OCN Review 2019
Test Taking Strategies

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Objectives

• Demonstrate knowledge/understanding of content areas of the OCN® test blueprint through self assessment, learning activities and practice test questions
• Identify topics within the content areas of the OCN® Test blueprint that require further study or additional preparation for the certification examination
• Review test taking strategies
Access Current Knowledge

- Review Blueprint- what content do you need to know?
- How well do you know the subjects?
- Concentrate on topics that are new to you
- Look at references provided by the ONCC for more information
Access Current Knowledge

- Take a review course- study what is new to you
- Depth of knowledge required to pass is **entry level**, you cannot know everything
Develop a study plan

• Topics, timeline, resources
• Recognize your learning style
• Schedule regular times to study- 1 hour increments
• Cramming is counterproductive
• Focus on general material – most of the material is basic and does not require constant updating
• It can take up to 6-12 months for new information to be incorporated into test questions
Your study habits

• If study groups work for you- continue
• If studying alone works- continue
• If creating a quiet study place works- continue
• If noise keeps you alert- go for it
• If changing your study space every couple of hours works- continue
Your study habits

Change up your study activities:

• Read a chapter out of a textbook one night
• Take a practice test on another
• Watch an instructional video the following night

The more often and different ways you can expose yourself to the material, the better you’ll retain it – and the more likely you are to pass your exam
Assess your attitude toward test taking

• Be positive; it makes a difference
• Be steadfast- determined
• Think success
Control your anxiety

• Use your experience
• Talk to others who have sat for the exam
• Review courses/practice exams
Do not listen to gossip about the exam

- Not verifiable
- Based on imperfect memory
- People tend to remember content in which they are uncomfortable
Set reasonable expectations

• Don’t expect to know everything
• Don’t try to know everything in great detail
• You do not need a perfect score to pass
• Test is designed to *entry-level* practice
Set reasonable expectations

- Learn general rules - not exceptions
- Most **likely** diagnoses will be on the exam
- Think about the most likely presentation and most common therapy
Prepare Mentally and Physically

Take care of yourself

- Sleep
- Exercise
- Eat Well

*Especially important while you study and right before the test*
How to read and interpret a test question

Parts of an Assessment Question

- **Situation/Scenario**: Statement giving information about a clinical problem
- **Stem**: specifically asks you something
- **Options**: Choices to answer the stem
How to read and interpret a test question

Situation/Scenario

- Sets the stage for the question
- Usually describes client, family member or significant other with a particular problem or set of problems
- Contains some pertinent information
• How to read and interpret a test question

**Question Stem**

• Central focus of the item

• Presented as a question or incomplete item
• How to read and interpret a test question

Question Stem

Look for words such as:

• Most correct
• Most likely
• Do first
• Initial
• Highest priority
• How to read and interpret a test question

**Question Stem**

May require information from the situation in order to answer
• How to read and interpret a test question

**Stem Types**

*True response stem* – asks for a true statement (commonly used)

*False response stem* – asks for the incorrect answer (not commonly used)
• Options: Choices to answer the stem

One option is the most correct answer

The correct option answers what the stem of the question is asking you, so make sure to re-read the stem (central focus of a question) after you’ve chosen your answer.
• Options: Choices to answer the stem

The other options are *Distractors*

• May be four options of similar length
• May be two short and two long answers
• May be similar in length and designed as the correct answer
• Must be plausible, but not correct
• If an option contains both correct and incorrect information it is a distractor
Options: Choices to answer the stem

TIPS

- Separate what the question is telling from what it is asking
- Scenario vs. stem (usually asks for true statement)
- Always identify the **client, issue, key words**
- Eliminate options offering new information
- Given: The nurse is always therapeutic and time is available
The nurse is preparing a medication for a client and observes the date of expiration occurred two months ago.

Which action should the nurse perform?
SAMPLE TEST QUESTION

Situation/Scenario:
The nurse is preparing a medication for a client and observes the date of expiration occurred two months ago.

Question Stem:
Which action should the nurse perform?
A. Give the medication
B. Discard the medication
C. Omit the medication
D. Return the medication to the pharmacy
SAMPLE TEST QUESTION

Options to the Nursing Test Question

A. Give the medication
B. Discard the medication
C. Omit the medication
D. Return the medication to the pharmacy

Rationale: Law requires all medication to have an expiration date. Outdated medication should be returned to the pharmacy for proper disposal.
Testing Errors
• Testing Errors

Misperceiving Information

• Words are read incorrectly
• Information is overlooked
Read These Options

PARIS IN THE SPRING

ONCE IN A LIFETIME

BIRD IN THE HAND
• Testing Errors

Misprocessing Information

Not recognizing a key word:
• Dysphagia may be misread as dysplasia

Focusing on the wrong key word in a distractor
• Testing Errors

Misapplying the Response

• Results when knowledge cannot be applied to the question
• Nurses have a great deal of knowledge, but may have difficulty narrowing it to a particular answer
• OPTION “MYTHS”

• No one position is favored: A vs. B vs. C vs. D
• When in doubt select C “myth”
• Don’t look for letters, sequences, shapes or patterns in answers

