STRESS AND ADAPTATION NURSING PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE

SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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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. Which of the following is a stage of General Adaptation Syndrome?

A. Alarm

B. Homeostasis

C. Inflammatory

D. Reflexive

2. Which theory emphasizes stress as a process including internal and external demands and resources?

A. Stress as stimulus (Holmes and Rahe)

B. Stress as transaction (Lazarus)

C. Stress as response (Selye)

D. Stress as process including internal and external demands and resources (Pearlin)

3. What role does pharmacology play in managing stress in cancer patients?

A. Pharmacology has no role in stress management for cancer patients.

B. Pharmacology is never used to manage stress; only therapy.

C. Only nonpharmacologic approaches are used to address stress.

D. Anxiolytics or antidepressants may be used to manage anxiety, sleep disturbance, and mood changes related to cancer, with attention to side effects and interactions.

4. Which gland releases ACTH as part of the GAS alarm stage cascade?

A. Hypothalamus

B. Anterior Pituitary

C. Adrenal Cortex

D. Adrenal Medulla

5. Which of the following is NOT part of effective environmental modifications to reduce hospital stress?

A. Encourage constant noise.

B. Provide no explanations.

C. Schedule caregiving to minimize disruption.

D. Avoiding any caregiver contact.

6. Which factor increases the risk of stress-related complications during pregnancy?

A. High maternal anxiety

B. Regular prenatal care

C. Adequate social support

D. Healthy baseline stress management

7. Which approach best supports patient adaptation to stress over time?

A. Rigid, one-size-fits-all plan with no family involvement.

B. Rely solely on medication for stress relief.

C. Skip follow-up evaluations to reduce patient burden.

D. Ongoing evaluation of anxiety, sleep, mood, coping, adherence, function, and satisfaction.

8. Which coping approach involves changing thoughts about the stressful situation rather than changing the situation?

A. Alter the stressor

B. Adapt to the stressor

C. Avoid the stressor

D. Escape

9. During acute stress, which branch of the autonomic nervous system is activated to trigger the fight-or-flight response?

A. Sympathetic

B. Parasympathetic

C. Somatic

D. Central

10. During the fight-or-flight response, which substances are released to promote energy mobilization?

A. Dopamine and Serotonin

B. Gamma-aminobutyric acid and Glutamate

C. Norepinephrine and Epinephrine

D. Endorphins and Enkephalins

Answers

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

Explanations

1. Which of the following is a stage of General Adaptation Syndrome?

A. Alarm

B. Homeostasis

C. Inflammatory

D. Reflexive

The main idea assessed is how the body reacts to stress through the stages of the General Adaptation Syndrome. In the alarm stage, the body detects a threat and switches into fight-or-flight mode. The sympathetic nervous system kicks in, and the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis is activated, flooding the body with catecholamines (like adrenaline) and cortisol. This creates immediate readiness: the heart rate and blood pressure rise, airways widen, glucose is released for quick energy, and overall alertness increases. This stage is all about mobilizing resources for rapid action. That's why this option fits as a stage of the General Adaptation Syndrome. The other terms don't describe a stage of GAS: homeostasis is the normal balance the body tries to maintain, not a stage; inflammatory response is a localized tissue reaction to injury or infection; reflexive refers to quick, automatic neural responses, not a systemic adaptation stage. After alarm, the body may move into resistance and then exhaustion if stress continues, but the alarm stage is the immediate first phase.

2. Which theory emphasizes stress as a process including internal and external demands and resources?

A. Stress as stimulus (Holmes and Rahe)

B. Stress as transaction (Lazarus)

C. Stress as response (Selye)

D. Stress as process including internal and external demands and resources (Pearlin)

This item is testing the idea that stress is a dynamic process shaped by the demands placed on a person and the resources available to meet them. Pearlin's stress process model describes stress as an ongoing interaction where internal demands (like personal roles and expectations) and external demands (such as work, caregiving, or family strains) create stressors, while resources (coping skills, social support, finances) help buffer or mediate their impact. How a person appraises these demands and uses resources to cope influences health and well-being over time, which is why this theory best fits the description of stress as a process involving internal and external demands and resources. In contrast, the stimulus view treats stress as a count of life events, the transaction view centers on appraisal of the situation, and the response view focuses on physiological reactions to stressors, rather than the ongoing resource-mediated process.

