Medical Surgical Exam Content Outline

Exam Objective: To measure the overall clinical knowledge of the Registered Nurse in the Medical Surgical setting.

Knowledge Domains: Medical-Surgical RN

- Cardiovascular: 12%
- Endocrine: 9%
- General Knowledge: 5%
- Gastrointestinal: 15%
- Multisystem: 8%
- Neurological: 11%
- Pulmonary: 8%
- Pharmacology: 8%
- Professional/Ethical Issues: 9%
- Psychosocial: 8%
- Renal/Genitourinary: 11%

Any unlawful use or reproduction of this data and content will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.
Each question in this assessment is categorized by a cognitive level that the test taker would use to respond. These categories are:

**Recall:** The ability to recall or recognize specific information.

**Application:** The ability to comprehend, relate, or apply knowledge to new or changing situations.

**Analysis:** The ability to analyze and synthesize information, determine solutions, and/or evaluate the usefulness of a solution.

I. Cardiovascular
   A. Knowledge of common interventions associated with patients experiencing acute chest pain.
   B. Knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and signs and symptoms (acute and chronic) of congestive heart failure.
   C. Knowledge of pharmacologic and dietary factors that contribute to CHF exacerbation.
   D. Knowledge of dietary education related cardiac disease process.
   E. Knowledge of pathophysiology of common cardiac disease processes, including discharge teaching.
   F. Knowledge of appropriate procedures for obtaining vital signs and blood specimens related to patient history and status.
   G. Knowledge of common cardiac medications used in the medical surgical setting, including:
      1. Appropriate assessments prior to administering medications
      2. Indications
      3. Side effects
   H. Knowledge of contraindications for anticoagulant medication therapy.
   I. Knowledge of common cardiac emergency protocols and when to initiate treatment for emergency situations.
   J. Knowledge of common treatment protocols for myocardial infarction.
K. Knowledge of contraindicated procedures for patients with pacemaker.

II. Endocrine
   A. Knowledge of pathophysiology, assessment findings, and treatment protocols for common endocrine disease processes including but not limited to:
      1. Diabetes
      2. Electrolyte imbalances
      3. Syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone secretion (SIADH)
      4. Hyperthyroidism
      5. Pituitary tumor
      6. Hypoglycemia
      7. Hyperglycemia
   B. Knowledge of diabetic education for:
      1. Dietary considerations
      2. Insulin requirements related to secondary diseases processes
   C. Knowledge of treatment of care and post-operative complications of common endocrine surgical procedures, such as:
      1. Parathyroidectomy
      2. Subtotal thyroidectomy

III. Gastrointestinal
   A. Knowledge of common gastrointestinal post-operative complications.
   B. Knowledge of care for Jackson-Pratt (JP) drains, including troubleshooting.
   C. Knowledge of Nasogastric tube (NGT) placement and indication for use.
   D. Knowledge of enteral feedings via G tube (GT).
   E. Knowledge of pathophysiology, assessment findings, and treatment protocols for common gastrointestinal disease processes including but not limited to:
1. Upper GI bleed
2. Lower GI bleed
3. Gastric ulcers
4. Diarrhea
5. Diverticulitis
6. Peritonitis
7. Appendicitis

F. Knowledge of normal and abnormal lab values related to gastrointestinal disease processes.

IV. General Knowledge

A. Knowledge of principles of TB skin testing.

B. Knowledge of treatment and monitoring of patient on PCA pump, including reversal agents.

C. Knowledge of principles of isolation precautions:
   1. Proper hand hygiene protocols
   2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

D. Knowledge of normal and abnormal lab values for common laboratory tests.

E. Knowledge of blood and blood products administration including adverse reactions.

F. Knowledge of calculating intake and output.

G. Knowledge of principles of assessment for a patient with restraints.

H. Knowledge of signs and symptoms of suicidal ideations.

I. Knowledge of patient care for non-ambulatory patients including but not limited to:
   1. Prevention of skin breakdown
   2. Wound and incision dressing changes
   3. Patient transfer techniques

Any unlawful use or reproduction of this data and content will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.
J. Knowledge of non-ambulatory patient transfer from bed to chair or vice versa

