

Preparation for the CNL Examination

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General Approach to testing

- Review Exam Blueprint
 - Program priorities
- Know that questions must be supported in literature
- Try practice exams linked to AACN Website

Mental Preparation

- See the exam as a challenge, even a pleasant one
- Approach with an attitude of confidence, not fear
- Trust your knowledge and preparation

Taking the Test

- Breathe deeply and collect your energy in the space
- Read stems carefully before distractors
 - Answer the question for yourself before proceeding
 - Consider elements that relate to the question as asked
 - Only then read the distractors

Choosing the Distractor

- Eliminate answers where there are two of the same category or idea
- Look for the answer that stands out
- When in doubt choose the longest answer
- If nothing falls into place, re-read the question

Simulation Exam Approaches

- Two sections with separate scores
 - Information Gathering
 - Decision Making

Information Gathering

- Consider elements of the set-up
- Use Diagnostic Hypotheses do direct data collection

Diagnostic Hypothesis Evaluation

- Considering the setup, what diagnostic hypotheses exist?
 - Consider conditions you know are a focus of CNL standards
 - Don't settle on a choice too soon
 - Develop a list of 3-5 possibilities
 - Think of them in order of "most likely" to "least likely"
- What information do you need to confirm or disconfirm each

Avoiding Diagnostic Error

- Do not use a shotgun approach to data collection
 - **Points deducted** for requesting unnecessary information
 - In real life this approach does not improve accuracy of diagnosis
- Refine your diagnostic hypothesis list
 - "Rule in:" data that confirms a choice
 - "Rule out:" data that shows a possibility is not true
- Each piece of data may change the priority order of your hypotheses
- Don't settle on your choice too soon

Decision Making

- Consider the highest risk diagnosis
 - Preserving life
 - Preserving function
- Consider priorities of your guidelines for CNL practice

In general

- Monitor your energy and emotional state as you proceed
- Take a minibreak periodically

Trust Yourself!