

Surgical Tech 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. What does "informed consent" mean in a surgical context?**
 - A. A document stating a patient is required to sign up**
 - B. A legal document signed by the patient, indicating they understand the procedure and risks involved**
 - C. Permission granted without explanation**
 - D. A form used for insurance purposes only**
- 2. Which sterilizer is known for using steam to sterilize equipment?**
 - A. High-vacuum**
 - B. Ethylene oxide**
 - C. Dry heat**
 - D. Radiation**
- 3. Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD) requires what specific action regarding surgical instruments?**
 - A. Use of sterilizable instruments**
 - B. Use of disposable instruments**
 - C. Delayed use of instruments**
 - D. Regular cleaning of instruments**
- 4. What is a common type of suction device used in surgery?**
 - A. Yankauer suction**
 - B. Jackson-Pratt suction**
 - C. Harrington suction**
 - D. Poole suction**
- 5. What is the only acceptable skin prep solution to use on or near the eye?**
 - A. Alcohol**
 - B. Iodine**
 - C. Chlorhexidine**
 - D. Dilute povidone-iodine**

- 6. What parameters should be used for sterilizing a Frazier suction in a Gravity Displacement Steam Sterilizer for immediate use?**
- A. 250 degrees F for 15 minutes**
 - B. 270 degrees F for 10 minutes**
 - C. 275 degrees F for 5 minutes**
 - D. 260 degrees F for 20 minutes**
- 7. What is the proper procedure for segregating sharp instruments after a surgical case?**
- A. Place them with delicate instruments**
 - B. Discard them in the general waste**
 - C. Place all sharp instruments in a separate basin**
 - D. Soak them in saline**
- 8. Which condition may require the use of a heart defibrillator?**
- A. Bradycardia**
 - B. Atrial fibrillation**
 - C. Ventricular fibrillation**
 - D. Asystole**
- 9. How is post-operative care typically managed?**
- A. Only monitoring vitals**
 - B. Simply stating discharge instructions**
 - C. Monitoring vitals, managing pain, and ensuring proper wound care**
 - D. Providing medication without monitoring**
- 10. What is the primary function of a surgical drape?**
- A. To absorb excess fluids during surgery**
 - B. To create a sterile barrier around the surgical site**
 - C. To provide warmth to the patient**
 - D. To display the surgical instruments**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What does "informed consent" mean in a surgical context?

- A. A document stating a patient is required to sign up
- B. A legal document signed by the patient, indicating they understand the procedure and risks involved**
- C. Permission granted without explanation
- D. A form used for insurance purposes only

Informed consent in a surgical context refers to a legal document signed by the patient that indicates they fully understand the procedure being performed, along with the associated risks, benefits, and alternatives. This concept is fundamental in healthcare, as it respects the autonomy and decision-making rights of patients regarding their own medical treatment. The process of obtaining informed consent ensures that the patient is adequately informed about what to expect before, during, and after the procedure. It involves a thorough discussion between the healthcare provider and the patient, allowing the patient to ask questions and seek clarification. This comprehensive approach is vital for ensuring that patients can make well-informed decisions about their healthcare. The emphasis on understanding the procedure and the risks involved differentiates informed consent from mere documentation or administrative requirements. Informed consent must involve clear communication and an acknowledgment by the patient that they have received and understood the relevant information, which is not the case with options that imply insufficient explanation or merely serving administrative needs.

2. Which sterilizer is known for using steam to sterilize equipment?

- A. High-vacuum**
- B. Ethylene oxide
- C. Dry heat
- D. Radiation

The sterilizer that utilizes steam for sterilization is known as a high-vacuum sterilizer. High-vacuum sterilizers operate by creating a high-pressure environment that uses steam to effectively kill microorganisms. The high vacuum technology allows for the thorough removal of air pockets prior to the introduction of steam, ensuring that it penetrates all surfaces of the instruments, which is critical for effective sterilization. Additionally, this sterilization method is typically efficient and commonly used in surgical settings because it can sterilize a wide range of heat- and moisture-stable instruments. The steam acts as the sterilant, denaturing proteins and disrupting cellular structures of bacteria, viruses, and spores, thus achieving sterility. Other sterilization methods mentioned, like ethylene oxide and dry heat, do work but employ different mechanisms—ethylene oxide uses gas for sterilization, while dry heat relies on elevated temperatures without moisture. Radiation involves using ionizing radiation and is not dependent on steam.

3. Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD) requires what specific action regarding surgical instruments?

- A. Use of sterilizable instruments**
- B. Use of disposable instruments**
- C. Delayed use of instruments**
- D. Regular cleaning of instruments**

Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD) is a rare and fatal neurodegenerative disorder caused by prions, which are misfolded proteins that can lead to severe brain damage. Prions are significantly more resistant to conventional sterilization methods than bacteria and viruses, making the handling of surgical instruments that may have been in contact with infected tissue particularly critical. Using disposable instruments is the most effective method for preventing transmission of CJD, as it eliminates the risk of prion contamination entirely. Once a disposable instrument is used, it can be safely discarded, thus preventing any potential prion exposure to both patients and healthcare personnel. This approach is essential because even rigorous sterilization techniques used for reprocessable instruments may not completely eliminate prions, leading to concerns about cross-contamination in clinical settings. The other considerations, such as using sterilizable instruments, delayed use, or regular cleaning, do not adequately address the inherent risks posed by prions. Prion contamination would not be effectively managed by sterilization methods alone, and merely cleaning or delaying the use of instruments still leaves open the chance for transmission. Therefore, opting for disposable instruments serves as the best preventative strategy in the context of CJD.

4. What is a common type of suction device used in surgery?

- A. Yankauer suction**
- B. Jackson-Pratt suction**
- C. Harrington suction**
- D. Poole suction**

The Yankauer suction is a common type of suction device widely used in surgical procedures due to its design and functionality. It features a rigid, curved structure that allows for effective aspiration of fluids in a variety of surgical settings, making it ideal for oral and pharyngeal suctioning as well as for use in the abdominal cavity. Its large, open tip helps prevent clogging while ensuring efficient removal of blood and other fluids from the surgical site. In addition to its practicality, the Yankauer suction is often preferred because it can be easily manipulated by the surgical team, allowing for precise control during procedures. Its design also minimizes the risk of tissue trauma, making it safer for both the patient and the surgeon when suctioning delicate areas. While other devices like Jackson-Pratt, Harrington, and Poole suction devices are also utilized in specific contexts within surgery, the Yankauer suction is recognized for its versatility and is a standard instrument in many surgical procedures.

5. What is the only acceptable skin prep solution to use on or near the eye?

- A. Alcohol**
- B. Iodine**
- C. Chlorhexidine**
- D. Dilute povidone-iodine**

The only acceptable skin prep solution to use on or near the eye is dilute povidone-iodine due to its efficacy as an antiseptic that's also safe for mucous membranes and sensitive skin areas. This solution is well-tolerated and has broad-spectrum antimicrobial activity, making it suitable for surgical procedures involving the eye or surrounding structures. While alcohol, iodine, and chlorhexidine are effective antiseptics, they are not suitable for use near the eyes. Alcohol can cause irritation and is volatile, leading to the risk of eye injury. Iodine in its concentrated form can also irritate or damage the ocular surfaces. Chlorhexidine has a risk of causing severe irritation or allergic reactions, especially if it comes into contact with the eyes. Therefore, using dilute povidone-iodine provides a safe alternative that minimizes the risk of adverse effects while ensuring effective skin disinfection.

6. What parameters should be used for sterilizing a Frazier suction in a Gravity Displacement Steam Sterilizer for immediate use?

- A. 250 degrees F for 15 minutes**
- B. 270 degrees F for 10 minutes**
- C. 275 degrees F for 5 minutes**
- D. 260 degrees F for 20 minutes**

The appropriate parameters for sterilizing a Frazier suction in a Gravity Displacement Steam Sterilizer for immediate use are set at 270 degrees F for 10 minutes. This setting ensures that the sterilization process is effective in eliminating all microbial life, including bacterial spores, which are the most resistant forms of microorganisms. When performing sterilization, it is crucial to choose the right temperature and time combination to ensure that the item being sterilized reaches the necessary conditions for effective sterilization. At 270 degrees F, the shorter time of 10 minutes is sufficient due to the increased temperature, allowing for a rapid and thorough sterilization process. While other temperature and time combinations are generally effective for sterilization, they do not match the efficacy and efficiency provided by the chosen parameters. For example, 250 degrees F for 15 minutes may not be adequate for immediate use because it operates at a lower temperature, potentially extending the time required for full sterilization. Similarly, while 275 degrees F for 5 minutes may seem effective due to the higher temperature, it is important to follow established protocols that have been validated for specific instruments and methods. Lastly, 260 degrees F for 20 minutes extends the time unnecessarily without achieving a higher level of safety or

