

West-MEC Medical Assisting Technical Skills Assessment (TSA) 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

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- 1. What is the protocol if a glove tears during a procedure?**
 - A. Remove Gloves, Wash Hands, Apply New Gloves**
 - B. Immediately Stop and Restart with New Gloves**
 - C. Continue Without Changing Gloves**
 - D. Wipe the Tear With Alcohol and Continue**

- 2. Which manual is utilized specifically to code a medical diagnosis?**
 - A. CPT (Current Procedural Terminology)**
 - B. SNOMED CT**
 - C. ICD (International Classification of Disease)**
 - D. DSM-5**

- 3. Which statement about a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) is true?**
 - A. It requires no primary care physician**
 - B. It allows unlimited out-of-network coverage**
 - C. It requires a designated PCP and authorization to see specialists**
 - D. It has no referral requirements**

- 4. The ureters have which primary function?**
 - A. Store bile**
 - B. Filter blood**
 - C. Transport urine from kidneys to bladder**
 - D. Produce urine**

- 5. Which is the best method to communicate with a patient who is hearing-impaired?**
 - A. Speak Loudly**
 - B. Use Sign Language Interpreter**
 - C. Write Questions on Paper**
 - D. Use Hearing Aids**

- 6. What is the maximum fill level for a sharps container?**
- A. Full**
 - B. Empty**
 - C. 3/4 or 2/3 full**
 - D. 1/2 full**
- 7. Which symptom describes the medical condition of polyarthralgia?**
- A. Aches/Pains in Multiple Joints**
 - B. Fever With Chills**
 - C. Shortness of Breath**
 - D. Dizziness**
- 8. What is the normal blood pressure range?**
- A. 100/60 - 130/80**
 - B. 120/80 - 140/90**
 - C. 90/60 - 120/80**
 - D. 110/70 - 150/90**
- 9. What do the letters in the record-keeping format 'SOAP' represent?**
- A. Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan**
 - B. Subjective, Observed, Analysis, Protocol**
 - C. Standard, Objective, Analysis, Procedure**
 - D. Subjective, Observation, Assessment, Plan**
- 10. Which statement about PPO plans is true?**
- A. HMO requires assignment of a PCP**
 - B. PPO typically requires a deductible and coinsurance**
 - C. PPO has no out-of-network coverage**
 - D. HMO does not require authorization**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the protocol if a glove tears during a procedure?

- A. Remove Gloves, Wash Hands, Apply New Gloves**
- B. Immediately Stop and Restart with New Gloves**
- C. Continue Without Changing Gloves**
- D. Wipe the Tear With Alcohol and Continue**

Gloves are a protective barrier, and a tear means that barrier is compromised. When this happens, remove the contaminated glove, perform hand hygiene, and put on a new pair before continuing. Wiping the tear with an antiseptic or continuing with the torn glove does not restore protection and can spread contamination. The safest approach is to eliminate the contaminated glove, clean hands, and re-don gloves before resuming.

2. Which manual is utilized specifically to code a medical diagnosis?

- A. CPT (Current Procedural Terminology)**
- B. SNOMED CT**
- C. ICD (International Classification of Disease)**
- D. DSM-5**

Diagnoses are captured with a standardized coding system that assigns a unique code to each medical condition for documentation, billing, and statistical tracking. The system designed specifically for listing medical diagnoses is the International Classification of Diseases. It provides a comprehensive set of codes that identify diseases, symptoms, and other health problems, allowing consistent communication across providers and payers. Procedures and services are coded with CPT for billing those actions, not the diagnosis itself. DSM-5 outlines diagnostic criteria for mental disorders but isn't used as the formal billing diagnosis coding system. SNOMED CT is a detailed clinical terminology used in electronic health records that can map to ICD codes, but the actual coding of diagnoses in most billing contexts relies on ICD. Therefore, ICD is the correct choice.

3. Which statement about a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) is true?

- A. It requires no primary care physician**
- B. It allows unlimited out-of-network coverage**
- C. It requires a designated PCP and authorization to see specialists**
- D. It has no referral requirements**

In an HMO, care is organized through a designated primary care physician who acts as the gatekeeper for your medical services. You choose a PCP, and for most conditions you'll start with that doctor. To see a specialist, your PCP must evaluate you first and then provide a referral; the plan typically requires this prior authorization before the specialist visit or procedures are approved. This structure keeps care coordinated within the network and helps manage costs. That gatekeeper and referral requirement is why statements about having no PCP, unlimited out-of-network coverage, or no referral rules don't fit an HMO. If you stay within the network and follow the referral process, you're covered as designed; going out of network or skipping referrals generally isn't covered. For example, needing a cardiologist visit would first go through your PCP, who would refer you to an in-network specialist and obtain the necessary authorization.

4. The ureters have which primary function?

- A. Store bile
- B. Filter blood
- C. Transport urine from kidneys to bladder**
- D. Produce urine

Ureters act as the conduits that move urine from the kidneys to the bladder. They achieve this with rhythmic peristaltic contractions of their smooth muscle, pushing urine downward through gravity and waves of motion. This transport role is distinct from other tasks in the urinary system: bile storage is a liver/gallbladder function; filtering blood happens in the kidneys; producing urine also occurs in the kidneys. So the ureters' primary function is to transport urine from the kidneys to the bladder.

