Test Taking Prep: Setting Yourself Up for Success

Objective
- Identify successful test taking strategies

Feeling a little nervous?
Preparation is the key!
Before the Examination.....

- Organize a timeline
  - www.cpancapa.org

- Study strategies

Study Strategies

- Review the examination handbook
  - CPAN Blueprint
  - CAPA Blueprint
- List study topics
- Form study group
  - 3-6 nurses, 1-2 hours/week, ~3 months before exam (!)
- Attend a review course
  - use to identify your weaknesses

- ABPANC Practice exams

- Study questions in Certification Review text

- Practice, practice, practice

- Practice relaxation and self care techniques
Resources

- Certified colleagues
- Educators
- Journals
- Conferences
- Practice Tests online - from ABPANC

Identify Your Personal Reactions to Test Taking

- Rusher
- Turtle
- Veteran
- Crammer
- Achiever
- Second Guesser

Mullen 1990

Rusher

- Out of control
- Fear forgetting
- Own worst enemy
- Solution
Turtle
- Slow, methodical
- Score better on first portion of exam
- Scores suffer from test taking methods
- Solution

Veteran
- Older, mature, knowledge/insight from life experiences
- Solution

Crammer
- Procrastinator
- Cannot cope with exam uncertainties
- Panic
- Solution
**Achiever**

- Obsessed
- Detailed study plan
- Over analyze questions, remember and regurgitate
- Solution

**Second Guesser**

- Indecisive
- Anxiety increases as they review exam
- Solution

**The Day Before....**

- Prepare Yourself
  - Physically/Emotionally
    - Get a good night’s sleep before the exam!
    - Stop studying!
    - Plan route to test site
    - Check for requested items: 2 forms of ID, one government issues w/photo
Exam Day Arrives....

- Eat a good breakfast
- Wear comfortable clothing
- Allow yourself enough time to get to test site
- Arrive 30 minutes before exam

Test Taking Hints & Helps

- Follow the instructions for entering answers, marking questions, returning to questions
  - 175 questions (140 scored, 35 unscored)
  - 3 hours to complete
- Read each question carefully
- Do not read into the question
- Consider usual situations
- Eliminate incorrect answers
- Only one correct answer
• Pass or Play – if you skip a question – mark it - BE VERY CAREFUL!!
• First response is usually the right one
• One question may remind you of a correct answer to a previous question

• Make the best educated guess
• Answer every question
• Reread and change answers only if you have reason for doing so!

Caveats
• This is a national exam, not specific to your state or practice area
• Generic terms used throughout: know generic names for drugs, equipment and procedures
Caveats

- Know drugs and doses, ACLS/PALS protocols
- Use multiple sources for review: JoPAN, perianesthesia/ambulatory nursing texts, physiology texts, ASPAN standards, etc.

- Don’t cram: useless and anxiety producing
- Relax, do your best
- Be positive and upbeat: you can do it!

Information Regarding Certification Available From

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Questions?

Thank you!