

International DHA-CriticalCare

DHA Critical Care Nurse (DHA-CriticalCare)



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Question: 1

Which diuretic is often preferred for hypertension?

- A. Thiazide (Polythiazide).
- B. Loop diuretics (furosemide).
- C. Potassium-sparing (Spironolactone).
- D. Carbonic anhydrase (Acetazolamide).

Answer: A

Explanation:

Thiazide diuretics, such as polythiazide, are frequently the first choice for treating hypertension. They work by inhibiting the sodium-chloride transporter in the distal convoluted tubule of the kidney. This inhibition increases the excretion of sodium and water, thereby decreasing the fluid volume within the blood vessels and reducing overall blood pressure.

Thiazides are favored because they are generally effective, safe, and cost-efficient. They also have a mild diuretic effect compared to other types, such as loop diuretics, making them suitable for long-term management of hypertension without severe electrolyte imbalances. Moreover, thiazides have been shown to provide additional cardiovascular benefits, including reducing the risk of stroke and heart failure.

Other types of diuretics like loop diuretics (e.g., furosemide) and potassium-sparing diuretics (e.g., spironolactone) are used in specific situations. Loop diuretics are more potent and are typically reserved for conditions like heart failure where rapid diuresis is required. Potassium-sparing diuretics are often used when there is a risk of hypokalemia, a common side effect of other diuretics.

Carbonic anhydrase inhibitors, such as acetazolamide, are less common for hypertension management. They have a different mechanism of action and are generally used for specific conditions such as glaucoma or altitude sickness rather than for controlling blood pressure.

In summary, thiazide diuretics, including polythiazide, remain the preferred choice for most patients with hypertension due to their efficacy, safety profile, and beneficial effects on cardiovascular outcomes. They are a cornerstone in the treatment of high blood pressure, particularly in patients without compelling indications for other types of diuretics.

Question: 2

Which of the following would NOT be a usual adult finding in a chest x-ray?

- A. heart appears as a solid structure with clear edges
- B. heart is less than one-half the width of the chest wall on a PA film
- C. bronchi are visible
- D. clavicles present in the upper thorax

Answer: C

Explanation:

When interpreting an adult chest x-ray, certain anatomical structures are expected to be visible under normal circumstances, and others are not typically seen unless there is an abnormality. Each option listed in the question presents different findings that may appear on a chest x-ray, but only one of these is generally not visible in a healthy adult.

The heart appearing as a solid structure with clear edges on a chest x-ray is a normal finding. The heart should be clear and distinct, and on a posterior-anterior (PA) film, the heart's width is generally expected to be less than half the width of the chest wall. This ensures that the heart size is within normal limits.

The visibility of bronchi in a chest x-ray typically depends on which parts of the bronchi are being referred to. The main stem bronchi might be visible because they are larger and more central. However, smaller bronchi (beyond the main stem) are generally not visible in a healthy adult. If these smaller bronchi are visible, it could suggest an abnormality such as bronchial wall thickening or inflammation, conditions often associated with diseases like chronic bronchitis or asthma.

The presence of clavicles in the upper thorax on a chest x-ray is another normal finding. The clavicles should be symmetrically positioned and visible at the top of the thorax, serving as a reference point in evaluating the alignment and possible skeletal abnormalities.

Therefore, the statement indicating that "bronchi are visible" as a usual adult finding in a chest x-ray is incorrect if referring to the smaller bronchi beyond the main stem. In a standard, healthy chest x-ray, these smaller bronchi are not typically visible. Their visibility often indicates an underlying lung condition, which warrants further medical evaluation. Thus, it is essential to understand which parts of the bronchial tree are visible on an x-ray to assess normal versus pathological findings accurately.

Question: 3

Which of the following statements about consent for clinical care is least accurate?

