# Contents at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Assessment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 1</strong></td>
<td>Preparing for the National Council Exam for Registered Nurses</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 2</strong></td>
<td>Pharmacology</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 3</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Respiratory System</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 4</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Genitourinary System</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 5</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Hematopoietic System</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 6</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of Fluid and Electrolyte Balance and Acid/Base Balance</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 7</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Burns</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 8</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Sensorineural Disorders</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 9</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Cancer</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 10</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Gastrointestinal System</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 11</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Musculoskeletal System</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 12</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Endocrine System</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 13</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Cardiovascular System</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 14</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Neurological System</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 15</strong></td>
<td>Caring for the Client with Psychiatric Disorders</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 16</strong></td>
<td>Caring for Maternal/Infant Client</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 17</strong></td>
<td>Caring for Pediatric Client</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 18</strong></td>
<td>Emergency Nursing</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 19</strong></td>
<td>Cultural Practices Influencing Nursing Care</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 20</strong></td>
<td>Legal Issues in Nursing Practice</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practice Exam I</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practice Exam II</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Answers to Practice Exam I</td>
<td>529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Answers to Practice Exam II</td>
<td>559</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

## Introduction

- Welcome to the NCLEX-RN® Exam Cram ........................................... 1
- Taking the Computerized Adaptive Test ........................................... 2
- The Cost of the Exam ................................................................. 2
- How to Prepare for the Exam .......................................................... 2
- How to Use This Book ................................................................. 3
- About the Book ........................................................................... 4
- Contact the Authors ................................................................. 5
- Self-Assessment ........................................................................ 5
- Testing Your Exam Readiness ....................................................... 6

## Chapter 1: Preparing for the National Council Exam for Registered Nurses

- Preparing for the Exam ................................................................. 8
  - The CAT Exam ........................................................................ 8
- Testing Strategies ....................................................................... 9
  - Read the Question Carefully ...................................................... 10
  - Look for Keywords .................................................................. 10
  - Watch for Specific Details ......................................................... 10
  - Eliminate Options That Are Clearly Wrong or Incorrect .......... 11
  - Look for Similar Options .......................................................... 11
  - Look for Opposite Answers ....................................................... 12
  - Remember Legalities ............................................................... 12
  - Remember Infection Control .................................................... 12
- Exam Prep Questions ................................................................... 13
  - Answer Rationales ................................................................... 15

## Chapter 2: Pharmacology

- Three Areas of Pharmacology ...................................................... 18
- How Nurses Work with Pharmacology ......................................... 19
- Time-released Drugs ................................................................... 20
Administering Medications ................................................................. 21
  The Seven Rights of Administering Medication ................................ 21
Understanding and Identifying the Various Drugs ............................ 22
  Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme Inhibitors ................................. 22
  Beta Adrenergic Blockers .............................................................. 23
  Anti-Infectives (Aminoglycosides) ................................................ 25
  Benzodiazepines (Anticonvulsants/Antianxiety) ............................ 26
  Phenothiazines (Antipsychotic/Antiemetic) .................................... 28
  Glucocorticoids ............................................................................ 29
  Antivirals ....................................................................................... 31
  Cholesterol-Lowering Agents ...................................................... 32
  Angiotensin Receptor Blockers .................................................... 33
  Histamine 2 Antagonists ............................................................... 34
  Proton Pump Inhibitors ................................................................. 36
  Anticoagulants .............................................................................. 37
  More Drug Identification Helpers .................................................. 38
Herbals .......................................................................................... 38
Drug Schedules ................................................................................ 39
Pregnancy Categories for Drugs ....................................................... 40
Exam Prep Questions ......................................................................... 41
  Answer Rationales ....................................................................... 43

Chapter 3:
Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Respiratory System ........ 45
  Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease ...................................... 46
    Chronic Bronchitis ................................................................. 46
    Emphysema .............................................................................. 46
    Asthma .................................................................................... 47
  Acute Respiratory Infections ....................................................... 47
    Pneumonia ............................................................................... 48
    Pleurisy ................................................................................... 49
    Tuberculosis ............................................................................. 50
    Influenza .................................................................................. 50
  Acute Respiratory Failure ............................................................ 51
    Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome ....................................... 51
    Pulmonary Embolus ................................................................... 52
Emerging Infections ................................................................. 53
  Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome ........................................ 53
  Legionnaire’s Disease .......................................................... 54
Diagnostic Tests for Review ..................................................... 55
Pharmacology Categories for Review ......................................... 55
Exam Prep Questions .............................................................. 57
  Answer Rationales ............................................................... 59
Suggested Readings and Resources ............................................. 60

Chapter 4:
Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Genitourinary System .............................................. 61
  Acute Glomerulonephritis ...................................................... 62
  Chronic Glomerulonephritis ................................................... 63
  End Stage Renal Disease ....................................................... 64
    Peritoneal Dialysis ............................................................ 64
    Hemodialysis ................................................................. 64
    Renal Transplantation ....................................................... 65
  Nephrotic Syndrome .......................................................... 65
  Urinary Calculi ................................................................. 66
  Urinary Tract Infections ....................................................... 67
  Genitourinary Disorders ....................................................... 67
    Prostatitis ................................................................. 67
  Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia ................................................ 68
  Bladder Cancer ................................................................. 69
Diagnostic Tests for Review ..................................................... 70
Pharmacology Categories for Review ......................................... 70
Exam Prep Questions .............................................................. 72
  Answer Rationales ............................................................... 74
Suggested Reading and Resources ............................................. 75

