Test-Taking Strategies: Tips for Success & Overcoming Anxiety

November 8, 6PM CST
Priority Setting Guidelines

These 4 guidelines will help you prioritize responses when given a scenario and you need to choose either 1 or more responses that are correct.

• Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs
• ABCs
• Nursing Process
• Safety and Risk Reduction
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

• Follows a pyramid approach

• Base items must be supported first
  • This includes physiological needs of the client: respiratory, circulatory, neurological systems

• Higher level items can be achieved next
  • Physiological needs are followed by: safety and security, love / belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization
ABCs

• Airway, breathing and circulation needs frequently take priority
  • Life will not be sustained with a compromised airway or difficulty breathing

• Circulatory issues follow
  • Hyper/hypotension
  • Hemorrhage
  • Clots
Nursing Process

• Further assessment data can be the priority issue

• Post-operative clients
  • Vital signs
  • Wound sites
Safety and Risk Reduction

• Safety issues should be addressed following physiological concerns
  • Fall risk
  • Potential for self-harm
  • Etc.
Default Strategies

These 5 default strategies are helpful when you can ‘narrow things down’ and now need to make a choice between two correct answers. They may help you identify a key word or phrase that directs you to the most correct option.

• Use What You Know
• Time Elapsed
• Early vs Late S&S
• Stay with the Client
• Look for the Most Complete Answer
Use What You Know

• You should know *something* about the concept or response in every question and set of options

• Focus on the information you do know
  • Do not focus on the items that you do not know
  • This will allow you to eliminate several options
Time Elapsed

• The priority nursing action will change based on the time interval
  • Hours, days, weeks

• The closer the client is to the time the risk occurred, the higher the risk of complications.
  • ie: Closer to surgery
Early vs. Late S&S

• Early clinical manifestations are generalized and nonspecific

• Late signs are more specific and serious

  • ie: With hypoglycemia, early signs might include ‘hunger, jittery’ while a late sign could be ‘loss of consciousness’
Stay with the Client

• The presence of the nurse at the bedside of the client is very important

• Rarely will a question have the nurse leaving the client

• Choose an answer that keeps the nurse with the client
Look for the Most Complete Answer

• Choose a response that has the least room for error

• Look for responses that have more objectivity (fact) vs. subjectivity (opinion).
References