3. What role does pharmacology play in managing stress in cancer patients?

A. Pharmacology has no role in stress management for cancer patients.

B. Pharmacology is never used to manage stress; only therapy.

C. Only nonpharmacologic approaches are used to address stress.

D. Anxiolytics or antidepressants may be used to manage anxiety, sleep disturbance, and mood changes related to cancer, with attention to side effects and interactions.

Pharmacology can support stress management in cancer care by using medications to ease anxiety, improve sleep, and stabilize mood when these symptoms are distressing or interfere with treatment and daily functioning. Nonpharmacologic approaches like counseling, mindfulness, and sleep hygiene are essential, but medications provide an important option when symptoms persist or are severe enough to impact adherence to therapy or quality of life. Anxiolytics can offer rapid relief of acute anxiety, which can help patients engage in treatment and coping strategies, yet they come with considerations such as daytime sedation, cognitive effects, potential dependence, and interactions with other medications. Antidepressants, including selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors or serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors, can help with ongoing anxiety and depressive symptoms as well as energy and mood, but they require several weeks to take full effect and may interact with chemotherapy, antiemetics, or other drugs. Sleep medications can help with cancer-related insomnia, but the goal is to minimize daytime impairment and avoid masking fatigue or causing next-day sedation. Choosing pharmacologic therapy involves evaluating the individual's overall treatment plan, organ function, and potential drug interactions, and it should be done in coordination with the oncology team. The aim is to use the lowest effective dose for the shortest appropriate duration while monitoring for side effects and reassessing as cancer treatment progresses. In short, medications can be a valuable part of stress management when used thoughtfully and safely alongside nonpharmacologic strategies.

4. Which gland releases ACTH as part of the GAS alarm stage cascade?

A. Hypothalamus

B. Anterior Pituitary

C. Adrenal Cortex

D. Adrenal Medulla

During the alarm stage of the GAS, the brain activates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis. The hypothalamus releases corticotropin-releasing hormone (CRH), which stimulates the anterior pituitary to secrete adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH). ACTH then travels to the adrenal cortex, prompting cortisol release to mobilize energy and support the stress response. The anterior pituitary is the source of ACTH in this cascade, not the hypothalamus (which releases CRH upstream), nor the adrenal cortex (which releases cortisol in response to ACTH), nor the adrenal medulla (which releases catecholamines).

5. Which of the following is NOT part of effective environmental modifications to reduce hospital stress?

A. Encourage constant noise.

B. Provide no explanations.

C. Schedule caregiving to minimize disruption.

D. Avoiding any caregiver contact.

Environmental modifications to reduce hospital stress rely on creating a calm, predictable environment and ensuring supportive interactions with caregivers. Scheduling caregiving to minimize disruption helps patients feel safe because routines are predictable, and explanations about care reduce uncertainty and anxiety. Reducing noise supports comfort and concentration. In contrast, avoiding any caregiver contact removes essential reassurance and social support, making stress worse. This is why that option doesn't fit the approach used to ease stress in the hospital.

6. Which factor increases the risk of stress-related complications during pregnancy?

A. High maternal anxiety

B. Regular prenatal care

C. Adequate social support

D. Healthy baseline stress management

Elevated maternal anxiety increases risk of stress-related complications during pregnancy because it sustains the maternal stress response via the HPA axis, raising cortisol and catecholamine levels. These hormones can cross the placenta and influence fetal development, making preterm birth, low birth weight, and later neurobehavioral issues more likely. Anxiety also contributes to poor sleep, unhealthy coping behaviors, and elevated maternal blood pressure, which can compound risk. Protective factors—regular prenatal care, adequate social support, and healthy baseline stress management—help buffer this response by reducing perceived stress and improving coping and physiological regulation. So the factor that increases risk is high maternal anxiety due to its direct impact on the body's stress pathways affecting both mother and baby.

