

Adult Nurse Practitioner Intensive Review

Fast Facts & Practice Questions

About the Author

Maria T. Codina Leik [MSN, ARNP, BC, NP-C (GNP, ANP, FNP)], designed and developed materials for the nurse practitioner review courses that she has presented nationally since 1997 through her company, National ARNP Services, Inc. (www.npreview.com). She is board-certified as an Adult Nurse Practitioner (ANP) and Gerontological Nurse Practitioner (GNP) with the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). She is board-certified by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) as Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP). She has been in the field of nursing for the past 23 years and has been in active practice as a nurse practitioner since 1991 in the South Florida area. Maria is also a speaker and is a twice published chapter author.

Adult Nurse Practitioner Intensive Review

Fast Facts & Practice Questions

Maria T. Codina Leik, MSN, ARNP, BC, FNP-C

 **SPRINGER PUBLISHING COMPANY**
New York

Copyright © 2008 Springer Publishing Company, LLC

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of Springer Publishing Company, LLC.

Springer Publishing Company, LLC
11 West 42nd Street
New York, NY 10036-8002
www.springerpub.com

Acquisitions Editor: Sally J. Barhydt
Managing Editor: Mary Ann McLaughlin
Production Editor: Matthew Byrd
Cover Design: Joanne E. Honigman
Composition: Aptara, Inc.

08 09 10/ 5 4 3 2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Codina Leik, Maria T.

Adult nurse practitioner intensive review : fast facts & practice questions /
Maria T. Codina-Leik.

p. ; cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-8261-0295-9

1. Nurse practitioners—Examinations, questions, etc. I. Title.

[DNLM: 1. Nurse Practitioners—Examination Questions. 2. Nursing Care—
Examination Questions. WY 18.2 C669a 2007]

RT82.8.C62 2007
610.73076-dc22

2007029922

Printed in Canada by Transcontinental.

Preface

This Adult Nurse Practitioner (ANP) review guide has been designed to save you valuable study time reviewing for the ANP board-certification examinations.

The content of this review book is applicable to the board-certification exams given by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) and the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP). This review guide covers the lifetime periods ranging from adolescence, adulthood, and into geriatrics. Non-clinical content such as the nurse practitioner role, medico-legal issues, reimbursement and others are also included.

This book, a “Mega Review” study guide, combines five different resources into one: (1) specific certification exam information that includes instructions on speeding up the application process, (2) test-taking techniques that are highly relevant for both the ANCC and AANP exam, (3) a question dissection and analysis section where you learn to pick out the “Best Clues” to solve problems along with the necessary clinical knowledge, (4) a review of primary care disorders including specific “Exam Tips” with advice on some current exam topics, and finally (5) a total of 500 sample questions and answers in a following section to practice your new skills.

Included in this review guide are many pictures and tables. Physical exam maneuvers (i.e., the Drawer sign, McMurrays sign, etc.) are beautifully illustrated by photographs and notes. This review guide will not only help to cut down your total review time, but will also give you a more productive and less frustrating experience. A special effort has been made to cut down as much extraneous information as possible without sacrificing the quality of the book’s contents.

If you have comments and suggestions for this book or are interested in having an intensive NP Review Course held in your school or local area, please contact me by email from my company’s Web site, National ARNP Services, Inc., at www.npreview.com.

*Writing this book taught me many things.
Most importantly, how blessed and lucky I am
to have E.J.L., my wonderful husband,
and daughters Maryfaye and Christina.
I am truly grateful for your love and support.
A smart and talented editor like Sally Barhydt,
and Springer Publishing Company
can help make a dream into solid reality.
Thank you all.*

Contents

About the Author	ii
Preface	v
Chapter 1 Certification Exam Information	1
Chapter 2 Question Dissection and Analysis	19
Chapter 3 Health Screening and Systems Review	63
United States Health Statistics	63
Health Prevention: Health Screening Recommendations From the U.S. Preventative Task Force	64
Organ System Review	66
Dermatology	66
Danger Signals	66
Normal Findings	68
Benign Variants	68
Topical Steroids	69
Disease Review	70
Endocrine System	86
Danger Signals	86
Normal Findings	86
Disease Review	88
Head, Eyes, Ears, Nose, & Throat	96
Danger Signals	96