- A. Expressed consent is given directly by written or verbal words.
- B. Implied consent is presumed in emergency situations.
- C. Partial consent is not an option.
- D. Consent can be implied by a patient's behavior.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Understanding the concept of consent within clinical care is essential for both healthcare providers and patients. Consent can be categorized in various forms, including expressed, implied, and partial consent. Each type has its specific conditions and implications.

Expressed consent is when consent is clearly and explicitly communicated by the patient, either verbally or in writing. This type of consent leaves little to no ambiguity about the patient's wishes regarding specific medical treatments or procedures. For instance, a patient signing a consent form for a surgical procedure is an example of expressed written consent.

Implied consent, on the other hand, is not given directly but rather inferred from a person's actions or the context of a situation. Commonly recognized in emergency scenarios, implied consent assumes that

a patient would agree to necessary medical interventions if they were able to provide consent. For example, an unconscious patient brought into an emergency department is treated under the assumption of implied consent, as immediate care is necessary to preserve life or prevent serious harm. Partial consent is where there appears to be some confusion or misunderstanding. Contrary to the statement that "Partial consent is not an option," partial consent is indeed a valid and frequently utilized form of consent in clinical settings. Partial consent occurs when a patient agrees to certain parts of a treatment plan but declines others. For example, a patient may consent to undergo diagnostic tests but decline any form of surgical intervention that might be suggested following the diagnosis. This demonstrates that the patient's autonomy is respected to choose which medical interventions they are comfortable with and which they are not.

The least accurate statement in the context provided is, therefore, "Partial consent is not an option." In clinical practice, it is crucial for healthcare providers to recognize and respect partial consent as it upholds the patient's right to make informed decisions about their own health care. Misunderstanding this can lead to ethical and legal issues, potentially compromising patient trust and adherence to recommended medical procedures.

In summary, understanding the different types of consent is fundamental in ensuring ethical medical practice and patient autonomy. Each type of consent serves a specific purpose and is applicable under different circumstances, with partial consent playing a critical role in personalized and patient-centered care.

Question: 4

A patient with a cognitive sign/symptom of delirium would MOST likely display which of the following?

- A. excessive restlessness
- B. irritability
- C. screaming
- D. diminished attention span

Answer: D

Explanation:

A patient with a cognitive sign/symptom of delirium would MOST likely display which of the following? - Excessive restlessness - Diminished attention span - Irritability - Screaming

Delirium is a clinical syndrome characterized primarily by disturbances in attention and cognition. It typically occurs due to a medical condition, intoxication, withdrawal from drugs, or a combination of these factors. The onset is usually sudden, occurring over hours to days, and the severity often fluctuates during the day.

One of the hallmark symptoms of delirium is a diminished attention span. Patients with delirium find it challenging to focus on a specific task or to maintain attention during a conversation. This can be observed through their easily distractible nature and inability to follow through with thoughts or actions.

Excessive restlessness is another common symptom. Patients may exhibit both verbal and physical restlessness, such as pacing, pulling at bedclothes, or making repetitive motions. These behaviors can be responses to hallucinations or delusions, which are sensory and perceptual disturbances frequently associated with delirium.

Irritability and mood fluctuations are also typical in delirium. Patients may become easily frustrated or agitated, often in response to relatively minor stimuli. This irritability can sometimes escalate into aggressive behaviors if not appropriately managed.

Screaming and other vocal disruptions can occur, particularly if the delirium is associated with fear, paranoia, or hallucinations. Patients might scream out of confusion, fright, or as a reaction to the false perceptions they are experiencing.

In summary, while all the listed symptoms can be observed in delirium, a diminished attention span is the most direct indicator of the cognitive impairments associated with this condition. The other symptoms – excessive restlessness, irritability, and screaming – are more reflective of the behavioral disturbances that can accompany the cognitive deficits in delirium.

Question: 5

A patient develops nausea and begins vomiting. There is also bleeding with no history of problems. What is the most likely cause?

