

## CEN Sample Questions

The following 10 sample questions are presented to demonstrate the format used on the CEN exam and how questions reflect the nursing process. These sample questions are not intended to reflect the difficulty of the actual questions on the CEN exam. The preferred response is indicated in boldface type.

1. A 12-lead ECG has been completed on a patient who presents with chest pain. The ST segment is normal. Which new finding is MOST critical and requires prompt intervention?

- A. **left bundle branch block**
- B. right bundle branch block
- C. peaked T waves
- D. inverted T waves

2. A patient presents following a motor vehicle crash with hoarseness, marked left lateral neck swelling, and respiratory difficulty. The PRIORITY intervention for this patient is

- A. **tracheal intubation.**
- B. IV fluids.
- C. needle cricothyrotomy.
- D. pleural decompression.

3. A patient presents to the emergency department reporting slurred speech and an unsteady gait for about 6 hours with complete resolution of the symptoms. Which of the following statements by the patient would be a PRIORITY to follow up?

- A. **"I haven't been able to refill my blood pressure medication for a few weeks."**
- B. "I use cannabidiol (CBD) edibles to help me sleep."
- C. "I was diagnosed with Guillain-Barré syndrome as a child."
- D. "My grandmother had rheumatic heart disease"

4. The possibility of an ectopic pregnancy increases when a patient has a history of
- A. breast cancer.
  - B. endometriosis.
  - C. teenage pregnancy.
  - D. **pelvic inflammatory disease.**
5. A patient presents with a chief complaint of suicidal ideation. Which of the following questions would be a PRIORITY for the nurse to ask?
- A. **"Do you have a plan?"**
  - B. "What medications do you take?"
  - C. "Do you live alone?"
  - D. "Have you attempted suicide before?"
6. A patient presents with a temperature of 101.4°F (38.6°C), a heart rate of 110 beats/min and a respiratory rate of 26 breaths/min. To consider if the patient may have sepsis, the nurse should assess if the patient has
- A. **a possible infection.**
  - B. positive blood cultures.
  - C. an immunocompromised state.
  - D. been febrile over 24 hours

7. A patient presents to the emergency department with a patellar dislocation. The nurse should monitor for associated injury to the

- A. femoral artery.
- B. sciatic nerve.
- C. **popliteal artery.**
- D. tibial nerve.

8. The nurse is caring for a patient who sustained significant facial injuries without cervical spine involvement. The nurse should ensure the head of the bed is elevated to

- A. **prevent pooling of oral secretions.**
- B. decrease intracranial pressure.
- C. improve venous return to the right atrium.
- D. promote gas exchange in the lung bases.

9. The nurse is triaging a child complaining of fever and rash for 3 days. The nurse notices the appearance of blue-gray spots with a red base on the inside of the child's mouth and a maculopapular rash on the face. Where would be the BEST location for this patient following triage?

- A. return to the waiting room in line of sight of the triage nurse
- B. resuscitation bay to prepare for intubation
- C. isolation room on droplet precautions
- D. **isolation room on airborne precautions**

10. The nurse is caring for a patient who has been diagnosed with an advanced end-stage (?) cancer. The medical team has suggested palliative care and hospice. Which of the following statements would be appropriate for the nurse to make when explaining the suggestion to the patient's family?

- A. **"Palliative care begins with the initial diagnosis and continues through the end of life."**
- B. "The patient cannot change their end-of-life decisions once enrolled in hospice."
- C. "There is an important legal distinction between withholding care and withdrawing care."
- D. "A Living Will names a person to make medical decisions if the patient is unable to do so."