Contents

Normal Findings	97
Benign Variants	98
Abnormal Findings	99
Evaluation and Testing	100
Disease Review	101
Cardiac System	110
Danger Signals	110
Normal Findings	111
Benign Variants	113
Abnormal Findings	116
Disease Review	116
Pulmonary System	133
Danger Signals	133
Normal Findings	134
Disease Review	135
Hematology	148
Danger Signals	148
Laboratory Testing	149
Disease Review	151
Gastrointestinal System	156
Danger Signals	156
Normal Findings	157
Benign Variants	157
Abdominal Maneuvers	158
Disease Review	158
Viral Hepatitis	163
Laboratory Tests	163
Case Studies for Viral Hepatitis	166
Renal System	167
Danger Signals	167
Normal Findings	168
Laboratory Testing	168
Disease Review	169
Men's Health	172
Danger Signals	172
Normal Findings	172
Disease Review	173
Women's Health	179
Danger Signals	179
Normal Findings	180
Menopausal Body Changes	181
Laboratory Procedures	182

Contents

Oral Contraceptives	183
Other Contraceptives	185
Benign Variants	187
Disease Review	187
Sexually Transmitted Diseases or Sexually Transmitted Infections	193
Danger Signals	193
Normal Findings	193
Disease Review	193
Pharmacology Review	203
Drug Categories	203
Pregnant Women and Drugs	203
Immunizations	204
Bacteria	206
Musculoskeletal System	207
Danger Signals	207
Normal Findings	208
Benign Variants	208
Exercise and Injuries	209
Orthopedic Maneuvers	209
Disease Review	211
Neurology	218
Danger Signals	218
Neurological Testing	219
Benign Variants	222
Disease Review	222
Mental Health	229
Danger Signals	229
Disease Review	230
Psychotropic Drugs	234
Adolescence	237
Danger Signals	237
Normal Findings	238
Immunization Schedule for Preadolescents (age > 10) and Older	240
Laboratory Tests	241
Legal Issues	241
Disease Review	242
Geriatrics	245
Danger Signals	245
Normal Findings	246
Risk Factors in the Elderly	248

Contents

Screening for Dementia	249
Immunizations	250
Disease Review	250
Nonclinical Topics	254
Nursing Practice	254
Nurse Practitioner Role	255
Malpractice Insurance	256
Case and Risk Management	256
Legal Health Issues	257
Institutional Review Boards	258
Public Health Policy	258
Theoretical Concepts	259
Health Care Organizations	260
Chapter 4 Practice Questions	261
Answers to Questions	369
References	389
Index	391

Certification Exam Information



American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)

www.nursecredentialing.org

Phone: 1-800-284-2378

Local & International: 301-628-5250

Prometric Contacts

Web site: <http://www.prometric.com/ANCC/>

Phone (ANCC only): 1-800-350-7076

The ANCC is the credentialing body of the American Nurses Association (ANA). The credentialing exams that are currently being offered to nurse practitioners are for the following specialties: adult, family, pediatric, gerontologic, acute care, adult or family psychiatric and mental health, and advanced diabetes management. The entire application packet can be downloaded from their Web site.

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)

www.aanp.org

Phone: (512) 442-5202

Fax : (512) 442-5221

Email: certification@aanp.org

Prometric Contacts

Web site: <http://www.prometric.com/AANP/>

Phone (AANP only): 1-888-680-5327

The AANP is a specialty organization that serves only nurse practitioners. It is currently offering three specialty exams: adult, family, and geriatric nurse practitioner. The entire application packet can be downloaded from their Web site.

Thomson Prometric Computer Testing Centers

Prometric Center Calling hours: 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Chapter 1

Both the ANCC and the AANP use this company to administer their computer-based certification exams. All testing centers are open from Monday to Friday with many centers open on evenings and weekends.

There are three methods available for locating, scheduling, or rescheduling yourself for the exam. In addition, you may cancel or confirm an appointment this way.

You can do all these online (open 24/7), by phone, or onsite (not all centers have this option). But first, you must have your candidate eligibility number to do so. The number is assigned to you directly by Prometric and is mailed within 2 weeks after you receive your authorization-to-test letter from either the ANCC or the AANP.

Qualifications

Graduate of an approved master's, postmaster's, or doctor of nursing practice (DNP) adult nurse practitioner program and an active RN (registered nurse) license.

Background Information

ANCC and AANP

Generally, the ANCC updates their nurse practitioner exams every 2 to 3 years. The time period that the AANP updates their exams is unknown. The questions for both exams are referenced from major nursing textbooks, national treatment guidelines, papers, and official governmental reports. Do not assume that because both exams are for nurse practitioners, the references used are written mostly by nurses. The opposite is true. A large number of the references used for both the exams are derived from major medical textbooks.