7. What is the proper procedure for segregating sharp instruments after a surgical case?

- A. Place them with delicate instruments**
- B. Discard them in the general waste**
- C. Place all sharp instruments in a separate basin**
- D. Soak them in saline**

The proper procedure for segregating sharp instruments after a surgical case involves placing all sharp instruments in a separate basin. This method is crucial for maintaining safety in the operating room. Sharp instruments, such as scalpels, needles, and other cutting tools, pose a significant risk for cuts and punctures to personnel if not handled carefully. By placing them in a designated basin, it minimizes the chances of accidental injury and allows for safe transportation to the decontamination area. This practice also helps streamline the cleaning and sterilization process, as segregating sharp instruments makes it easier for staff to manage and identify items that require special attention. Ensuring that sharp instruments are isolated from delicate instruments is vital, as it prevents damage to those delicate instruments and assists in efficient sorting and cleaning protocols.

8. Which condition may require the use of a heart defibrillator?

- A. Bradycardia**
- B. Atrial fibrillation**
- C. Ventricular fibrillation**
- D. Asystole**

Ventricular fibrillation is a critical condition that requires the use of a heart defibrillator. This situation arises when the heart's electrical activity becomes chaotic, preventing it from effectively pumping blood. In ventricular fibrillation, the heart muscles quiver ineffectively instead of contracting normally, leading to the cessation of blood circulation. A defibrillator delivers a high-energy shock to the heart, which can reset its electrical activity and restore a normal rhythm. While bradycardia (slow heart rate), atrial fibrillation (irregular heart rhythm), and asystole (absence of electrical activity in the heart) may warrant different interventions, they are not typically treated with defibrillation in the same manner as ventricular fibrillation. A heart defibrillator is specifically indicated for the chaotic and life-threatening rhythm of ventricular fibrillation, making it essential for emergency response in such cases.

9. How is post-operative care typically managed?

- A. Only monitoring vitals
- B. Simply stating discharge instructions
- C. Monitoring vitals, managing pain, and ensuring proper wound care**
- D. Providing medication without monitoring

Post-operative care encompasses a comprehensive approach to ensure the patient's recovery following surgery. It involves not only monitoring vital signs but also includes actively managing pain and providing proper wound care. Monitoring vital signs is crucial, as it helps detect any immediate complications that may arise, such as infection or respiratory issues. Pain management is also essential, as surgical procedures often result in discomfort that can significantly impact a patient's recovery experience. Additionally, ensuring proper wound care is vital to prevent infection, promote healing, and monitor for any signs of complications such as excessive bleeding or dehiscence. This integrated approach reflects the multifaceted responsibilities of surgical staff in promoting effective recovery and minimizing complications. By addressing these key areas—vital signs, pain, and wound care—healthcare providers can deliver thorough and effective post-operative care, fostering a better healing environment for the patient.

10. What is the primary function of a surgical drape?

- A. To absorb excess fluids during surgery
- B. To create a sterile barrier around the surgical site**
- C. To provide warmth to the patient
- D. To display the surgical instruments

The primary function of a surgical drape is to create a sterile barrier around the surgical site. This is essential in preventing contamination during surgical procedures, which can lead to infections and complications. Surgical drapes are designed to maintain sterility and protect both the surgical field and the patient from pathogens. They are typically made of materials that can either be disposed of after use or are designed for sterilization and reuse, ensuring a safe and hygienic environment during surgery. While some aspects of the other options might be relevant in certain contexts, they do not address the primary purpose of surgical drapes as effectively as the creation of a sterile barrier. Absorbing excess fluids, providing warmth, or displaying instruments are secondary concerns or functions that do not align with the main role of ensuring sterility and preventing infection in the surgical setting.

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://surgicaltech.examzify.com>

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