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National Certified Patient Care Technician (NCPCT) Exam



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Question: 1

This ECG result is characteristic of:



- A. atrial flutter (AFL).
- B. sinus tachycardia.
- C. atrial fibrillation (AR).
- D. premature atrial contraction (PAC).

Answer: C

Explanation:

Atrial fibrillation (AF) occurs when the atria contract rapidly and irregularly, resulting in an absence of P waves but a rapid series of chaotic fibrillatory waves. Ventricular contractions are irregular as well, although the QRS complex may appear fairly normal. With persistent AF, the atrial rate may exceed 400 bpm while the ventricular rate usually ranges from 100 to 150. If the rate is lower than 100, the AF is considered to be controlled. The radial pulse is usually lower than the apical pulse because some contractions are weak.

Question: 2

The OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard applies to contact with:

- A. Blood and all body fluids
- B. Blood and all body fluids, secretions, and excretions
- C. The items in response B plus non-intact skin and mucous membranes
- D. The items in response C plus unfixed human tissue and tissue culture, cells, or fluid known to be positive for HIV, HBV, or HCV

Answer: D

Explanation:

Response C applies to CDC recommendations for use of Standard Precautions, but the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard goes further to include the items in response D.

Question: 3

Which one of the following should the patient care technician include on an ECG report prepared for other healthcare team members?

- A. Interpretation of the ECG.
- B. Recommendations.
- C. Clinical impression.
- D. Objective data.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The patient care technician should include objective data on the ECG report prepared for other healthcare team members. These include demographic data and descriptions of the heart rate, rhythm, P wave, PR interval, QRS duration, QT interval, ST segment, T wave, and axis. The technician should also include the results of any ECG interpretation software but should avoid making personal interpretations, clinical impressions, or recommendations. The patient care technician should carefully review the ECG to ensure that it has captured all necessary information.

Question: 4

A patient has scattered personal belongings around the room and bathroom, resulting in a cluttered space. The PCT should do which of the following?

- A. Clean up the clutter
- B. Explain that the room looks cluttered
- C. Ask the patient for permission to organize the personal belongings
- D. Remind the patient to organize the personal belongings

Answer: C

Explanation:

If a patient has scattered personal belongings around the room and bathroom, resulting in a cluttered space, the PCT should ask the patient for permission to organize the personal belongings. The PCT should not handle any personal belongings without permission and should insist on moving items only if they pose a safety hazard, such as when items are placed on the floor.

Question: 5

If a patient is having trouble sleeping at night, which of the following should be avoided in the evening?

- A. Coffee
- B. Herbal tea

- C. Orange juice
- D. Sugar candies

Answer: A

Explanation:

If a patient is having trouble sleeping at night, the patient should avoid drinking coffee in the evening because it is high in caffeine, a stimulant. Other foods or drinks high in caffeine include cola and many other carbonated drinks, chocolate, energy drinks, and tea (black and green). Herbal tea is usually decaffeinated and is not actually made from tea leaves.

Question: 6

When entering the room of a patient who is completely blind, which of the following should the PCT do?

- A. Clap their hands to alert the patient.
- B. Stop and state their name, title, and purpose.
- C. Touch the patient gently to alert the patient to their presence.
- D. Say the patient's name to alert the patient to their presence.

Answer: B

Explanation:

When entering the room of a patient who is completely blind, the PCT should stop and state his or her name, title, and purpose: "Mrs. Brown, this is Sally Smith, your patient care technician. I'm here to help you take your shower." If the patient is in a single room, the PCT should stop at the door. If the patient is in a double room, the PCT should stop at a distance from the bed. People who are blind can often sense or hear the presence of another person and may be startled if the PCT approaches too closely before speaking.

Question: 7

An older patient has been sitting up in bed but has slid down the bed about 6 inches. When the PCT repositions the patient, the PCT notes that the coccygeal (tailbone) area is reddened. In addition to notifying the nurse, the PCT should do which of the following?

- A. Massage the reddened area vigorously.
- B. Position the patient on a side.
- C. Place a soft blanket under the patient's hips.
- D. Wash the reddened area with warm soapy water.

Answer: B

Explanation:

If an older patient has been sitting up in bed but has slid down the bed about 6 inches, the

patient is at risk for both friction (skin rubbing against sheet) and shear (skin and tissue staying in one place while body moves), which can lead to a pressure sore. Any redness should be immediately reported to the nurse and the patient positioned on the side. Reddened areas should not be massaged as this may cause further tissue injury.

Question: 8

If a patient repeatedly coughs while the PCT is feeding the patient, what should the PCT do?

- A. Stop the feeding and tell the nurse
- B. Feed the patient more slowly
- C. Offer liquid after every bite
- D. Give the patient smaller spoonfuls of food

Answer: A

Explanation:

If a patient repeatedly coughs while the PCT is feeding the patient, the PCT should stop feeding the patient and tell the nurse so that the nurse can examine the patient to determine if the patient is aspirating, which means that some of the food and/or fluid is entering the lungs instead of the stomach. Other signs of aspiration may include pain when swallowing, difficulty initiating a swallow, wheezing, excessive saliva, and chest discomfort.

Question: 9

A patient with diabetes mellitus, type 1, received insulin before lunch but ate little and is now confused and trembling and the patient's skin is cold and clammy. The PCT should do which of the following?

- A. Provide the patient with oral glucose tablet.
- B. Advise the patient to drink some juice.
- C. Use the emergency light to call for a nurse.
- D. Advise the patient to lie down.

Answer: C

Explanation:

If a patient with diabetes mellitus, type 1, (insulin-dependent) takes insulin and does not eat adequately, the patient is at risk for an insulin reaction, which can be life threatening, so the PCT should use the emergency light to call the nurse and remain with the patient until the nurse arrives. Signs of insulin reaction (hypoglycemia or low sugar) include confusion, trembling, cold clammy skin, numbness/tingling, and blurred or double vision. The nurse may delegate the PCT to provide the patient juice, candy or other food.

Question: 10

The most common reason for rejecting a specimen for chemistry is

- A. an underfilled tube
- B. an overfilled tube
- C. clotting
- D. hemolysis

Answer: D

Explanation:

The most common reason for rejecting a specimen for chemistry is hemolysis, whereas the most common reason for hematology is clotting. Other reasons that specimens may be rejected include overfilling or underfilling a tube because this alters the required ratio of additive to specimen and can interfere with the testing results. Specimens transported and handled in the wrong collection tube, at the wrong temperature, with the wrong additive, or with exposure to light (if photosensitive) may also be rejected.

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