Exam Format

Both are computer-based tests (CBTs) designed in a multiple-choice format. Each question has four answer choices with only one correct option.

Total Number of Questions

ANCC

The ANCC exam has 175 total questions. Of these, 25 sample questions are not scored (for statistical evaluation only). Therefore, only 150 of the questions are graded.

AANP

The AANP exam has a total of 150 questions.

Total Time

ANCC and AANP

The actual testing time allowed for both exams is 3.5 hours. Before the actual exam starts, a computer tutorial “free” time of 30 minutes is given. This is when the instructions and the computer commands are discussed. When the tutorial period expires, the computer automatically starts the exam. Therefore, the total time for the entire test is 4 hours.

The computer will automatically shut down the exam when the 3.5 hours of allotted time expires. There is no extra time allotted for a break. If you need a break during the counted time of 3.5 hours, then you will be using actual test time.

Fast Facts Certification Exam Questions

Because the AANP certification exam has fewer questions, there is more time allotted to solve them compared with the ANCC exam. Each question (ANCC exam only) is worth one point no matter how easy or difficult it is to solve.

ANCC: 1.2 minutes per question (total 175 questions)

AANP: 1.4 minutes per question (total 150 questions)

Fast Facts Comparing the ANCC Versus the AANP Exam

1) Which board certification is better?

Both are equally recognized as national specialty certifying bodies and are acceptable to governmental entities such as Medicare and Medicaid; as well as to local state agencies such as the state boards of nursing (BON). If you are a new graduate, it is a good idea to speak to nurse practitioners in your area as well as faculty to find out whether one certification is preferred over the other in your area of practice.

2) What is an “official” transcript?

A transcript is considered “official” only if it remains inside the sealed envelope in which it was mailed from your college registrar’s office. Preferably, have your transcripts mailed directly to your residence. Another option is to have the school registrar mail the transcript directly to the certifying organization. Order at least three to four copies of your final transcripts and keep the extras unopened to keep them official. Open one copy (yours) and check it for accuracy.

Chapter 1**3) What is the ANCC's "Form E" used for?**

Form E is part of the application packet from the ANCC. It is also known as the "Nurse Practitioner Educational Preparation" form. It must be signed off by the current director of your school's nurse practitioner program even if you are not a recent graduate.

If you are a new graduate, make sure that you have the form signed off before leaving school. Even if you plan to take the AANP's test, it is still a good idea to get a copy of Form E. If you ever need to take the ANCC test in the future or change your mind, it will help save time during the application process.

4) What is the difference between the testing dates for the ANCC and for the AANP?**ANCC**

The ANCC exam can be taken at almost any time of the year (except for major holidays) whenever the Thomson Prometric Testing Centers are open. The ANCC does not have any application deadlines.

AANP

The AANP exam can only be taken three times a year during a specified 10-week period known as the testing "window." Each window has its own application deadline. Therefore, there are three deadlines per year to watch for when applying for the AANP exam. If you miss the regular deadline for your window, there is also a "late deadline" (you are charged a late fee). To get the most current AANP schedule, check their Web site at www.aanp.org.

AANP Exam Schedule*Window 1: January to April*

The application deadline is usually in the last week of December
Late deadline is in January

Window 2: May to August

The application deadline is usually in the third week of April
Late deadline is in May

Window 3: September to December

The application deadline is usually in the third week of July
Late deadline is in August

5) When can I apply for the certification exams?**ANCC**

You are allowed to apply as early as during the last semester/quarter before you graduate. If you apply early, you must include an official copy of your current

Certification Exam Information

transcript (even if it is not the final one). As soon as the final transcripts are available, mail the official copy to complete your application. According to the ANCC staff I have spoken with (by phone), their organization prefers that test takers apply only when the final transcripts are available. They apparently prefer that the entire application along with the final transcript and test fee be sent in together as one package instead of separately.

Within 2 to 3 weeks, a notice that they received the application along with the General Testing Information Booklet will be mailed to you. The ANCC takes from 4 to 8 weeks to process an application. If you are deemed eligible, the authorization-to-test (ATT) form letter is mailed directly to you from the testing agency within 4 to 8 weeks. If you are deemed not eligible, you can appeal an application to the ANCC. A letter regarding the appeal process will be mailed to you within a few weeks.

AANP

The AANP also allows test takers to apply as early as during the last semester/quarter before graduation. Because each of the AANP testing windows has a deadline, I suggest that you apply early a few weeks before you graduate.

