

# The Pitt Medical Terminology Practice Test (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. Magnesium Citrate is classified as which type of laxative?**
  - A. Osmotic laxative**
  - B. Stimulant laxative**
  - C. Saline laxative**
  - D. Bulk-forming laxative**
  
- 2. What is the medical term for a brief episode of stroke-like symptoms due to a temporary blockage?**
  - A. CVA (Cerebrovascular Accident)**
  - B. TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack)**
  - C. Arrhythmia**
  - D. EKG (Electrocardiogram)**
  
- 3. In blunt head trauma, which feature is true regarding the dura?**
  - A. Dura is lacerated**
  - B. There is no impact to the skull**
  - C. There is immediate brain herniation**
  - D. Dura remains intact**
  
- 4. The bulk tissue of an organ that performs its primary functions is called:**
  - A. Cortex**
  - B. Parenchyma**
  - C. Substratum**
  - D. Epithelium**
  
- 5. What is the brand name for Cefazolin?**
  - A. Ancef**
  - B. Keflex**
  - C. Zithromax**
  - D. Ventolin**

**6. What does PCI stand for in cardiovascular interventions?**

- A. Percutaneous Coronary Intervention**
- B. Peripheral Circulatory Intervention**
- C. Postoperative Cardiac Intervention**
- D. Percussive Cardiac Intervention**

**7. BAC stands for which term?**

- A. Blood Alcohol Concentration**
- B. Blood Alcohol Content**
- C. Breath Alcohol Count**
- D. Body Alcohol Content**

**8. Used to assess a patient's level of consciousness after a brain injury; range is 3-15 with lower numbers more serious.**

- A. GCS (Glasgow Coma Scale)**
- B. Arrhythmia**
- C. Pan Scan**
- D. Popliteal block**

**9. Which of the following is the most common cause of small bowel obstruction?**

- A. Hernias**
- B. Tumors**
- C. Adhesions**
- D. Gallstones**

**10. Which abbreviation stands for the department that administers health care for military veterans?**

- A. VHA**
- B. DOD**
- C. VA**
- D. NIH**

## Answers

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Magnesium Citrate is classified as which type of laxative?**

- A. Osmotic laxative
- B. Stimulant laxative
- C. Saline laxative**
- D. Bulk-forming laxative

Magnesium citrate is classified as a saline laxative because it is a mineral salt that stays in the intestinal lumen and draws water into the bowel. When you take it, the magnesium salts are not fully absorbed, creating an osmotic gradient that pulls water into the colon. This higher water content softens and expands the stool, increasing stool volume and speeding evacuation. This mechanism distinguishes saline laxatives from bulk-forming laxatives (which add fiber to increase stool bulk), stimulant laxatives (which stimulate gut nerves to raise motility), and other osmotic laxatives that may use non-saline osmotic agents. Remember to stay hydrated and be aware of potential electrolyte effects, especially in people with kidney issues.

**2. What is the medical term for a brief episode of stroke-like symptoms due to a temporary blockage?**

- A. CVA (Cerebrovascular Accident)
- B. TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack)**
- C. Arrhythmia
- D. EKG (Electrocardiogram)

A brief episode of stroke-like symptoms caused by a temporary blockage is a transient ischemic attack. The word “transient” signals that the symptoms are short-lived, while “ischemic” points to reduced blood flow to a part of the brain. Because the blockage is temporary, brain function typically returns to normal and there is no lasting damage, which distinguishes TIAs from a full stroke. Think of it as a warning sign: TIAs mimic a stroke but don’t cause permanent injury, whereas a cerebrovascular accident is a true stroke with lasting deficits. An arrhythmia is simply an abnormal heart rhythm, not this brain event, and an electrocardiogram is a test to measure heart activity, not the episode itself.

**3. In blunt head trauma, which feature is true regarding the dura?**

- A. Dura is lacerated**
- B. There is no impact to the skull**
- C. There is immediate brain herniation**
- D. Dura remains intact**

Blunt head trauma typically involves forces delivered to the skull without a penetrating wound, and the dura mater is a very tough, adherent layer that forms the outer protective covering. Because of its strength, the dura usually remains intact unless there is a penetrating injury or an extremely high-energy impact that tears it. When injury occurs, problems often come from bleeding beneath the dura (between the skull and dura) or from brain injury itself, not from the dura tearing. So even in conditions like epidural or subdural hematomas, the boundary between skull and brain—the dura—remains continuous, though it may be displaced or the brain behind it compressed. Immediate brain herniation is not an automatic consequence of blunt trauma and depends on how rapidly pressure increases. Saying there is no impact to the skull is incorrect, since blunt trauma by definition involves impact to the skull.