- A. diabetes insipidus
- B. idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura
- C. HHNK
- D. disseminated intravascular coagulation

Answer: D

Explanation:

The most likely cause of the symptoms described - nausea, vomiting, and bleeding with no prior history of bleeding problems - is Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation (DIC). DIC is a complex and severe condition that disrupts the body's normal blood clotting and bleeding processes. It involves the widespread activation of clotting mechanisms in the blood, which can lead to the formation of blood clots throughout the body's small vessels. This excessive clotting consumes clotting factors and platelets, eventually leading to a paradoxical increased risk of bleeding (hemorrhage).

DIC typically arises as a secondary complication of another severe illness or condition. Common triggers include severe infections (like sepsis), major trauma, cancer, complications of pregnancy, or severe reactions to blood transfusions. It is not a disease that a person would have a history of, as it occurs acutely, often in response to another medical emergency.

Patients with DIC might initially present with symptoms that are seemingly unrelated to bleeding, such as nausea and vomiting. These symptoms can arise due to the body's general inflammatory response and the release of cytokines and other inflammatory mediators. As the condition progresses, the more characteristic signs of DIC, such as bleeding from various sites (including surgical sites, venipuncture sites, or mucosal membranes), can become apparent. This bleeding can range from minor to life-threatening.

The diagnosis of DIC is typically made through laboratory tests that show abnormalities in clotting factors (such as prolonged prothrombin time, or PT, and activated partial thromboplastin time, or aPTT), decreased platelet count, decreased levels of fibrinogen, and the presence of fibrin degradation products or D-dimers. Treatment of DIC focuses on addressing the underlying cause, supporting the patient with blood products if necessary, and using medications to control the coagulopathy.

In summary, DIC is a serious, acute condition that can manifest rapidly with symptoms like nausea, vomiting, and unusual bleeding. Its treatment is complex and requires prompt management of both the DIC itself and its underlying cause.

Question: 6

Which of the following types of pharmacologic agents is used to suppress secretion of gastric acid?

- A. Cimetidine
- B. Ranitidine
- C. Omeprazole
- D. Sucralfate

Answer: C

Explanation:

Suppression of gastric acid secretion is critical in the management of conditions like gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), peptic ulcer disease, and Zollinger-Ellison syndrome. Various classes of pharmacologic agents are used for this purpose, each working through different mechanisms to reduce acid secretion in the stomach.

Omeprazole is a proton pump inhibitor (PPI). Proton pump inhibitors are among the most potent inhibitors of gastric acid secretion available today. They work by irreversibly blocking the hydrogen-potassium ATPase enzyme system (the proton pump) on the gastric parietal cell surface. This action prevents the final step in the secretion of gastric acid. By doing so, PPIs significantly decrease the production of stomach acid, providing relief from symptoms and allowing healing of ulcers and inflamed stomach lining. Omeprazole, as a representative of this class, is effective in treating conditions where reducing stomach acid is necessary.

On the other hand, cimetidine and ranitidine belong to another class of drugs known as histamine H₂-receptor antagonists (H₂ blockers). These drugs work by blocking the action of histamine on the H₂ receptors of the stomach's parietal cells, which reduces the production of stomach acid. Histamine plays a significant role in signaling the stomach to produce acid, so by inhibiting this signal, H₂ blockers decrease overall acid production.

Sucralfate represents yet another approach to managing conditions related to gastric acid. It is a cytoprotective agent, which does not suppress acid secretion directly. Instead, sucralfate forms a gel-like substance that coats the ulcer or any open sores in the stomach and protects them against further damage from acid and digestive enzymes. This allows the ulcer to heal while the underlying cause of the ulcer can be treated.

In conclusion, while sucralfate and H₂ blockers like cimetidine and ranitidine are useful in the treatment of acid-related disorders, proton pump inhibitors like omeprazole are more directly involved in the suppression of gastric acid secretion. Therefore, omeprazole is particularly noted for its effectiveness in reducing gastric acid secretion through its action on the proton pump.