Example:
-”I have too many C answers”
-There is no pattern to answers
• OPTION “MYTHS”

The longest answer contains the most information but don’t assume the information in the longest answer is correct.
• Eliminating Incorrect Options
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  Absolutes
  
  • Anti-hypertensives *always* make you dizzy
  • Patients should *never* self-medicate
  • Doubtless the nurse is *correct*
  • The patient was *completely satisfied* with treatment

*Nothing is always, never, or none*
• Eliminating Incorrect Options Absolutes

A. Treatment for PE always includes mechanical ventilation
B. PE only occurs in patients with deep vein thrombosis
C. Patients with PE never have pleuritic pain
D. Patients with PE usually present with sudden dyspnea
Eliminating Incorrect Options

What if I don’t know the answer?

Mrs. Myers is receiving cranial radiation for brain metastasis related to lung cancer and is taking high dose dexamethasone. Which activity poses the least risk for triggering an adverse effect of dexamethasone therapy in this patient?

A. Shopping at the mall on a Saturday afternoon
B. Cleaning her two story house
C. Attending Sunday morning church services
D. Serving refreshments at her 6 year-old grandsons school play
• Eliminating Incorrect Options
  What if I don’t know the answer?

A. Shopping at the mall on a Saturday afternoon
B. Cleaning her two story house
C. Attending Sunday morning church services
D. Serving refreshments at her 6 year-old grandsons school play
• Eliminating Incorrect Options

There is no penalty for guessing

**BUT**

you don’t want to “have to” guess too frequently
• Test-Taking Strategies
  Concentrate on the question at hand

  • Each question demands your undivided attention
  • Work at a steady pace
  • Stay focused
  • Be systematic
  • Don’t spend more than 2 minutes on each question

BREATHE
• Test-Taking Strategies
  • Read the client description and question carefully
  • Take time to read each word in the situation
  • Read the question stem-be sure you understand what it is asking
  • Form the answer in your mind, then select the option closest to your answer
  • The correct answer answers what the stem of the question is asking- make sure to re-read the stem after you’ve chosen your answer
• Test-Taking Strategies
  • Once a question is answered, it’s done……..Go to the next question
  • The information provided is the only information to use
  • Avoid adding information to the situation
  • Don’t assume information that is not there
  • Don’t refer to personal experience
  • Go with your gut (intuition) it may be a trigger to your memory if it sounds familiar
• Test-Taking Strategies

Identify the steps of the nursing process being tested:

• If an assessment question is asked, answers should involve collection of more data
• Become sensitive to words that indicate the phase of the nursing process being tested
• If the question asks for an assessment, the best answer is an assessment- don’t be distracted by an appropriate intervention
• If the question asks for an intervention, do not answer with an assessment
The nurse completes a client’s vitals and notes the following:

A. RR: 28 per minute
B. Temperature: 98.6F
C. HR: 90
D. BP: 100/70

Which of these results would be concerning to the nurse?
• Test-Taking Strategies

EXAMPLE

Which of these results would be concerning to the nurse?

• Temperature: No WNL (98.6F)
• RR: YES 28 per minute patient is tachypneic
• HR: No WNL (90)
• BP: No WNL 100/70
• Test-Taking Strategies

• Don’t test angry
• Be in the moment
• Avoid personalizing a question
• Answer according to what you have learned not according to what you believe
• Test-Taking Strategies

What kind of question is being asked?

Look for key words that lead you, these help to determine what kind of answer the question requires:

avoid  initial  most
best first significant
except contributing to likely
not appropriate of the following

most consistent with
• Test-Taking Strategies

  Look for answers that are somehow different

Example:
If three options give a specific age, but the fourth option generalizes (i.e. adult), the general option is usually the correct one
• Test-Taking Strategies

Look for answers that facilitate something

• Client teaching
• Assisting client towards independence
• Look for facilitative words

*Assist
*Aid
*Support
*Encourage
*Facilitate

*Help
*Reinforce
*Foster
*Nurture
*Endorse
• Test-Taking Strategies

  Look for relationships between answers

  • Item writers usually write the question first, the right answer next, then the distractors
  • Usually the correct answer has a connection with the other options
  • Incorrect answers don’t have a relationship with each of the other answers
  • Look for logic
• Test-Taking Strategies
  
  Select the answer that is most inclusive

  • If more than one answer looks to be correct, see if one of the answers contain the other

  • The more comprehensive an answer is, the more likely it is the correct one
A left–sided tension pneumothorax is best described as an accumulation of air in the:

A. Left pleural space, resulting in collapse of the left lung
B. Right pleural space, resulting in collapse of the left lung
C. Left pleural space, resulting in collapse of the left lung and compression of the right thoracic structures
D. Left pleural space, resulting in collapse of the right lung and compression of the right thoracic structures
• Test-Taking Strategies

A left-sided tension pneumothorax is best described as an accumulation of air in the:

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• Test-Taking Strategies

Be aware of questions that ask you to **prioritize**

• Recognize the most important intervention to perform first
• Questions like this use words such as **first, best, most, initial, better, or highest priority**
• All choices may be correct, but one has the highest priority, or one or two might actually be incorrect
• Airway, breathing, and circulation always have the highest priority
• Test-Taking Strategies