This is especially important for those planning to graduate during December. If you decide to wait until your final transcripts are released, you can easily miss the December deadline or possibly the late deadline (January). Test takers who miss both deadlines for the first AANP testing window of the year have to wait until the next one opens in June. If you are a new graduate, this translates into a wait of at least 6 months after you have graduated and results in a big delay in your ability to practice as a nurse practitioner.

Note:

For both exams, do not forget to photocopy all the contents in your application before mailing it in a large envelope.

6) Special instructions for AANP applications

Be careful when you are filling out the AANP applications. Do not leave any of the questions unanswered or leave any blanks on the application forms. It will delay your application by several weeks since it can not be fully processed until all the required documentation is correctly completed. Also, do not answer “*refer to enclosed transcript*” (or the equivalent) on any question asking you for the number of credits or course numbers. You must fill in the required course numbers, credit hours, and dates by hand.

7) After receiving an acceptance letter, how much time do I have before it expires?

ANCC

You have up to 90 days from the date stamped on the acceptance letter to take your exam.

Chapter 1

AANP

The AANP's acceptance letter is valid only for one 10-week testing window. If you do not take your exam within the dates assigned for the window, then your acceptance letter will expire and is no longer valid. A memo must be faxed to the AANP certification department with a request to sit for another testing window. For more information and instructions, call their office in Texas at (512) 442-4262.

8) What is the Prometric candidate eligibility number?

ANCC and AANP

This is the number that is assigned to you directly by Prometric that allows you to schedule an appointment for the exam. Your candidate eligibility number is mailed directly from Prometric within two weeks after you receive your authorization-to-test letter.

9) How do I schedule myself for the exam?

ANCC and AANP

There are three methods available. They are listed under the Thomson Prometric Testing Center information on the first page. Do not forget that you will need your candidate eligibility number which is assigned to you directly by Thomson Prometric. It is mailed to you within 2 weeks after you receive your acceptance letter.

You must give a minimum of 48 hours notice to cancel an appointment. If you have less than 48 hours left, the testing center must be called directly and informed about the cancellation. When you reschedule, you will be charged a rescheduling fee.

Note:

Avoid scheduling yourself at the time of the day when you tend to get tired or sleepy. For most, this is usually after lunchtime. Simply picking the wrong time can cause you to fail the exam, sometimes by as little as two points.

10) What should I do if the time slot I want is no longer available?

If the testing center you chose does not have the time or date you want available, then look for another testing center as soon as possible. This is a good idea if your acceptance letter or testing window is about to expire. For some, it may mean a long drive to another city, but it may well be worth the extra time and effort to avoid the extra paperwork needed if you miss your designated deadline.

Note:

Morning time slots tend to get filled quickly. If you are unable to find one, some testing centers do have a waiting list. Unfortunately, this option is not available online; you must call the local testing center to find out if a waiting list is available.

11) When do I receive my test scores?

ANCC

A new change with the ANCC computer-based nurse practitioner exams was implemented this year. You will learn right away whether you have passed or failed. After you complete the test or when the 3.5 hour time limit expires, your results will be shown to you on the computer. Your official test scores are mailed to you within 1 to 2 weeks after taking the exam.

AANP

For the last few years, AANP test takers have been shown their unofficial test result in the computer after they have completed the exam (or when the 3.5-hour time limit expires).

This is known as the unofficial score. The official scores are mailed to you within the next few weeks.

12) What are the passing scores?

ANCC

The passing score is 350 points or higher. ANCC scores range from 100 to 500 points.

AANP

The passing score is 500 points or higher. AANP scores range from 100 to 800 points.

13) What are the passing rates for each exam?

ANCC

The latest passing rate for the ANCC ANP exam is 80% (2006). The passing rates for the exam over the years have ranged from between the mid-70th to the low 80th percentile.

AANP

Currently, the passing rates for the AANP exams are not released to the public.

14) How are the scores listed?

ANCC and AANP

The scores for each domain (ANCC term) or category (AANP term) are listed individually in addition to the total score. The highest score is listed first and the lowest score is last.

The lower scores indicate your weakest areas. Devote more study time to these areas if you do not pass. If you did not take a review course, I recommend

Chapter 1

that you find one or buy their tapes. My review courses are listed in my Web site at www.npreview.com.

15) How do I inform the BON of my certification status?

Both the ANCC and the AANP can give your scores to your state's BON with your permission. A special form must be filled out and is available for download at their Web sites.

16) What happens if I do not pass the exam?