Chapter 5:
Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Hematopoietic System .............................................. 77
  Anemia ............................................................................. 78
    Pernicious Anemia ............................................................ 78
    Aplastic Anemia ............................................................... 79
    Sickle Cell Anemia ........................................................... 80
Chapter 6:
Caring for the Client with Disorders of Fluid and Electrolyte Balance and Acid/Base Balance .................................................. 89

Basic Knowledge of Fluid and Electrolyte Balance ............................... 90
Regulation of pH and Its Effect on Fluid and Electrolytes ......................... 91
How the Body Regulates pH ................................................................. 91
Metabolic Acidosis .................................................................................. 91
Causes of Metabolic Acidosis ................................................................. 91
Symptoms of Metabolic Acidosis ......................................................... 92
Care of the Client with Metabolic Acidosis ........................................... 92
Respiratory Acidosis .............................................................................. 93
Causes of Respiratory Acidosis ............................................................. 93
Symptoms of Respiratory Acidosis ....................................................... 94
Caring for the Client with Respiratory Acidosis ...................................... 94
Metabolic Alkalosis ................................................................................ 95
Causes of Metabolic Alkalosis ............................................................... 95
Symptoms of Metabolic Alkalosis .......................................................... 95
Caring for the Client with Metabolic Alkalosis ......................................... 96
Respiratory Alkalosis ............................................................................. 96
Symptoms of Respiratory Alkalosis ....................................................... 96
Care of the Client with Respiratory Alkalosis .......................................... 97
Normal Electrolyte Values .................................................................... 97
Changes Associated with Aging ............................................................ 98
Exam Prep Questions ............................................................................ 100
Answer Rationales ............................................................................... 102
Suggested Reading and Resources ....................................................... 103
Chapter 7:
Caring for the Client with Burns ....................................................... 105

Burn Classifications ................................................................. 106
Burn Measurement with TBSA .................................................. 108
Nursing Care for Burn Victims ................................................. 109
The Emergent Phase ............................................................... 110
The Intermediate Phase ......................................................... 113
Dressings for Burns ............................................................... 114
The Rehabilitative Phase ......................................................... 115
Diagnostic Tests for Review .................................................... 116
Pharmacology Categories for Review ...................................... 116
Exam Prep Questions .............................................................. 117
Answer Rationales ................................................................. 119
Suggested Reading and Resources ............................................ 120

Chapter 8:
Caring for the Client with Sensorineural Disorders ......................... 121

Disorders of the Eyes .............................................................. 122
Intraocular Disorders .......................................................... 122
Retinal Disorders ................................................................. 125
Refractive Errors ................................................................. 127
Traumatic Injuries .............................................................. 128
Visual Tests for Review .......................................................... 129
Pharmacology Categories for Review ...................................... 129
Ear Disorders ................................................................. 129
Otitis Externa ............................................................... 130
Otitis Media ............................................................... 130
Meniere’s Disease ........................................................... 130
Otosclerosis ............................................................... 131
Presbycusis ............................................................... 131
Ear Trauma ............................................................... 132
Assisting Clients with Hearing Loss ......................................... 132
Diagnostic Tests for Review .................................................... 132
Pharmacology Categories for Review ...................................... 133
Exam Prep Questions .............................................................. 134
Answer Rationales ................................................................. 136
Suggested Reading and Resources ............................................ 137
Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) ........................................ 166
Diseases Associated with the Liver .......................................................... 167
   Hepatitis ............................................................................................... 167
   Cirrhosis .............................................................................................. 172
   Pancreatitis .......................................................................................... 174
Cholecystitis/Cholelithiasis ................................................................. 176
   Symptoms of Cholecystitis and Cholelithiasis ........................................ 176
   Diagnosis of Cholecystitis/Cholelithiasis ............................................ 177
   Treatment of Cholecystitis ................................................................. 177
   Treatment of Cholelithiasis ................................................................. 177
Clostridium Difficile ............................................................................... 178
Food-Borne Illnesses ............................................................................ 179
Diagnostic Tests for Review ................................................................. 180
Pharmacology for Review ....................................................................... 180
Exam Prep Questions ................................................................................ 182
   Answer Rationales ................................................................................ 184
Suggested Reading and Resources ......................................................... 185

Chapter 11:  
Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Musculoskeletal System ........ 187
   Fractures ............................................................................................... 188
   Treating Fractures .............................................................................. 188
   Compartment Syndrome ..................................................................... 191
   Osteomyelitis ...................................................................................... 192
Osteoporosis ............................................................................................ 193
   Treatment of Osteoporosis ................................................................. 194
Gout ........................................................................................................... 195
   Treatment of the Client with Gout ...................................................... 195
Rheumatoid Arthritis ............................................................................... 195
   Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis .................................................... 196
Musculoskeletal Surgical Procedures ..................................................... 197
   Fractured Hip and Hip Replacement .................................................. 197
   Total Knee Replacement ................................................................. 198
   Amputations ...................................................................................... 199
Assistive Devices for Ambulation ........................................... 201
Crutches ........................................................................... 201
Canes ............................................................................... 202
Walkers ............................................................................ 202
Diagnostic Tests for Review ................................................ 203
Pharmacology for Review .................................................. 203
Exam Prep Questions .......................................................... 205
Answer Rationales .............................................................. 207
Suggested Reading and Resources ....................................... 208