Question: 7

Which of the following statements about multiple organ dysfunction syndrome (MODS) is least accurate?

- A. MODS develops in 1% of all patients admitted to the ICU.
- B. MODS occurs in 20% to 47% of patients with multiple trauma.
- C. MODS is responsible for up to 80% of all ICU deaths.
- D. Death rates increase as the number of involved organs increases.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Multiple organ dysfunction syndrome (MODS) is a severe, life-threatening condition characterized by progressive dysfunction in two or more organ systems following a significant illness or injury. The accuracy of statements regarding the prevalence and impact of MODS varies, and understanding these nuances is critical in medical education and clinical practice.

The statement "MODS develops in 1% of all patients admitted to the ICU" is indeed the least accurate. This underestimates the actual incidence of MODS in this patient population. Research and clinical observations suggest that MODS affects about 15% of all patients admitted to intensive care units (ICUs), indicating a much higher risk and prevalence. The underestimation presented in the initial statement could potentially lead to misapprehensions regarding the seriousness and commonality of MODS in critical care environments.

Furthermore, the incidence of MODS is particularly high among patients with multiple trauma, where it occurs in 20% to 47% of cases. This high rate highlights the severe impact that traumatic injuries can have on multiple body systems, leading to a cascade of organ failures that significantly complicate patient outcomes and treatment strategies.

Another critical aspect of MODS is its contribution to mortality rates in ICUs. The statement "MODS is responsible for up to 80% of all ICU deaths" underscores the severity of this condition and its role as a leading cause of death in critically ill patients. This statistic reflects the challenging nature of managing such patients, who often require complex interventions across multiple specialties.

Finally, the correlation between the number of failing organs and mortality rates is well-documented. As the statement "Death rates increase as the number of involved organs increases" suggests, the prognosis for patients worsens with each additional organ system involved. This progressive nature of MODS necessitates a highly coordinated, multidisciplinary approach to care, aimed at supporting organ function and preventing further organ failure.

In summary, understanding the true incidence and impact of MODS in ICU settings is crucial for healthcare providers. The underestimation of its prevalence can lead to inadequate preparation and response to this potentially fatal syndrome. Accurate data and continued research are essential for improving patient outcomes in critical care.

Question: 8

Hyperkalemia results when which of the following occurs?

- A. Blood potassium levels are too low.
- B. Blood potassium levels are too high.
- C. Blood calcium levels are too high.
- D. Blood calcium levels are too low.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Hyperkalemia is a medical condition characterized by an abnormally high level of potassium in the blood. The normal range for blood potassium levels is typically between 3.5 and 5.0 milliequivalents per liter (mEq/L). When potassium levels exceed 5.0 mEq/L, it is referred to as hyperkalemia. Potassium is a critical electrolyte necessary for the proper function of nerve and muscle cells, including those in the heart. It plays a significant role in regulating heartbeat and muscle function.

The question asks what happens in the case of hyperkalemia. The correct answer would be that blood potassium levels are too high. It is important to understand that hyperkalemia does not refer to low potassium levels or any abnormalities in blood calcium levels. Instead, it specifically pertains to the condition where there is an excess of potassium in the bloodstream.

High potassium levels can occur due to various reasons including kidney failure, where the kidneys are unable to remove excess potassium from the blood, the use of certain medications, the breakdown of muscle tissue, or conditions that affect potassium movement out of cells into the bloodstream.

Understanding these triggers is crucial for managing and treating hyperkalemia effectively.

The management of hyperkalemia typically involves measures to reduce potassium levels in the blood, which might include medications, dietary changes, or in severe cases, dialysis. Monitoring potassium levels is an essential part of managing patients at risk of hyperkalemia, particularly those with kidney disease or those on certain medications that affect potassium levels.

Question: 9

Which of the following is least likely to be a cause of hypoglycemia?