ANCC

A few weeks after you receive your official score letter, the "permission to retest" letter with an application is automatically mailed to you by the ANCC along with a re-test fee charge. There is a time requirement of a minimum of 90 days after the date of taking the last exam before you are allowed to retest. Unlike the AANP, the ANCC does not require any continuing education credits (CEUs) in order to be allowed to retest.

AANP

Although there is no 90-day time requirement prior to retesting, the AANP requires test takers to take 15 CEUs in their area(s) with the weakest score. Choose courses that address the area(s); if in doubt, call the AANP. The CEUs taken before taking your certification exam are not eligible. After completing this requirement, you can mail or fax your certificates of completion as proof. Call the AANP certification office first before faxing any documents. After your CEUs have been approved, an "application to retest" form is mailed to you along with the charge for a retest fee.

17) If you fail the ANCC or AANP exam the second time

You must resubmit a full application (like the first time) along with all the required documentation and pay the full test fee.

18) What is the professional designation used by each organization?

ANCC

The initials "APRN, BC" (Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Board Certified) are used. No periods or spaces are necessary when writing these initials.

AANP

The designation "NP-C" (Nurse Practitioner-Certified) is used. Do not use a comma before the "C" (certified). Use only a dash.

19) How long is my certification valid?

Board certification from both the ANCC and AANP is valid for 5 years. It can be renewed by the following methods or by retaking the certification exam. A grace period is available for both, but after the grace period expires, you must retake the exam.

ANCC

Recertification for adult nurse practitioners (ANPs) and family nurse practitioners (FNPs) no longer requires the mandatory 1,000 hours of clinical practice (over a 5-year period) as before. These are the only two NP specialties that are exempted from the clinical practice requirement.

You must complete at least 75 contact hours of continuing education (at least 50% of credits must come from ANCC-approved providers) plus fulfill any one of the ANCC designated professional development categories below. Examples of some of the methods acceptable for recertification are the following:

- a) Continuing education credits
- b) Presentations and lectures
- c) Publications and research
- d) Development of education materials such as CD ROM, videotape, or other media presentation
- e) Preceptorship

You can also choose to retake and pass the certification exam to renew your board certification. This is mandatory if you let your certification expire and do not renew it within the allowed grace period.

Note:

Full-time nursing faculty are not allowed to use didactic lecture time that is part of their job requirements as continuing education credits.

Adapted from the ANCC at <http://www.nursecredentialing.org/cert/recert/>

AANP

A minimum of 1,000 hours of clinical practice as a nurse practitioner in your area of specialty is mandatory along with 75 contact hours of continuing education credits.

20) Is there any reciprocity between the ANCC and the AANP?

Family and adult nurse practitioners who are certified by an approved national certification body (i.e., ANCC, AANP, etc.) who meet criteria are eligible to apply. To request information and applications, contact the AANP certification department by the following methods:

- 1) Email: certification@aanp.org

Chapter 1

Table 1.1 ANCC Domains of Practice

Adult Nurse Practitioner Exam	Percent
I. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	19% <i>29 Questions</i>
II. Assessment of Acute and Chronic Illness	22% <i>33 Questions</i>
III. Clinical Management	32% <i>48 Questions</i>
IV. Nurse Practitioner and Patient Relationship	12% <i>18 Questions</i>
V. Professional Role and Policy	9% <i>13 Questions</i>
VI. Research	6% <i>9 Questions</i>
Total	100%

Note. Adapted from the ANCC Adult Nurse Practitioner Board Certification Exam Content Outline; retrieved July 5, 2007, from <http://www.nursecredentialing.org/cert/>

- 2) Fax: (512) 442-5221
- 3) Phone: (512) 442-5221

The ANCC can be contacted by calling their Customer Care Center at 1-800-284-2378.

Test Question Classification

American Nurses Credentialing Center

Classification

Table 1.1 shows a breakdown of the domains used in the ANCC exam. These numbers are not static and they have changed over time. For example, the percentage makeup of the test questions that I consider the “non-clinical” domains (NP and patient relationships, professional role and policy, and research) have increased to 27%. This means that 40 out of the 150 total questions are from the non-clinical domains.

Summary

- 1) These are the top three domains in the ANCC ANP certification exam:
 - Clinical management (32%)
 - Assessment of acute and chronic illness (22%)
 - Health promotion and disease prevention (19%)
- 2) Test takers who score low in any two of the domains just listed will usually fail the exam because these domains account for 110 out of the 150 total questions in the ANCC ANP exam.