Chapter 12:
Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Endocrine System .......... 209
The Endocrine System .......................................................... 210
Pituitary Disorders .............................................................. 210
Tumors of the Pituitary ......................................................... 211
Thyroid Disorders ............................................................... 213
Hypothyroidism .................................................................. 213
Hyperthyroidism .................................................................. 214
Parathyroid Disorders .......................................................... 215
Hypoparathyroidism ............................................................. 216
Hyperparathyroidism ............................................................ 217
Adrenal Gland Disorders ....................................................... 218
Adrenocortical Insufficiency (Addison’s Disease) .................... 218
Adrenocortical Hypersecretion (Cushing’s Syndrome)
or Cushing’s Disease .......................................................... 219
Diabetes Mellitus ................................................................. 219
Diagnostic Tests for Review ................................................ 223
Pharmacology Categories for Review .................................... 223
Exam Prep Questions ............................................................ 224
Answer Rationales .............................................................. 226
Suggested Reading and Resources ....................................... 227

Chapter 13:
Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Cardiovascular System .......... 229
Hypertension .................................................................... 230
Medications Used to Treat Hypertension ................................. 231
## Chapter 14:
**Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Neurological System**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart Block</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxicity to Medications</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malfunction of the Conduction System</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myocardial Infarction</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis of Myocardial Infarction</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Myocardial Infarction Clients</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflammatory Diseases of the Heart</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infective Endocarditis</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pericarditis</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buerger's Disease</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrombophlebitis</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raynaud's Syndrome</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aneurysms</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestive Heart Failure</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Tests for Review</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacology Categories for Review</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Prep Questions</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer Rationales</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Reading and Resources</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 14: Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Neurological System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seizures</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Seizures</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Seizure Clients</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status Epilepticus</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brain Injuries</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidural Hematomas</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subdural Hematoma</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Epidural and Subdural Hematomas</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Intracranial Pressure</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of ICP</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurological Assessment</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranial Nerve Assessment</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow Coma Scale</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intracranial Pressure Monitors</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 15:
Caring for the Client with Psychiatric Disorders ........................................... 273

Anxiety-Related Disorders ................................................................. 274
  Generalized Anxiety Disorder ......................................................... 274
  Post-traumatic Stress Disorder ....................................................... 275
  Dissociative Identity Disorder ......................................................... 275
  Somatoform Disorder ....................................................................... 276
  Panic Disorder .................................................................................. 276
  Phobic Disorders ............................................................................. 277
  Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder ....................................................... 277

Personality Disorders ........................................................................ 278
  Cluster A ............................................................................................ 278
  Cluster B ............................................................................................ 279
  Cluster C ............................................................................................ 280
  Managing Clients with Personality Disorders ...................................... 281

Psychotic Disorders .......................................................................... 282
  Schizophrenia ................................................................................... 282
  Bipolar Disorders ............................................................................. 284

Substance Abuse .............................................................................. 286
  Alcoholism ......................................................................................... 286
  Other Commonly Abused Substances ............................................ 288
Bronchiolitis ................................................................. 348
Cystic Fibrosis (Mucoviscidosis) ........................................ 349
Gastrointestinal Disorders ................................................ 350
  Gastroenteritis .......................................................... 350
  Pyloric Stenosis ......................................................... 350
  Intussusception ......................................................... 351
  Celiac (Gluten-Induced Enteropathy, Celiac Sprue) .......... 351
Cardiovascular Disorders ................................................ 351
  Rheumatic Fever ......................................................... 352
  Kawasaki’s Disease (Mucocutaneous Lymph Node Syndrome) .... 353
Musculoskeletal Disorders ................................................ 354
  Scoliosis ................................................................. 354
  Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease (Coxa Plana) ....................... 355
  Muscular Dystrophies ................................................ 355
Childhood Cancer ........................................................ 356
  Wilms Tumor (Nephroblastoma) ..................................... 356
  Leukemia ................................................................. 356
  Osteogenic Sarcoma (Osteosarcoma) ............................... 357
Ingestion of Hazardous Substances .................................... 357
  Salicylate Overdose .................................................... 357
  Acetaminophen (Tylenol) Overdose ................................. 357
  Lead (Plumbism) ....................................................... 358
  Iron Poisoning .......................................................... 358
Diagnostic Tests for Review ............................................. 359
Pharmacology Categories for Review ................................ 359
Exam Prep Questions ...................................................... 360
  Answer Rationales ..................................................... 362
Suggested Reading and Resources ..................................... 363