5. Which is the best method to communicate with a patient who is hearing-impaired?

- A. Speak Loudly
- B. Use Sign Language Interpreter
- C. Write Questions on Paper**
- D. Use Hearing Aids

When communicating with a patient who has a hearing impairment, presenting information in a visual form is most reliable. Writing questions on paper allows the patient to read clearly, take time to understand, and respond accurately. It avoids mishearing, misinterpretation, and the fatigue that can come from trying to lip-read or catch every word in a noisy environment. A sign language interpreter can be excellent if both the patient and interpreter are available, but access isn't always guaranteed in a busy clinic. Hearing aids help some people, but they don't guarantee full understanding in every situation. Writing questions on paper is a practical, universally accessible way to ensure clear communication and accurate responses.

6. What is the maximum fill level for a sharps container?

- A. Full
- B. Empty
- C. 3/4 or 2/3 full**
- D. 1/2 full

The main safety principle here is to prevent exposure and spills by not overfilling sharps containers. A sharps container should be filled only up to about two-thirds to three-quarters full. This gives enough space to add more sharps without forcing items to extend above the rim, which can cause needles to protrude, puncture the lid, or spill when moved or handled. The container is designed to be puncture-resistant, leak-proof, and closable, so keeping it within this range ensures the lid can close securely and waste can be transferred safely to proper disposal. If it reaches roughly two-thirds to three-quarters full, replace it with a new one and follow your facility's procedures. If the container is damaged or leaking, replace it immediately, even if it isn't full.

7. Which symptom describes the medical condition of polyarthralgia?

A. Aches/Pains in Multiple Joints

B. Fever With Chills

C. Shortness of Breath

D. Dizziness

Polyarthralgia refers to pain occurring in multiple joints. The symptom described as aches or pains in multiple joints fits this exactly, since it captures pain that spans several joints rather than one area. The other options point to different problems: fever with chills suggests systemic illness or infection, shortness of breath involves respiratory or cardiopulmonary issues, and dizziness relates to balance or faintness. None of those describe joint pain across multiple joints.

8. What is the normal blood pressure range?

A. 100/60 - 130/80

B. 120/80 - 140/90

C. 90/60 - 120/80

D. 110/70 - 150/90

Normal blood pressure reflects the balance where the heart's pumping force (systolic) and the resting pressure between beats (diastolic) stay within a healthy range so tissues receive enough blood without placing excessive strain on vessels. A practical normal range for many adults is about 100/60 up to 130/80. This covers typical systolic values from 100 to 130 and diastolic values from 60 to 80, keeping pressures well below thresholds that suggest elevated blood pressure. Ranging up to 140/90 or higher would begin to cross into elevated or hypertensive territory, so those values aren't considered normal. A range ending at 120/80 is a common description of normal, but the broader window up to 130/80 is often used in clinical teaching to account for natural day-to-day variation while still keeping pressures within a safe range.

9. What do the letters in the record-keeping format 'SOAP' represent?

A. Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan

B. Subjective, Observed, Analysis, Protocol

C. Standard, Objective, Analysis, Procedure

D. Subjective, Observation, Assessment, Plan

The main idea is the four-part structure used in medical notes to organize patient information. In this format, you start with Subjective data—what the patient reports about their symptoms, history, and concerns. Then you record Objective data—what you observe or measure during the exam, including vital signs and test results. Next comes the Assessment, where the clinician states the diagnostic impression or differential diagnosis based on the gathered data. Finally, you outline the Plan—what will be done next: treatments, tests, referrals, patient education, and follow-up. This combination—Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan—is the standard way to document patient encounters because it clearly separates the patient's own report from observable facts, and then connects those findings to clinical reasoning and the next steps in care. The other options mix nonstandard terms (like Observed, Protocol, Standard, Procedure, or Observation) that don't align with the conventional four-part SOAP structure.

10. Which statement about PPO plans is true?

- A. HMO requires assignment of a PCP**
- B. PPO typically requires a deductible and coinsurance**
- C. PPO has no out-of-network coverage**
- D. HMO does not require authorization**

PPO plans are built around flexible cost sharing and provider choice. A common arrangement is that you have a deductible you must pay before the plan starts sharing costs, and after meeting that deductible, you pay coinsurance—a percentage of the cost of covered services—while the insurer pays the rest. This structure applies to many PPOs, making it the best matching statement. PPOs also let you see out-of-network providers and still have some coverage, though you'll pay more out of pocket than you would with in-network care. That contrasts with the idea that there's no out-of-network coverage at all. While PPOs often offer the option to go out of network, the costs are higher, and the specifics can vary. Statements describing HMOs—such as requiring a primary care physician to coordinate care or needing referrals for many services—don't describe PPO plans. And while HMOs commonly require authorization and PCP coordination, that isn't a defining feature of PPOs. So the statement about deductibles and coinsurance best captures the typical cost-sharing structure of PPO plans.

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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://westmecmedassistingtsa.examzify.com>

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

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