Certification Exam Information

- 3) The percentage of nonclinical questions has recently increased from 19% to 27%.
- Nurse practitioner and patient relationship (12%)
 - Professional role and policy (9%)
 - Research (6%)

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Scoring System*Classification*

Currently, the AANP does not release its statistics. The percentage makeup of their exam questions for each of the categories listed below is not public knowledge.

- I. Health promotion
- II. Disease prevention
- III. Diagnosis
- IV. Management of acute disease
- V. Management of chronic disease

Summary

A larger number of questions on this exam are clinically based. This conclusion is drawn not only from my personal experience, but also from feedback from former review course students.

***Fast Facts* ANCC and AANP Exams**

- A. The most current treatment guidelines and protocols are those that were probably released about 3 years (or longer) before the current exam you will be taking. The more recent guidelines will not be in the exams.
- B. The nurse practitioner certification tests are national exams concentrating on primary care disorders. These are not tests on specialty disorders. Keep this in mind when you are reading the answer options. In general, avoid picking exotic diseases as answers.
- C. AANP exams list the normal lab results of the pertinent lab in a test question. Remember, normal lab results are shown only once on the exam. Write them down on your scratch paper. The ANCC does not do this.
- D. No asymptomatic or “borderline” cases of disease states are presented in the test.
Example: In real life, most patients with iron-deficiency anemia are asymptomatic and do not have either pica or spoon-shaped nails. In the exam, they will probably have these clinical findings.
- E. Disease states are presented in their “classic” textbook presentation.

Chapter 1

Example: If a case of acute mononucleosis is being presented, the patient will most likely be a teen presenting with the classic triad of sore throat, fatigue, and enlarged cervical nodes.

- F. Learn the disorders for which maneuvers are used.

Example: Tinel's or Phalen's is used to assess for carpal tunnel syndrome.

- G. Learn what a positive result means for a physical exam maneuver.

Example: A positive anterior or posterior drawer test means that a knee is unstable.

- H. Be knowledgeable about physical exam "normals." There are very few questions on benign variants.

Example: Torus palatinus, fishtail uvula (listed under the head, eye, ear, nose, and throat [HEENT] system review).

- I. Learn what a lab result means and the follow-up needed to further evaluate the patient. It is very rare to get a question asking for actual number values.

- J. Medications are listed in both generic and brand-name forms, or they may be listed only as a drug class.

Example: The drug class *macrolide* is used instead of *erythromycin* or *azithromycin* as the answer option.

- K. Most of the drugs mentioned in the exam are the older, well-recognized drugs.

Example:

Macrolide: erythromycin or clarithromycin (Biaxin)

Cephalosporins: first-generation (Keflex), second-generation (Ceftin/ Cefzil), third-generation (Rocephin)

Quinolones: ciprofloxacin (Cipro); ofloxacin (Floxin)

Quinolones with gram-positive coverage levofloxacin (Levaquin)

Sulfa: trimethoprim/sulfamethazole (Bactrim, Septra)

Tetracyclines: tetracycline; doxycycline (Vibramycin)

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID): ibuprofen; naproxen (Anaprox)

Cough suppressant: dextromorphan (Robitussin)

Other examples are listed in both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 sections.

- L. Some Category B drugs that are allowed for pregnant or lactating women may be included in the ANP exam

Example: For pain relief, pick acetaminophen (Tylenol) instead of NSAIDs such as ibuprofen (Advil) or naproxen (Aleve, Anaprox DS).

- M. When memorizing drugs, you do not have to memorize every side effect. Instead, learn about a drug's common side effects, dangerous side effects, contraindications, and drug interactions. There is no need to memorize drug doses.

Certification Exam Information

Example: ACE inhibitors: a common side effect is a dry cough (up to 10%). A well-known side effect is a dry cough. A serious side effect is hyperkalemia (rarely angioedema). Do not mix this drug class with potassium-sparing diuretics (i.e., triamterene). It is the preferred drug to treat hypertension in diabetics because of its renal-protective properties.

- N. The ANCC exam is more likely to have answer options written as verbal statements with questions addressing mental health topics. Keep these good communication rules in mind: Ask open-ended questions, avoid judgmental statements, do not reassure, do not give abrupt responses, respect the patient's culture, and do not confront the patient.
- O. One to two questions on bioterrorism topics have appeared in the exam. Remember that the best method for spreading viruses or bacteria is to make them airborne or nebulized. Anthrax is treated with ciprofloxacin.
- P. Questions about nursing theory have not been seen on either exam for several years.
- Q. Other health theorists (not nurses) who have been included on the exams in the past are (not inclusive): Erickson, Freud, Piaget, systems theory, Elizabeth Kübler-Ross's theory on bereavement, Health Belief Model, Self-Efficacy Model.
- R. ANCC has increased the number of questions on nonclinical issues (27%).
Example: Nursing practice, health policy, Nurse Practice Act, nurse practitioner role, living will, durable power of attorney, advance directives, privacy laws, documentation, quality assurance, risk management, reimbursement issues, Medicare, research. These are discussed in Chapter 3.
- S. Keep in mind that the majority of questions in the AANP and 73% of the questions (2006 statistics) on the ANCC exams are clinically based.
- T. Follow national treatment guidelines for certain disorders. The following is a list of treatment guidelines used as references by the ANCC.