Chapter 18:
Emergency Nursing .......................................................... 365
  The ABCDs of Emergency Care ....................................... 366
    Airway ................................................................. 367
    Breathing ............................................................. 367
    Circulation .......................................................... 368
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deficits</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining Client Information</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Injuries</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chest Injuries</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdominal Injuries</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documenting and Protecting Forensic Evidence</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poisoning</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poisonous Stings and Bites</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bioterrorism</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical and Biological Agents</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Warfare</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triage Categories for Disaster Victims</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Tests for Review</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacology Categories for Review</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Prep Questions</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer Rationales</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Reading and Resources</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Chapter 19:
### Cultural Practices Influencing Nursing Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Assessment</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Client Beliefs</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Clients Who Speak Different Languages</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare of Hispanics/Latinos</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Considerations</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Nonverbal/Verbal Communication</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childbirth and Pain Response</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare of Native Americans and Alaskan Natives</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Considerations</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Nonverbal/Verbal Communication</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childbirth and Pain Response</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare of Asian-Americans</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Considerations</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Nonverbal/Verbal Communication</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childbirth and Pain Response</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Healthcare of Arab-Americans .................................................. 393
-time Considerations ............................................................. 394
Use of Nonverbal/Verbal Communication .................................. 394
Childbirth and Pain Response ................................................... 394
Nursing Plan Dietary Considerations Across Cultures .................. 395
Religious Beliefs and Refusal of Care Considerations .................. 396
Exam Prep Questions ............................................................. 400
Answer Rationales ............................................................... 402
Suggested Reading and Resources ............................................ 403

Chapter 20:
Legal Issues in Nursing Practice ............................................. 405
Types of Laws ......................................................................... 406
Statutory Laws/Regulatory Laws ............................................... 407
Civil Laws .............................................................................. 407
Criminal Laws ........................................................................ 407
Common Law .......................................................................... 407
Code of Ethical Behavior in Nursing Practice .............................. 409
Legal Theories That Affect Nursing Practice ............................... 410
Negligence ............................................................................. 410
Malpractice ............................................................................. 410
Witnessing Consent for Care .................................................... 411
Tort ....................................................................................... 411
Assault and Battery ................................................................ 411
Fraud ..................................................................................... 411
Managing Client Care ............................................................. 411
Exam Prep Questions ............................................................. 417
Answers to Exam Questions .................................................... 419
Suggested Reading and Resources ............................................ 420

Practice Exam I ........................................................................ 421
Practice Exam II ....................................................................... 475
Contents

Answers to Practice Exam I ................................................................. 529
   Answer Rationales ...................................................................... 531

Answers to Practice Exam II .............................................................. 559
   Answer Rationales ...................................................................... 561

Appendix A:
   Things You Forgot ...................................................................... 589
   Therapeutic Drug Levels .......................................................... 589
   Vital Signs ................................................................................ 589
   Anticoagulant Therapy ............................................................... 590
   Intrapartal Normal Values .......................................................... 590
   Standard Precautions ............................................................... 591
   Airborne Precautions ............................................................... 591
   Droplet Precautions .................................................................. 592
   Contact Precautions .................................................................. 592
   Revised Life Support Guidelines (American Heart Association) .... 592
   Defense Mechanisms Often Used by Clients During Stressful Situations .... 592
   Nutrition Notes ....................................................................... 593
   Immunization Schedule ............................................................ 594

Appendix B:
   Need to Know More? ................................................................ 597
   Pharmacology .......................................................................... 597
   Care of the Client with Respiratory Disorders ......................... 597
   Care of the Client with Genitourinary Disorders ...................... 598
   Care of the Client with Hematological Disorders ..................... 598
   Fluid and Electrolytes and Acid/Base Balance ......................... 599
   Care of the Client with Burns ................................................... 599
   Care of the Client with Sensory Disorders ............................... 599
   Care of the Client with Neoplastic Disorders ......................... 600
   Care of the Client with Gastrointestinal Disorders ................. 600
   Care of the Client with Musculoskeletal and Connective Tissue Disorder .... 601
   Care of the Client with Endocrine Disorders ........................... 601
   Care of the Client with Cardiac Disorders ............................... 602
   Care of the Client with Neurological Disorders ....................... 602
xxii
NCLEX-RN Exam Cram, Third Edition

Care of the Client with Psychiatric Disorders ........................................ 603
Maternal-Newborn Care ........................................................................ 603
Care of the Pediatric Client .................................................................... 603
Cultural Practices Influencing Nursing Care ........................................... 604
Legal Issues in Nursing Practice ............................................................... 604

Appendix C:
Calculations ............................................................................................ 605
The Apothecary System of Measurement .................................................. 605
The Household System of Measurement .................................................. 605
Metric Measurements .............................................................................. 606
Test Your Math Skills .............................................................................. 606
Answers ................................................................................................... 607

Appendix D:
Most-Prescribed Medications in the United States .................................... 609

Appendix E:
Alphabetical Listing of Nursing Boards in the United States and Protectorates ........................................... 613

Index ....................................................................................................... 629
Introduction

Welcome to the NCLEX-RN® Exam Cram

Often when we are studying for a very important exam such as the NCLEX®, we feel overwhelmed by the amount of content there is to master. This book will help you organize your knowledge and get ready to take and pass the Licensure Exam for Registered Nurses. This introduction discusses the NCLEX® exam in general and how the Exam Cram can help you prepare for the test. It doesn’t matter whether this is the first time you’re going to take the exam or if you have taken it previously; this book gives you the necessary information and techniques to obtain licensure.

