



Certified Pediatric Nurse Review Course: Test-Taking Strategies

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Content Overview

Applying to take the CPN exam

 Structure of exam

Preparation tips

Practice questions



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Confirm your Eligibility

The CPN exam validates the knowledge and expertise of Pediatric Nurses beyond RN licensure



To apply you will need:

- 1800 hours of pediatric clinical practice in the past 24 months
- A current, active, unrestricted RN license in the U.S., Canada, or U.S. territory

(Pediatric Nursing Certification Board, "Certification Steps", n.d.)

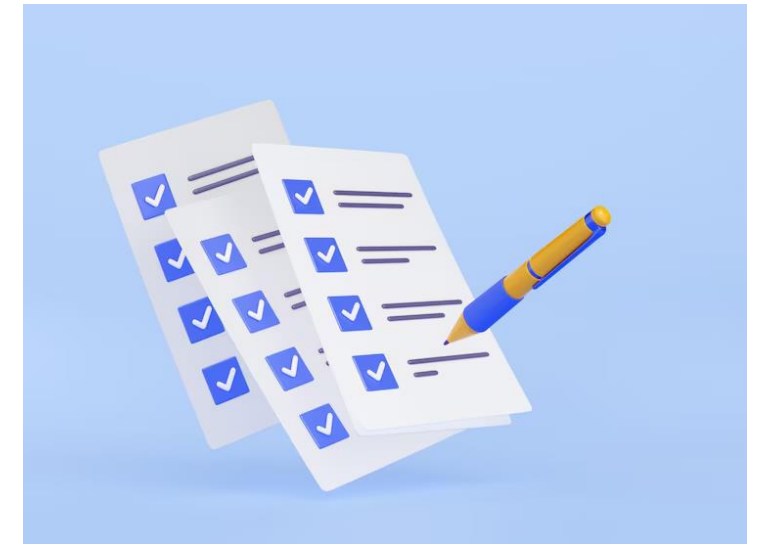
Eligibility FAQs

Do I need a BSN to take the exam?

- No. You can have a Diploma, Associate's Degree, Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate Degree in Nursing.

What counts for clinical practice hours?

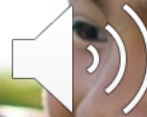
- Direct patient care in hospital, ambulatory or public health settings
- Teaching or Administration
- Clinical research
- Consultation in pediatric nursing





Exam Registration

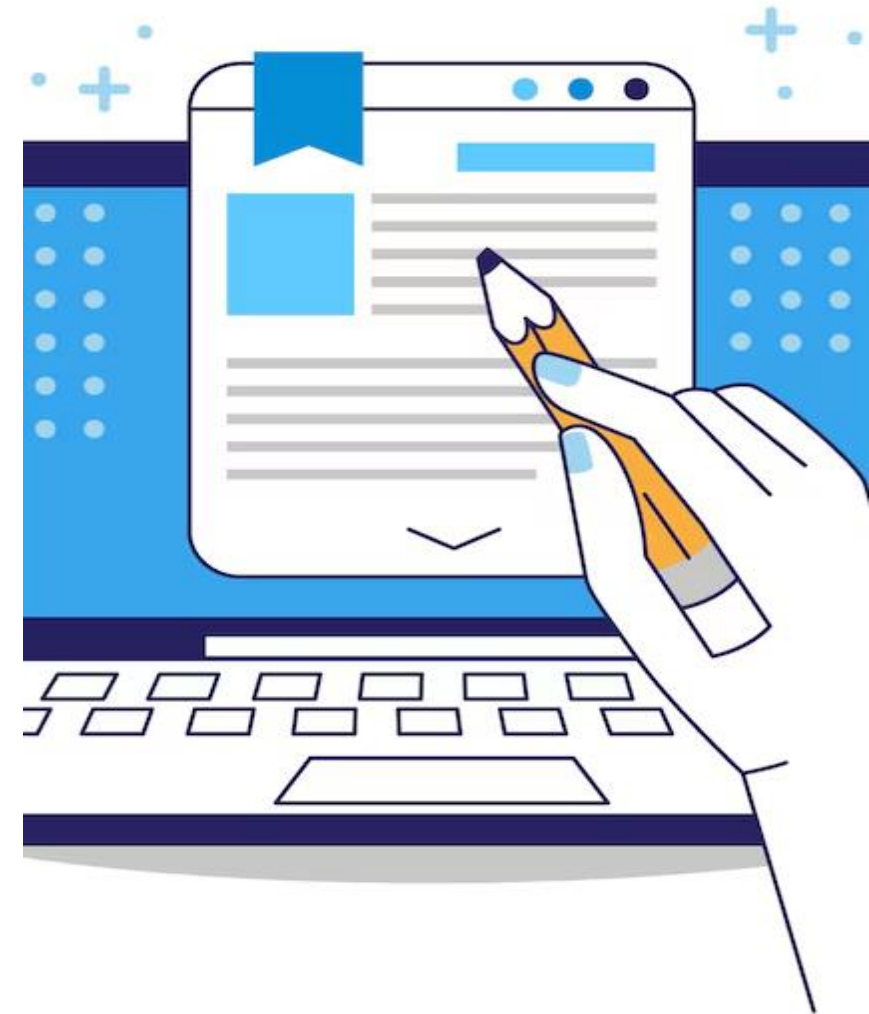
- Nemours Children's Health participates in the No Pass, No Pay program
- Contact the program coordinator/clinical educator prior to registering to review the No Pass, No Pay benefits
 - Delaware Valley associates - Tracy Savitz | tracy.savitz@nemours.org
 - Central Florida nurses – clinical educator for your department
- Go to www.pncb.org to access the CPN application



The CPN Exam

About the Exam

- 175 multiple choice questions
- 150 are scored
- Time allotted: 3 hours
- **There is no penalty for guessing!!**
- Questions appear one at a time- you can mark items to come back to later.
- Unofficial pass/fail status appears on the screen at the end



Exam Content Breakdown

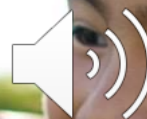
Domain	Weight	Questions
Health Promotion	23%	34
Assessment	35%	53
Planning and Management	33%	50
Professional Responsibilities	9%	13

(Pediatric Nursing Certification Board, "Certification Steps", n.d.)