National Treatment Guidelines*Hypertension*

Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, and Treatment of High Blood Pressure (JNC) 7th Report

Community-Acquired Pneumonia (CAP)

American Thoracic Society (ATS) Treatment Guidelines for Outpatient Community-acquired Pneumonia

Hyperlipidemia

National Cholesterol Education Panel (2002). Third Report of the Expert Panel on Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Cholesterol in Adults

Chapter 1

Asthma

Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma. Expert Panel Report. National Asthma Education and Prevention Program (2003)

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (or sexually transmitted infections)

Sexually Transmitted Disease Treatment Guidelines (2002). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Healthy People 2010

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010, 2nd edition.

Health Prevention

The Guide to Clinical Preventative Services (2002). U.S. Preventative Task Force

Links to the national treatment guidelines are available at www.npreview.com

Fast Facts

Maximizing Your Scores

- 1) There is no penalty for guessing. If you run out of time, quickly fill out the remaining questions at random. Never leave any question unanswered.
- 2) “Mark” questions that you want to review later after you have completed your exam. This is a special command that you will learn how to use during the 30-minute computer tutorial period. Marking a question allows you to return to it later or to change the answer. To save yourself more time, learn how to use the computer’s commands before taking the exam. Go to the ANCC Web site at www.nursingworld/ancc/ and click the “Computer Tutorial” link to practice.
- 3) Plan ahead what you want on the scratch paper before the test by making one at home. Practice writing it down and memorize the notes so that you do not waste time trying to remember it when you are taking the exam.
- 4) Save yourself time (and mental strain) by reading the last sentence (or stem) of long questions and case scenarios *first*. Then read the question again from the beginning.
- 5) The advantage of this “backward reading” technique is that you know ahead of time what the question is asking for. When you read it again “normally,” it becomes easier to recognize important clues that will help you answer the question.
- 6) To avoid making careless errors, do not read the questions too rapidly. You will go into “autopilot” mode. Remind yourself to read slowly and carefully throughout the test.
- 7) If you are having problems choosing or understanding the answer options, try to read them from the bottom up (from option D to A).
- 8) One method of guessing is to look for a pattern. Pick the one answer that does not fit the pattern. Another is to pick the answer that you are most “attracted”

Certification Exam Information

- to. Go with your gut feeling and do not change the answer unless you are very sure of the answer.
- 9) In general, it is not a good idea to change too many answers on an exam.
 - 10) The first few questions are usually harder to solve. This is a common test design. Do not let it shake your confidence. Guess the answer and mark it. All questions are worth only one point.
 - 11) If you spend more than 1 minute on a question, you are wasting time. Answer it at random and mark it so that you can return to it later after you finish the entire test. Never leave any question unanswered. You can lose one point (or more) because there is a one-in-four chance of guessing correctly.
 - 12) Wear a watch with a second hand. It makes it easier to see if you are spending too much time on a question.
 - 13) In general, each question is allotted about 60 seconds to solve. Most test takers finish the exam within 2.5 to 3 hours.
 - 14) If you have failed the test before, try not to memorize what you did on the previous exam you took. The answers you remember may be wrong.
 - 15) Pretend that you have never seen the test before so that you can start out fresh mentally (for repeat test takers).
 - 16) Consider a quick break (if you have enough time) if you get too mentally fatigued. Go to the bathroom and get a drink of water, and splash cold water on your face. This can take less than 5 minutes.
 - 17) Eat some hard candy. Hard candies are allowed inside the testing area as long as they are unwrapped.
 - 18) Dress in comfortable clothes and shoes. Dress in layers.
 - 19) The countdown clock in the computer does not stop for breaks. Do not use more than 5 minutes for your quick bathroom break.
 - 20) Do not forget that the testing areas are monitored by both video cameras and microphones.