Exam Cram books help you understand and appreciate the subjects and materials you need to pass. The books are aimed at test preparation and review. They do not teach you everything you need to know about the subject of nursing. Instead they present you with materials you are likely to encounter on the exam. Using a simple approach, we will help you understand the need-to-know information. First, you will learn medical-surgical content, psychiatric content, obstetric content, and pediatric content, with an emphasis on pharmacology, skills, and treatment of these disorders. In a well-organized format, you will learn the pathophysiology of the most common problems affecting clients, the treatment of these disorders, and the nursing care.

The NCLEX-RN® consists of questions from the cognitive levels of knowledge, comprehension, application, and analysis. The majority of questions are written at the application and analysis levels. Questions incorporate the five stages of the nursing process (assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation) and the four categories of client needs. Client needs are divided into subcategories that define the content within each of the four major categories. These categories and subcategories are

- Safe, effective care environment:
  - Management of care: 16–22%
  - Safety and infection control: 8–14%
- Health promotion and maintenance: 6%–12%
- Psychosocial integrity: 6%–12%
Physiological integrity:
- Basic care and comfort: 6%–12%
- Pharmacological and parenteral therapy: 13%–19%
- Reduction of risk: 10%–16%
- Physiological adaptation: 11%–17%

Taking the Computerized Adaptive Test

Computerized Adaptive Testing offers the candidate several advantages. The graduate can schedule the exam at a time that is convenient for him. The Pearson VUE Testing group is responsible for administering the exam. Because you might not be familiar with the Pearson testing centers, we recommend that you arrive at least 30 minutes early. If you are late, you will not be allowed to test. Bring two forms of identification with you, one of which must be a picture ID. Be sure that your form of identification matches your application. You will be photographed and fingerprinted on entering the testing site, so don’t let this increase your stress. The allotted time is six hours. The candidate can receive results within approximately seven days (in some states even sooner). Remember that the exam is written at approximately the 10th-grade reading level, so keep a good dictionary handy during your studies.

The Cost of the Exam

The candidate wishing to write the licensure exam must fill out two applications: one to the National Council and one to the state in which she wants to be licensed. A separate fee must accompany each application. The fee required by the National Council is $200. State licensing fees vary from state to state. Licensure applications can be obtained on the National Council’s website at www.ncsbn.org. Several states are members of the multistate licensure compact. This means that, if you are issued a multistate license, you pay only one fee. This information can be obtained by visiting the National Council’s website as well.

How to Prepare for the Exam

Judicious use of this book, either alone or with other books such as the NCLEX® Exam Prep book by the same authors, and a review seminar such as the one provided by Rinehart and Associates, will help you achieve your goal of becoming a registered nurse. As you review for the NCLEX® Exam, we suggest that you find a location where you can concentrate on the material each day. A minimum of two hours per day for at least two weeks is suggested. We
have provided you with exam alerts, tips, notes, and sample questions—both multiple-choice and alternative items. These questions will acquaint you with the types of questions you will see during the exam. We have also formulated a mock exam with those difficult management and delegation questions that you can score to determine your readiness to test. Pay particular attention to the exam alerts and the Cram Sheet. Using them will help you gain and retain knowledge and reduce your stress as you prepare to test.

How to Use This Book

Each topical Exam Cram chapter follows a regular structure, along with cues about important or useful information. Here’s the structure of a typical chapter:

- **Opening hotlists**—Each chapter begins with a list of terms and concepts you must learn and understand before you can know the subject matter. The hotlists are followed by an introductory section that sets the stage for the rest of the chapter.

- **Topical coverage**—After the opening hotlists, each chapter covers a series of topics related to the chapter’s subject title. Throughout this section, we highlight topics or concepts that are likely to appear in the exam.

Even though the book is structured to the exam, these flagged items are often particularly important:

- **Exam alerts**—An exam alert stresses concepts, terms, or activities that are likely to relate to one or more test questions. For that reason, we think any information in an alert is worthy of unusual attentiveness on your part. A special exam alert layout is used like this:

  ![EXAM ALERT](image)

  This is what an exam alert looks like. Remember to pay particular attention to these items!

- **Notes**—Throughout each chapter, additional information is provided that, although not directly related to the exam itself, is still useful and will aid your preparation. A sample note is shown here:

  ![NOTE](image)

  This is how notes are formatted. Notes direct your attention to important pieces of information that relate to nursing and nursing certification.
Tips—A tip might tell you another way of accomplishing something in a more efficient or time-saving manner. An example of a tip is shown here:

TIP

This is how tips are formatted. Keep your eyes open for these, and you’ll learn some interesting nursing tips!

- **Exam prep questions**—Although we talk about test questions and topics throughout the book, the section at the end of each chapter presents a series of mock test questions and explanations of both correct and incorrect answers.

- **Practice exams**—Practice Exam I and Practice Exam II provide additional practice questions. Use these to gauge your learning and to build the confidence needed to move forward to the real exam.