7. Which approach best supports patient adaptation to stress over time?

A. Rigid, one-size-fits-all plan with no family involvement.

B. Rely solely on medication for stress relief.

C. Skip follow-up evaluations to reduce patient burden.

D. Ongoing evaluation of anxiety, sleep, mood, coping, adherence, function, and satisfaction.

Ongoing, multidimensional assessment is essential for helping a patient adapt to stress over time. By regularly evaluating anxiety, sleep, mood, coping strategies, medication adherence, daily functioning, and satisfaction with care, you get a complete picture of how well the person is adjusting and where adjustments are needed. This approach recognizes that stress affects many areas of life, and a good plan must evolve as the person changes, barriers emerge, or new stressors arise. It also supports patient engagement, because the patient can see how different factors interact and why specific adjustments are made. A rigid, one-size-fits-all plan with no family involvement can't account for individual differences or changing circumstances, so it often fails to support true adaptation. Relying solely on medication addresses symptoms but not the behavioral, sleep, or coping components that drive long-term adjustment. Skipping follow-up evaluations eliminates opportunities to detect new problems, monitor progress, and modify the plan as needed.

8. Which coping approach involves changing thoughts about the stressful situation rather than changing the situation?

A. Alter the stressor

B. Adapt to the stressor

C. Avoid the stressor

D. Escape

Changing thoughts about the stressful situation rather than changing the situation itself is cognitive adaptation through reframing. This approach uses mental reinterpretation or acceptance to lessen the emotional impact of the stressor without altering the external circumstances. By adjusting how you perceive the event—finding a different, more manageable meaning or focusing on controllable aspects—you reduce distress and maintain functioning even if the situation remains unchanged. Altering the stressor would mean trying to change the external conditions themselves, which is why it doesn't fit. Avoiding or escaping involves withdrawing from the stressor rather than addressing it mentally, so they don't reflect changing thoughts to cope. Adapting to the stressor captures the idea of adjusting one's thoughts and response to proceed effectively, making it the best fit.

9. During acute stress, which branch of the autonomic nervous system is activated to trigger the fight-or-flight response?

A. Sympathetic

B. Parasympathetic

C. Somatic

D. Central

During acute stress, the fight-or-flight response is driven by the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system. This system rapidly readies the body for action by increasing heart rate and the force of contraction, bronchodilating airways, dilating pupils, releasing glucose from the liver, and redirecting blood toward skeletal muscles while dialing down nonessential functions like digestion. The sympathetic signals originate in the thoracic and lumbar regions, with preganglionic neurons releasing acetylcholine onto postganglionic neurons that secrete norepinephrine, and the adrenal medulla releasing epinephrine (adrenaline) into the bloodstream to amplify the response. In contrast, the parasympathetic branch promotes rest and digestion, the somatic system governs voluntary skeletal muscle control, and the central nervous system refers to the brain and spinal cord rather than a branch of the autonomic system.

10. During the fight-or-flight response, which substances are released to promote energy mobilization?

A. Dopamine and Serotonin

B. Gamma-aminobutyric acid and Glutamate

C. Norepinephrine and Epinephrine

D. Endorphins and Enkephalins

During the fight-or-flight response, the body rapidly mobilizes energy through the sympathetic-adrenal system by releasing catecholamines: norepinephrine and epinephrine. Norepinephrine, released from sympathetic nerves, helps increase heart rate and redirects blood toward muscles, preparing the body for quick action. Epinephrine, released from the adrenal medulla, acts on the liver and fat tissue to boost glucose release (glycogenolysis) and fatty acid breakdown (lipolysis), raising blood sugar and available energy so muscles can respond quickly. This coordinated surge provides the rapid energy supply needed for action. The other substances listed don't play that primary energy-mobilizing role. Dopamine and serotonin are more about mood, motivation, and reward. GABA and glutamate regulate neuronal activity, not energy availability in a stress response. Endorphins and enkephalins are pain-relief peptides and analgesics rather than energy mobilizers.

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://stressandadaptationnursing.examzify.com

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