiac tamponade, toxins, and thrombosis (pulmonary or coronary). By assessing and treating these factors, such as providing adequate ventilation to resolve hypoxia or administering fluids for hypovolemia, you significantly improve the chances of successful resuscitation and recovery. While additional medications or increasing the rate of compressions may seem like immediate responses, they do not address the underlying issues that led to the child's condition. Defibrillation is appropriate in cases of specific arrhythmias, but without first addressing reversible causes, the chances of effective resuscitation remain diminished. Therefore, focusing on identifying and treating reversible causes is the most effective and evidence-based way to improve outcomes in pediatric cardiac arrest scenarios.

8. What is a common effect of proper CPR technique?

- A. Immediate return of spontaneous circulation**
- B. Improved blood flow to vital organs**
- C. Reduced risk of airway obstruction**
- D. Instant stabilization of heart rhythm**

Proper CPR technique effectively improves blood flow to vital organs, which is crucial during cardiac arrest. When performed correctly, CPR creates artificial circulation by compressing the chest, which helps maintain perfusion to vital organs such as the heart and brain. This is particularly important because the brain and coronary arteries are highly sensitive to prolonged periods of inadequate blood flow, and timely CPR can significantly enhance the chances of survival and recovery. The other choices reflect outcomes that may not directly result from proper CPR technique. While immediate return of spontaneous circulation can occur in some cases, it is not a guaranteed outcome of CPR and may take multiple cycles or interventions. Reduced risk of airway obstruction is more related to effective airway management rather than CPR itself. Instant stabilization of heart rhythm might occur with defibrillation but is not a direct effect of performing CPR. Thus, improved blood flow to vital organs encapsulates the primary and essential benefit of effective CPR.

9. In pediatric cardiac arrest, what are the two most common initial rhythms?

- A. Ventricular fibrillation and PEA**
- B. Asystole and PEA**
- C. Sinus bradycardia and tachycardia**
- D. Atrial arrhythmias**

In pediatric cardiac arrest, asystole and pulseless electrical activity (PEA) are indeed the two most common initial rhythms observed. Asystole represents a complete cessation of electrical activity in the heart, which means there are no discernible heartbeats or cardiac output. This is a critical situation that indicates the heart is no longer functioning in a way that can support circulation. On the other hand, pulseless electrical activity refers to the presence of organized electrical activity on the electrocardiogram without an effective mechanical response that produces a pulse. This can occur due to various underlying factors, such as hypoxia, metabolic imbalances, or hypovolemia, leading to inadequate circulation despite some electrical activity. Recognizing these two rhythms is essential in pediatric advanced life support since they guide the resuscitation efforts, including the initiation of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the administration of medications. Quick identification and appropriate response to these rhythms can significantly impact outcomes for pediatric patients in cardiac arrest. In contrast, ventricular fibrillation, sinus bradycardia, tachycardia, and atrial arrhythmias are not the most common initial rhythms in the pediatric population facing cardiac arrest scenarios.

10. When is it appropriate to begin CPR if you do not feel a pulse in a child?

- A. After checking for breathing**
- B. Within 10 seconds**
- C. After assessing for signs of shock**
- D. Only upon reaching the emergency room**

Beginning cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) promptly is crucial when there is no detectable pulse in a child. The recommendation to initiate CPR within 10 seconds of identifying the absence of a pulse is based on the need to act swiftly to prevent irreversible brain and organ damage that can occur due to lack of blood flow and oxygen. In pediatric emergencies, every second matters. If a pulse cannot be felt, it's essential to quickly check other signs of circulation, like respiration, but if those signs are also absent or if the child is unresponsive, starting CPR immediately is vital. Thus, initiating abdominal compressions and ventilations without delay is the most effective course of action to sustain life until emergency services arrive. The other options do not emphasize the urgency needed in this scenario. Checking for breathing before starting CPR may cause delays that can be harmful, and assessing for signs of shock could also prolong the response time. Waiting until reaching the emergency room is not appropriate, as immediate action is essential outside of a hospital setting where resuscitative efforts can begin right away.

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://pediatricadvancedlifesupport.examzify.com>

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

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