- **Glossary**—At the end of the book you will find a glossary that defines critical nursing terms we cover in this book.

- **CD**—The CD includes a testing engine with many practice questions that you should use repeatedly to practice your test-taking skills and to measure your level of learning. You should be able to correctly answer more than 90% of the questions on the practice tests before taking the real exam.

- **Cram Sheet**—At the very beginning of the book is a tear card we call the Cram Sheet. This is a helpful tool that gives you distilled, compressed facts. It is a great tool for last-minute study and review.

**About the Book**

The topics in this book have been structured using the systems approach to nursing. We believe that the simple way to learn the disease process, treatments, and diagnostic studies is the best way. You will review material from each system and the related skills, diagnostics, diets, and so on with each system as we move through the content. You will also consider cultural and religious concerns when caring for the client experiencing threats or deprivations.

Aside from being a test preparation book, this book is also useful if you are brushing up on your nursing knowledge. It is an excellent quick reference for the licensed nurse.
Contact the Authors

The authors of this text are interested in you and want you to pass on the first attempt. If, after reviewing with this text, you would like to contact the authors, you can do so at Rinehart and Associates, PO Box 124, Booneville, MS 38829 or by visiting our website at www.nclexreview.net.

Self-Assessment

Before you take the exam, you might have some concerns, such as

- Am I required to answer all 265 questions to pass?
  No. If you run out of time, the computer looks at the last portion of the exam and determines whether you are consistently above or below the pass point.

- What score do I have to make to pass the NCLEX-RN® Exam?
  There is not a set score. When you were in nursing school, you might have been required to score 75% or 80% to pass and progress onto the next level. The licensure exam is not scored in percentages. The computer is looking for consistency above or below the pass point. When the candidate shows this consistency, the computer stops asking questions.

- How do they develop the test plan?
  Every three years a survey is sent out to 4,000 newly licensed nurses. These nurses are asked questions based on the “Activity Statement” for nursing practice. Based on the results of the survey, the test plan is set by the National Council and members of the Licensure Committee. These members are appointed from representative states.

- What types of questions will I be asked?
  The majority of questions are multiple-choice. A small number of the questions may be alternative items. These items are identify picture, put on ear phones and identify sound such as breath sounds, identify grafts, fill-in-the-blanks, identify-a-diagram, place-in-sequence, or check-all-that-apply questions. Some examples of alternative items are:
    - Figure the 8-hour intake and output.
    - Identify the area where the mitral valve is heard the loudest.
    - Place in sequence the tasks you would use in the skill of washing your hands.
    - Work the math problem.
    - Check all that apply to the care of the client after a cardiac catheterization.
Will I have a calculator for math problems?
Yes, a drop-down calculator is provided.

Will I have something to write on in the testing area?
Yes, a dry erase board or paper will be provided. Don’t worry about the test givers thinking that you are cheating. They clean and secure the area after each candidate.

What if I get sick and cannot take my exam?
You have a period of time allowed during which you can cancel your appointment and reschedule. If, however, you do not contact the Pearson VUE group in that allotted time and do not attend to take the exam, you forfeit your money and have to reapply.

Can I carry a purse or bag into the testing center?
No, there will be lockers for your use in the testing center. (Also, dress warmly because the area is usually cool.) Any suspicious behavior can cause you to forfeit the opportunity to complete your test so be sure to leave any paper or notes in your car.

Can I take breaks?
Yes, there are optional breaks throughout the test.

If I should fail, when could I retest?
The required time to wait before you can rewrite is 45 days in most states; however, some states require that you wait 90 days. Should you be unsuccessful, you should contact the state where you want to obtain licensure for its required retest time.

Testing Your Exam Readiness
First and foremost, you obviously must have completed or be very close to completing your RN classes at the college level. The better you did in your college work, the better your chances are of doing well on this exam. However, there are no guarantees on the NCLEX-RN® exam, so you should prepare specifically for this exam using your college class work as a foundation.

Whether you attend a formal review seminar or use written material such as this book, or a combination of both, preparation is essential. Costing as much as $400 a try—pass or fail—you want to do everything you can to pass on your first attempt. Spend time each day studying and taking exam questions. The more questions you take, the more prepared you will be. I recommend that you score at least 90% on our practice questions consistently before you attempt to take the exam. With these facts in mind, let’s get ready to take the NCLEX-RN® exam. Good luck!
# Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Respiratory System

## Terms you’ll need to understand

- Acute respiratory failure
- Apnea
- Asthma
- Atelectasis
- Bronchitis
- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)
- Cor pulmonale
- Cyanosis
- Dyspnea
- Emphysema
- Empyema
- Hemoptysis
- Hypoxemia
- Hypoxia
- Pleural effusion
- Pleurisy
- Pneumonia
- Pulmonary embolus
- Tachypnea

## Nursing skills you’ll need to master

- Assessing breath sounds
- Providing tracheostomy care
- Collecting sputum
- Teaching proper use of an inhaler (MDI and DPI)
- Performing chest physiotherapy
- Assisting with thoracentesis
- Obtaining a throat culture
- Performing venipuncture
- Administering medication
- Managing chest drainage system
- Maintaining oxygen therapy
- Maintaining assisted ventilation
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) exists when prolonged disease or injury has made the lungs less capable of meeting the body’s oxygen needs. Examples of COPD include chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma.