Fast Facts Review Timeline

- 1) The amount of time you need to study depends on how well prepared you are. The minimum time it takes is about 6 weeks.
- 2) Look over the table of contents of your primary care textbook and plan the time you want to allocate to each organ system. Do not forget to review the normal findings as well.
- 3) Plan and write down your study schedule. Post it in a visible area.
- 4) Start reviewing your weakest areas first and assign more time to them. Save the areas you know well for the last. Do not get fixated on memorizing too much rote information at once (i.e., cranial nerves). Use a mnemonic or make up your own.
- 5) Besides reading books, use tapes or CDs, especially if you learn best by listening. The more senses you use (reading and listening), the easier it is to remember facts.

Chapter 1

- 6) Use a new notebook to write yourself reminders during your review. When reading on a topic, write down brief notes. Write yourself reminders and tips.
- 7) Read your notes at the end of the study session and several times a day.
- 8) Pick an area to study where you will not be disturbed. For some with small children, this may mean studying outside the home (i.e., library, bookstore).
- 9) If you learn better in a group, organize one. Decide ahead of time what to cover so that you do not waste time.
- 10) Try to study daily even if you can only afford 10 to 15 minutes. Consistency is important. You can break up your study sessions over the day. You will retain information better this way than by doing one large cram session per week.
- 11) Take some notes or photocopy material that you want to learn and place it in your purse or wallet.

Fast Facts Other Test-Taking Issues**A. Emotional Readiness**

Your internal beliefs about how well you will do in the exam are very important and should not be minimized. Try the following exercises if you are feeling too anxious.

This is a good exercise for test takers who have failed the exam before. Of course, you must also devote enough time and effort into your review studies.

Instructions: Programming Your Subconscious Mind

Make a tape/CD or write down positive affirmations. Post them on your bathroom mirror and the dashboard of your car. Keep repeating the phrases to yourself.

Examples:

“I feel confident that I will pass my certification exam and do very well.”

“I always do well in multiple-choice tests.”

“I feel secure in myself and am confident that I will pass the exam.”

- 1) Imagine vividly, believe, and feel yourself passing the exam.
- 2) Do this exercise as much as you can, especially during the two weeks before the exam.

B. Your Panic Button

If you find yourself starting to panic, try the following calming technique:

- 1) Close your eyes. Tell yourself very firmly to *stop*. Keep repeating it until you calm down and your heart rate slows down.
- 2) Concentrate hard to consciously slow down your breathing.
- 3) Take three deep breaths and exhale slowly through pursed lips.
- 4) Tell yourself “I am breathing in ‘self-confidence’ and exhaling out my ‘fear.’”

Certification Exam Information

C. Testing Center Details

- 1) Call the testing center a few days before to verify your appointment.
- 2) Locate and drive to the testing center before taking the exam.
- 3) Arrive at least 20 minutes before your scheduled time to get checked in.
- 4) Required documentation:
 - Authorization-to-test (ATT) letter and two types of positive identification.
 - You will NOT be allowed to take the exam without both of these documents
Your primary ID should contain both your picture and signature (driver's license, passport, or a U.S. government ID). Expired IDs are not acceptable. Your second ID must have your signature on it such as a valid credit/debit card, check cashing card, or citizenship ID (permanent resident/green card). The following are not acceptable ID: social security card, draft registration card, or student ID cards.
- 5) The only things you can bring inside a testing area are scratch paper and pencils given to you by the testing center staff. Ask for extra paper if you tend to write a lot.
- 6) Each test taker is assigned one small cubicle with one computer. If you are having problems with seeing the computer screen, bring it to the proctor's attention as soon as possible.
- 7) You can request ear plugs; consider this option if you are sensitive to noise.
- 8) Do not forget your computer glasses if you need them to read text on the computer.
- 9) The test-taking room is monitored closely by videotape and microphones.

D. The Night Before the Exam

- 1) Briefly go over your notes for a quick review.
- 2) Avoid eating a heavy meal or consuming alcoholic drinks.
- 3) Get enough sleep. Aim for 7 to 8 hours. Lack of sleep affects memory.
- 4) Set two alarms to wake you up on time the next morning.

E. The Day of the Exam

- 1) Avoid a heavy or fatty breakfast. The best meals are a combination of protein with a complex carbohydrate.
- 2) Do not forget to bring some small hard candy (without the wrappers) with you. You may need to eat some, especially after the second hour of testing.
- 3) Wear comfortable clothing and dress in layers.
- 4) Consider limiting the amount of fluid you drink 1 to 2 hours before the test.
- 5) Do not forget to empty your bladder before starting your exam.