When given the option to medicate or use a non-pharmacologic treatment, select the non-pharmacologic treatment

Alternative methods of treating a problem should be attempted before administering medication
• Test-Taking Strategies

• For each option note if it is a true statement (+), a false statement (-), or a not sure (?)
• If there are two matching options left, select the more familiar
• If there is one matching and one not sure, pick the matching one

GO WITH YOUR GUT & AVOID CHANGING ANSWERS!
• Test-Taking Strategies

• When two choices sound very good, the best one is usually the least expensive, least invasive way to achieve the goal
• If the answer includes two options that are opposite each other, one of the two is probably the correct answer
• When numeric answers cover a wide range, a number in the middle is more likely to be correct
• Test-Taking Strategies

If a question is lengthy pick out clues:

A patient is admitted to the hospital with febrile neutropenia r/t recent chemotherapy. Current vital signs have deteriorated in the last few hours. They are now: BP 87/52; HR 130, RR 32, temperature 102.1F. He receives 2 L of IV NS over 60 minutes but remains hypotensive. His urine output for the past two hours is 25ml/hr. His blood urea nitrogen is 50mg/ml and his creatinine is 5.1 mg/dl. His mentation has progressively worsened and he is now responsive only to painful stimuli. His chest x-ray shows bilateral infiltrations. His point of care blood glucose is 225 mg/dl. A diagnosis is made of sepsis with multiple organ dysfunction syndrome.

What is the nurse’s priority goal for this patient?
• Test-Taking Strategies

If a question is lengthy pick out clues:

A patient is admitted to the hospital with *febrile neutropenia* r/t recent chemotherapy. Current vital signs have deteriorated in the last few hours. They are now: **BP 87/52; HR 130, RR 32, temperature 102.1°F**. He receives 2 L of IV NS over 60 minutes but remains hypotensive. His urine output for the past two hours is 25ml/hr. His blood urea nitrogen is 50mg/ml and his creatinine is 5.1 mg/dl. His mentation has progressively worsened and he is now responsive only to painful stimuli. His *chest x-ray shows bilateral infiltrations*. His point of care blood glucose is 225 mg/dl. A diagnosis is made of *sepsis with multiple organ dysfunction* syndrome.

*What is the nurse’s priority goal for this patient*
• SAMPLE TEST QUESTION

A. Ensuring nutritional needs are met
B. Maintaining adequate tissue oxygenation
C. Changing the patients pain medication from patient-controlled analgesia to continuous infusion
D. Obtaining blood, sputum, urine, and wound cultures
A patient is admitted with a diagnosis of syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone (SIADH). Which of the following orders would the nurse question?

A. Neurologic assessment every 4 hours
B. Serum sodium level every 4 hours
C. Infusion of 1 liter NS IN at 100ml/hr
D. Strict intake and output
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ONCC Practice Tests

- ONCC web-based Practice Tests simulate the testing experience and help you to become familiar with the types of items found on ONCC examinations. They may also help candidates assess their strengths and weaknesses in subject areas covered on the examinations.

- Each Practice Test includes a set of 50 items or questions. The same 50 items will appear each time a test is used, although they may be presented in a different order. You may take the Practice Test as often as you wish during the allotted time period. This tests must be completed online, there are no paper tests.
ONCC Practice Tests

- **Free Practice Tests:** There are 50 items on each test. You may use these tests as often as you like. These tests must be completed online. Like all ONCC Practice Tests, the items on the free Practice Test do not change each time it is used.

- **Purchase Practice Tests:** Additional 50-item Practice Tests can be purchased. These tests must be completed online. There are no hard-copy tests. Purchasers will have access to purchased tests for 14 days, and may take the test as often as desired during the 14-day period. The same 50 items will appear on the test each time it is used.

https://practicetests.oncc.org/FreeTests.aspx
• OCN REVIEW RESOURCES
• Test-Taking Strategies

• Take practice tests- timed at two minutes for each question- goal 9 of 10 answers correct
• Then timed at 1.5 minutes for each question- goal of 9 of 10 answers correct
• Then timed at 1 minutes for each question- goal of 9 of 10 answers correct
• Test-Taking Strategies
  • Using practice tests in a timed environment helps reduce anxiety when it’s time for the real thing
  • Helps facilitate working at a steady pace
• Test-Taking Strategies

The night before the exam

• Know test site location, make a “dry run”
• Get a good night’s sleep
• Eat sensibly- avoid alcohol
• Assemble required materials: ID, admission card
• Know the exam room rules: no water or food, no phones

TIME TO PUT THE BOOKS AWAY
• Test-Taking Strategies

Day of Exam

• Wear comfortable, layered clothing
• Eat a good breakfast, avoid too much caffeine
• Get there early
• Wear a watch, keep track of time
• No cell phones!
• Stay relaxed and confident, *think positively!*
• Don’t panic, if you start getting anxious, take slow deep breaths
SPRING MEETING & OCN REVIEW COURSE

KEEP CALM AND GOOD LUCK