**4. The bulk tissue of an organ that performs its primary functions is called:**

- A. Cortex**
- B. Parenchyma**
- C. Substratum**
- D. Epithelium**

Functional tissue of an organ is called parenchyma. This refers to the cells that actually carry out the organ's main activities. The supporting framework outside of that—the stroma or substratum—provides structure, blood vessels, and nerves but does not perform the organ's primary function. The cortex is just an outer layer of some organs, not the bulk functional tissue, and epithelium lines surfaces and forms glands rather than being the main functional mass of most organs. So the tissue that does the organ's work is the parenchyma.

**5. What is the brand name for Cefazolin?**

- A. Ancef**
- B. Keflex**
- C. Zithromax**
- D. Ventolin**

Brand and generic names can be confusing, but knowing them helps prevent mix-ups in prescribing and patient care. Cefazolin is a first-generation cephalosporin used mainly for surgical prophylaxis and various infections, and its brand name is Ancef. Keflex is the brand name for cephalexin, not cefazolin, while Zithromax is azithromycin and Ventolin is albuterol. So Ancef is the correct brand name for cefazolin.

## 6. What does PCI stand for in cardiovascular interventions?

- A. Percutaneous Coronary Intervention**
- B. Peripheral Circulatory Intervention**
- C. Postoperative Cardiac Intervention**
- D. Percussive Cardiac Intervention**

PCI stands for Percutaneous Coronary Intervention. The key idea here is recognizing what the acronym means in cardiology. "Percutaneous" means through the skin, referring to how the procedure is done via a catheter inserted through a small skin puncture. "Coronary" points to the heart's arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle. "Intervention" indicates a therapeutic procedure to open or widen a blocked artery and restore blood flow, typically accomplished with angioplasty and may include placing a stent. This procedure is used to treat narrowed or blocked coronary arteries in conditions like angina or during a heart attack, helping to quickly improve blood flow and outcomes. The other options don't fit because they don't describe a catheter-based treatment of the heart's arteries: peripheral circulatory intervention involves arteries outside the heart, postoperative cardiac intervention isn't a standard term for this technique, and percussive cardiac intervention isn't a real medical term.

## 7. BAC stands for which term?

- A. Blood Alcohol Concentration**
- B. Blood Alcohol Content**
- C. Breath Alcohol Count**
- D. Body Alcohol Content**

Blood Alcohol Concentration is the standard term. It reflects the amount of alcohol in the blood relative to the blood's volume, so it's expressed as a percentage or as grams per deciliter. This precise, per-volume measure is why scientific and medical contexts use "concentration" rather than "content." While you might hear people use terms like "Blood Alcohol Content" in informal settings, the correct, widely accepted term is Blood Alcohol Concentration. The other options don't fit because they aren't the established medical terminology for this measurement.

## 8. Used to assess a patient's level of consciousness after a brain injury; range is 3-15 with lower numbers more serious.

- A. GCS (Glasgow Coma Scale)**
- B. Arrhythmia**
- C. Pan Scan**
- D. Popliteal block**

The Glasgow Coma Scale is used to rate a patient's level of consciousness after brain injury. It sums scores from three areas—eye opening, verbal response, and motor response—giving a total from 3 to 15, where lower numbers signal deeper impairment and higher numbers indicate better alertness. This makes it the best choice because it directly quantifies consciousness and tracks changes over time, guiding urgent decisions and monitoring. The other terms refer to different medical concepts: an abnormal heart rhythm, a comprehensive trauma imaging scan, and a leg nerve block, none of which assess consciousness.

**9. Which of the following is the most common cause of small bowel obstruction?**

- A. Hernias**
- B. Tumors**
- C. Adhesions**
- D. Gallstones**

Adhesions formed after abdominal surgery are the main cause of small bowel obstruction. When the peritoneum is irritated during surgery, scar tissue develops into fibrous bands that connect loops of bowel or attach bowel to the abdominal wall. These adhesions can tether or kink the intestines, or create closed loops, blocking the passage of contents. Because abdominal operations are common, adhesions occur frequently and are the leading reason SBOs occur. Other causes exist—hernias can trap bowel, tumors can obstruct, and gallstone ileus can block the intestine—but they're less common overall than adhesions.

**10. Which abbreviation stands for the department that administers health care for military veterans?**

- A. VHA**
- B. DOD**
- C. VA**
- D. NIH**

Understanding who runs health care for veterans helps distinguish between the department and its internal agencies. The abbreviation VA stands for the Department of Veterans Affairs, the federal department that administers veterans' benefits and health care. Within VA, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) operates the hospitals and clinics, but VHA is a part of VA, not the department itself. The Department of Defense provides care for active-duty service members, while the National Institutes of Health focuses on medical research. So, the abbreviation for the department that administers health care for military veterans is VA.

## 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](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://thepittmedicalterms.examzify.com>**

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

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