K. Knowledge of appropriate procedures for obtaining vital signs and blood specimens related to patient history and status such as:
   1. Using the appropriate adult B/P cuff size
   2. Check for contraindications before obtaining B/P (i.e. History of Mastectomy or presence of AV Fistula)
   3. Using the appropriate needle size for blood specimen collection
   4. Selecting the appropriate site for blood specimen collection

L. Knowledge of how to correctly prioritize patient assessments, based upon acute medical condition/symptoms/complaints.

V. Multisystem
   A. Knowledge of normal and abnormal assessment findings for patients with various medical conditions and comorbidities.
   B. Knowledge of bedside medical procedures, including but not limited to:
      1. Paracentesis
      2. Lumbar puncture
      3. Arthrocentesis
   C. Knowledge of common sepsis protocols.
   D. Knowledge of wound care, including the definition and rationale for:
      1. Types of debridement
      2. Different types of wound dressing

VI. Neurological
   A. Knowledge of common treatment protocols for:
      1. Seizures
      2. Falls
3. Hemorrhagic CVA
4. Ischemic CVA

B. Knowledge of assessment findings consistent with neurological conditions:
   1. Increased intracranial pressure (ICP)
   2. Change in level of consciousness
   3. Stroke or Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA)

C. Knowledge of dietary considerations for patients with dysphagia such as:
   1. Using thickened liquids
   2. Ordering pureed diet
   3. Elevating head of bed during meals

VII. Pharmacology
A. Knowledge of how to perform parenteral dosage calculations and metric conversions.
B. Knowledge of medication administration principles:
   1. Drug classifications and indications
   2. Patient education
   3. Dietary considerations/contraindications
   4. Signs/symptoms of toxicity
   5. Baseline vital signs
   6. Subcutaneous injection sites
C. Knowledge of side effects of tuberculosis medications.
D. Knowledge of tapering medications to minimize side effects.
E. Knowledge of medication contraindications based on patient status.
F. Knowledge of anticoagulant antidote medication administration.
G. Knowledge of narcotic reversal agent medication administration.
H. Knowledge of how to monitor for adverse side effects.
I. Knowledge of medication contraindications related to known drug allergies.
J. Knowledge of contraindications related to antidiabetic medications.

VIII. Professional/Ethical Issues
A. Knowledge of principles and protocols for advance healthcare directives.
B. Knowledge of protocols for suspected coworker substance abuse.
C. Knowledge of principles of cultural diversity and protocols for communicating with non-English speaking patients.
D. Knowledge of principles of patient privacy and HIPAA guidelines.
E. Knowledge of prioritizing patient assessments.
F. Knowledge of principles for obtaining informed consent.

IX. Psychosocial
A. Knowledge of therapeutic communication for patients with suicidal ideation and psychological conditions.
B. Knowledge of common nursing interventions that accompany suicidal precautions.

X. Pulmonary
A. Knowledge of performing comprehensive pulmonary assessment.
B. Knowledge of normal and abnormal pulmonary assessment findings.
C. Knowledge of pathophysiology and appropriate treatment interventions of common pulmonary conditions:
   1. Acute respiratory distress
   2. COPD
   3. Pulmonary embolism
   4. Pneumothorax
   5. Emphysema
D. Knowledge of oxygen therapy and delivery systems, including patient and family education related to therapy.

E. Knowledge of how to care for patients with chest tubes, including how to troubleshoot equipment, assess for air leak, etc.

F. Knowledge of tracheal suctioning, including proper technique, timing, maintaining sterility, etc.

XI. Renal/Genitourinary

A. Knowledge of placement and management of indwelling urinary catheters.

B. Knowledge of tests and procedures for common renal and genitourinary conditions.

C. Knowledge of pathophysiology and treatment of care of common renal and genitourinary conditions:
   1. Acute kidney injury
   2. Kidney stones
   3. Renal failure
   4. Urinary tract infection

D. Knowledge of principles of dialysis.

E. Knowledge of treatment of care post common renal/genitourinary surgical procedures, such as TURP, Kidney biopsy, Nephrectomy, etc.

F. Knowledge of normal and abnormal lab values for patients with renal disease.