Chronic Bronchitis

Chronic bronchitis, an inflammation of the bronchi and bronchioles, is caused by continuous exposure to infection and non-infectious irritants, such as cigarette smoke. The condition is most common in those ages 40 to 55. Chronic bronchitis may be reversed with the removal of noxious irritants, although it is often complicated by chronic lung infections. These infections, which are characterized by a productive cough and dyspnea, can progress to right-sided heart failure and pulmonary hypertension. Chronic bronchitis and emphysema have similar symptoms that require similar interventions.

Emphysema

Emphysema is the irreversible overdistention of the airspaces of the lungs, which results in destruction of the alveolar walls. Clients with emphysema are classified as pink puffers or blue bloaters. Pink puffers may complain of exertional dyspnea without cyanosis. Blue bloaters develop chronic hypoxia, cyanosis, polycythemia, cor pulmonale, pulmonary edema, and eventually respiratory failure.

Physical assessment reveals the presence of a barrel chest, use of accessory muscles, coughing with the production of thick mucoid sputum, prolonged expiratory phase with grunting respirations, peripheral cyanosis, and digital clubbing.

In identifying emphysema, a chest x-ray reveals hyperinflation of the lungs with flattened diaphragm. Pulmonary studies show that the residual volume is increased while vital capacity is decreased. Arterial blood gases reveal hypoxemia.

Many symptoms of chronic bronchitis and emphysema are the same; therefore, medications for the client with chronic bronchitis and emphysema include bronchodilators, steroids, antibiotics, and expectorants. Oxygen should be administered via nasal cannula at 2–3 liters/minute. Close attention should be given to correcting acid-base imbalances, meeting the client’s nutritional needs, avoidance of respiratory irritants, prevention of respiratory infections, providing oral hygiene, and client teaching regarding medications.
Asthma

Asthma is the most common respiratory condition of childhood. Intrinsic (nonallergenic) asthma is precipitated by exposure to cold temperatures or infection. Extrinsic (allergenic or atopic) asthma is often associated with childhood eczema. Both asthma and eczema are triggered by allergies to certain foods or food additives. Introducing new foods to the infant one at a time helps decrease the development of these allergic responses. Easily digested, hypoallergenic foods and juices should be introduced first, including rice cereal and apple juice, which may be given at six months of age. Cow’s milk should not be given to the infant before one year of age. Symptoms of asthma include expiratory wheeze; shortness of breath; and a dry, hacking cough, which eventually produces thick, white, tenacious sputum. In some instances an attack may progress to status asthmaticus, leading to respiratory collapse and death.

Management of the client with asthma includes maintenance therapy with mast cell stabilizers and leukotriene modifiers. Treatment of acute asthmatic attacks includes the administration of oral or inhaled short-term or long-term B2 agonist and anti-inflammatories as well as supplemental oxygen. Methylxanthines, such as aminophylline, are rarely used for the treatment of asthma. These drugs, which can cause tachycardia and dysrhythmias, are administered as a last resort. Antibiotics are frequently ordered when a respiratory infection is present.

Acute Respiratory Infections

Acute respiratory infections, such as pneumonia, are among the most common causes of death from infectious diseases in the United States. Pneumonia is the fifth major cause of death in persons over age 65.
Pneumonia

Pneumonia is an inflammation of the parenchyma of the lungs. Causative organisms include bacteria, viruses, and fungi. Some of these organisms are listed here:

- Pneumococcus
- Group A beta hemolytic streptococcus
- Staphylococcus
- Pseudomonas
- Influenza types A and B
- Cytomegalovirus
- Aspergillus fungiatus
- Pneumocystis carinii

Presenting symptoms depend on the causative organism. The client with viral pneumonia tends to have milder symptoms, whereas the client with bacterial pneumonia might have chills and fever as high as 103°. Clients with cytomegalovirus, pneumocystis carinii, or aspergillus will be acutely ill. General symptoms of pneumonia include

- Hypoxia
- Tachypnea
- Tachycardia
- Chest pain
- Malaise
- Fever
- Confusion (especially in the elderly client)

Care of the client with pneumonia depends on the causative organism. The management of bacterial pneumonias includes antibiotics, antitussives, antipyretics, and oxygen. Antibiotics that may be ordered include penicillin G, tetracycline, garamycin, and erythromycin. Viral pneumonias do not respond to antimicrobial therapy, but are treated with antiviral medication such as Symmetrel (amantadine). Fungal pneumonias are treated with antifungal medication such as Nizoral (ketoconozole). Additional therapies for the client with pneumonia include providing for fluid and nutritional needs, obtaining frequent vital signs, and providing oral hygiene. Supplemental oxygen and chest percussion and drainage should be performed as ordered by the physician.
Pleurisy

Pleurisy, an inflammation of the pleural sac, can be associated with upper respiratory infection, pulmonary embolus, thoracotomy, chest trauma, or cancer. Symptoms include:

- Sharp pain on inspiration
- Chills
- Fever
- Cough
- Dyspnea

Chest x-ray reveals the presence of air or fluid in the pleural sac. Management of the client with pleurisy includes the administration of analgesics, antitussives, antibiotics, and oxygen therapy. The presence of pleural effusion can require the client to have a thoracentesis. It is the nurse's responsibility to position the client for the procedure and to monitor for signs of complications related to the procedure. The nurse should assess the client’s vital signs, particularly changes in respirations and blood pressure, which can reflect impending shock from fluid loss or bleeding. The nurse should also observe the client for signs of a pneumothorax.