Style of Exam Questions

- Each question has 4 responses
- All choices could be correct
- Focus on best, first, or most important
- There are no “all of the above”, “none of the above” or a & b, a,c & d type questions





Preparing for and Taking the Exam

General Tips

- Know the content areas and purpose of the exam
- Identify areas where you need to focus your study
 - **Don't** focus on your strengths!
- Other factors to consider:
 - Timeframe in which you want to take the exam
 - Individual vs. group studying
 - Is a little pressure a good thing?



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(Pediatric Nursing Certification Board, n.d.)



Image by storyset on Freepik

Dealing with Test Anxiety

- Have a good study plan in place
- Take care of your body
 - Sleep
 - Nutrition
- Take care of your mind
 - Relaxation techniques
 - Positive self-talk
 - Mindfulness interventions

Day of Exam

- Remember that you've done this before (and succeeded)
- Know yourself (and plan accordingly!)
- Be rested, ready, and on time!!!
- Beware of potentially harmful strategies:
 - Excessive caffeine/energy drinks
 - Cramming



(Pediatric Nursing Certification Board, n.d.)

Really important...

- Read the **ENTIRE** question ***SLOWLY*** and ***CAREFULLY***.
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Focus on Being Thorough

- Read the question, then try to answer the question **WITHOUT** looking at your choices
- Once you have an idea, read **ALL** the choices
- Yours may be there but may not be the best answer
- Eliminate the answers that are obviously wrong



If you must guess...

- Try to make it a 50/50
- If two options are very similar, eliminate both of them
- If you have no idea at all, look for the different answer
 - 3 general and one specific choice?
 - 3 antibiotics and one antifungal?

Image by benzoix on Freepik



Practice Questions

Look for **KEY WORDS**

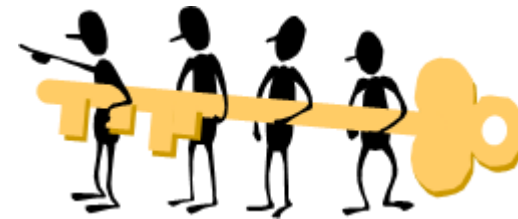
- Except
- Least
- Never
- Indicated /
contraindicated
- Always
- Best
- Priority
- First



What is the **KEY** word here?

A patient is scheduled for liver biopsy in two days. Pre-procedure lab work results have been sent back. Which of these reports is a priority for the nurse to notify the physician about today?

- A. Hgb of 10.5
- B. PTT of 45 seconds
- C. Elevated ALT and AST
- D. Elevated ammonia level

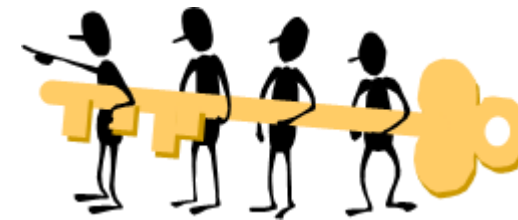


What is the KEY word here?

A patient is scheduled for liver biopsy in two days. Pre-procedure lab work results have been sent back. Which of these reports is a **priority** for the nurse to notify the physician about **today**?



- A. Hgb of 10.5
- B. **PTT of 45 seconds**
- C. Elevated ALT and AST
- D. Elevated ammonia level



General vs. Specific Questions

- If the question is a general question, look for the general answer
 - Toddlers tend to....
 - An important item in health maintenance...
- If it's a specific question, look for the more specific answer
 - The key lab value for this patient...
 - The first step you would take is...



Is this question general or specific?

One of the goals of any patient's care is that he remain free of infection. Which of the following would indicate that this goal has not been met?

- A. Increase in urine output from 1500 ml to 1800 ml
- B. Body temperature stable over past 24 hours
- C. Mental status appropriate on current shift
- D. An increase in WBC count



Is this question general or specific?

One of the goals of **any patient's** care is that he remain free of infection. Which of the following would indicate that this goal has **not** been met?

- A. Increase in urine output from 1500cc to 1800cc
- B. Body temperature stable over past 24 hours
- C. Mental status appropriate on current shift
- D. **An increase in WBC count**





Determining Priorities

- 
- If something isn't done, will the patient die?
 - If something isn't done, will the patient be severely compromised?
 - ABCs are always a priority
 - Pain and discomfort are always a priority, unless life threatening situation
 - Pick actual over potential problems

The priority here is...

Which of the following is the major problem that occurs with severe diarrhea?

A. Fluid and electrolyte imbalance

B. Spasmodic abdominal cramps

C. Skin irritation of the anal region

D. Disruption of lifestyle



The priority here is...

Which of the following is the **major** problem that occurs with severe diarrhea?

A. Fluid and electrolyte imbalance

B. Spasmodic abdominal cramps

C. Skin irritation of the anal region

D. Disruption of lifestyle



Other Pearls:

- To identify what to do next, use the Nursing Process
- To identify an initial need, use Maslow's hierarchy
- Remember to consider patient safety
- Always check the PATIENT first and THEN the equipment

References

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References

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