- A. decreased need for insulin
- B. oral hypoglycemic agents
- C. salicylates
- D. missed insulin dosage

Answer: D

Explanation:

Hypoglycemia, or low blood sugar, can be induced by several factors, particularly in individuals with diabetes who are managing their condition through medication. Understanding what might lead to hypoglycemia is essential for effectively managing and preventing it. The options listed for potential causes of hypoglycemia include decreased need for insulin, oral hypoglycemic agents, salicylates, and missed insulin doses.

First, a decreased need for insulin may occur when there is a change in diet, exercise, or overall health. For instance, if an individual with diabetes exercises more than usual without adjusting their insulin dose, they might use up glucose in their blood more quickly, leading to hypoglycemia. Similarly, if they eat less than usual but do not adjust their insulin dosage, this could also lead to lower blood sugar levels. Thus, a decreased need for insulin, if not managed properly, can indeed be a cause of hypoglycemia. Second, oral hypoglycemic agents, which are medications used to lower blood sugar levels in people with type 2 diabetes, can certainly cause hypoglycemia. These medications stimulate the pancreas to

produce more insulin or increase the effectiveness of insulin. If taken improperly or without adequate food intake, these medications can lead to excessively low blood sugar levels.

Third, salicylates, commonly found in drugs like aspirin, have been noted to lower blood sugar levels, particularly in large doses. Salicylates increase insulin secretion and enhance its effectiveness, which can potentially lead to hypoglycemia, especially in individuals who are also taking other glucose-lowering medications.

Lastly, the idea that a missed insulin dosage could lead to hypoglycemia appears counterintuitive and is indeed incorrect. Missing an insulin dose would more likely lead to hyperglycemia, or high blood sugar, because there would be insufficient insulin to help glucose enter the cells for energy, thus leaving excess glucose in the bloodstream. Therefore, missing an insulin dose does not cause hypoglycemia; rather, it prevents it, making this choice the least likely cause among the options provided.

Question: 10

The distortion and displacement of the brain from one compartment to another is known as which of the following?

- A. cerebral stroke
- B. embolism
- C. herniation
- D. thrombosis

Answer: C

Explanation:

The correct answer to the question regarding the distortion and displacement of the brain from one compartment to another is "herniation."

The human brain is protected and enclosed within the skull, which can be conceptually divided by the dura mater into several compartments. The dura mater is a thick, durable membrane that envelops the brain and spinal cord, and it forms several folds or partitions that separate the brain into these compartments. Some of the major folds include the falx cerebri, which divides the left and right cerebral hemispheres, and the tentorium cerebelli, which separates the cerebrum from the cerebellum.

Brain herniation, also known simply as herniation, occurs when there is an abnormal displacement of brain tissue from one compartment to another. This usually happens in response to pressure differences exacerbated by swelling, accumulation of fluid, or the presence of a mass like a tumor. The increased pressure in one area of the brain forces it to move towards an area of lower pressure, pushing the tissue through structures like the openings created by the dura mater folds.

There are several types of herniations, including subfalcine (cingulate) herniation under the falx cerebri, transtentorial (uncal) herniation, which involves the medial temporal lobe being pushed through the tentorium, and tonsillar herniation, where parts of the cerebellum are pushed downwards through the foramen magnum. Each type of herniation affects different brain structures and can lead to specific sets of symptoms.

This process of herniation is extremely dangerous and considered a medical emergency as it can lead to severe brain damage or death. The pressure displaces and compresses vital brain tissues and blood vessels, potentially limiting blood supply to critical areas of the brain and causing further damage or dysfunction.

It is crucial to differentiate herniation from other conditions like cerebral stroke, embolism, and thrombosis, which involve blood vessels and circulation rather than the physical displacement of brain structures. Stroke typically refers to the sudden death of brain cells due to lack of oxygen when the blood flow to the brain is impaired either by blockage (ischemic stroke) or rupture (hemorrhagic stroke) of a blood vessel. Embolism and thrombosis also relate to obstructions within blood vessels but do not involve the mechanical movement of brain tissue from one compartment to another.

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