Nursing Skill: Positioning the client for a thoracentesis

- Sitting on the edge of the bed with feet supported and with the head and arms resting on a padded over bed table
- Sitting astride a chair with the arms and head resting on the back of the chair
- Lying on the unaffected side with the head of the bed elevated 30 to 45 degrees (for clients unable to sit upright)
Tuberculosis

*Tuberculosis* (TB) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by the mycobacterium tuberculosis. It is transmitted by droplets from the respiratory tract. Airborne precautions, as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), should be used when caring for the client with tuberculosis.

**NOTE**

Standard precautions and transmission-based precautions are provided in Appendix A, “Things You Forgot,” which is on the CD.

Diagnosis includes the administration of the Mantoux skin test, sometimes referred to as the Purified Protein Derivative (PPD), which is read in 48–72 hours. The presence of a positive Mantoux test indicates exposure to TB but not active infection. A chest x-ray should be ordered for those with a prior positive skin test. A definite diagnosis of TB is made if the sputum specimen is positive for the tubercle bacillus. Factors that can cause a false positive TB skin test include nontuberculous mycobacterium and inoculation with BCG vaccine. Factors that can cause a false negative TB skin test include anergy (a weakened immune system), recent TB infection, age, vaccination with live viruses, overwhelming TB, and poor testing technique. Management of the client with TB includes the use of ultraviolet light therapy and the administration of antimycobacterial drugs. Medication regimens can consist of several drugs including Myambutol (ethambutol), INH (isoniazid), Rifadin (rifampin), and PZA (pyrazinamide). The use of multiple drug therapy has reduced treatment time from two years to as little as six months; however, drug resistant forms may require longer treatment periods. Clients are no longer considered infectious after three negative sputum samples have been obtained. Surgical management may include a wedge resection or lobectomy.

Influenza

*Influenza* is an acute highly contagious infection that primarily affects the upper respiratory tract. Symptoms of influenza include the following:

- Chills and fever greater than 102° F.
- Sore throat and laryngitis
- Runny nose
- Muscle aches and headache

Complications of influenza include pneumonia, exacerbations of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), and myositis. More serious complications include pericarditis
Acute Respiratory Failure

Acute Respiratory Failure can be defined as the lungs’ failure to meet the body’s oxygen requirements. One acute respiratory condition you need to be familiar with is acute respiratory distress syndrome, commonly known as ARDS.

Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome

Acute respiratory distress syndrome, commonly known as ARDS or noncardiogenic pulmonary edema, occurs mostly in otherwise healthy persons. ARDS can be the result of anaphylaxis, aspiration, pulmonary emboli, inhalation burn injury, or complications from abdominal or thoracic surgery. ARDS may be diagnosed by a chest x-ray that will reveal emphysematous changes and infiltrates that give the lungs a characteristic appearance described as ground glass. Assessment of the client with ARDS reveals

- Hypoxia
- Sternal and costal retractions
- Presence of rales or rhonchi
- Diminished breath sounds
- Refractory hypoxemia

Care of the client with ARDS involves

- Use of assisted ventilation
- Monitoring of arterial blood gases
Attention to nutritional needs

- Frequent change in position, placement in high Fowler’s position, prone position, or use of specialized beds to minimize consolidation of infiltrates in large airways

- Investigational therapies, including the use of vitamins C and E, aspirin, interleukin, and surfactant replacements

**Pulmonary Embolus**

*Pulmonary embolus* refers to the obstruction of the pulmonary artery or one of its branches by a clot or some other undissolved matter, such as fat or a gaseous substance. Clots can originate anywhere in the body but are most likely to migrate from a vein deep in the legs, pelvis, kidney, or arms. *Fat emboli* are associated with fractures of the long bones, particularly the femur. *Air emboli*, which are less common, can occur during the insertion or removal of a central line. Common risk factors for the development of pulmonary embolus include immobilization, fractures, trauma, cigarette smoking, use of oral contraceptives, and history of clot formation.

**TIP**

Remember the three Fs associated with fat emboli:
- Fat
- Femur
- Football player

Fat emboli are associated with fracture of long bones (such as a fractured femur); most fractured femurs occur in young men 18–25, the age of most football players.

Symptoms of a pulmonary embolus depend on the size and location of the clot or undissolved matter. Symptoms include
- Chest pain
- Dyspnea
- Syncope
- Hemoptysis
- Tachycardia
- Hypotension
- Sense of apprehension
Emerging Infections

- Petechiae over the chest and axilla
- Distended neck veins

Diagnostic tests to confirm the presence of pulmonary embolus include chest x-ray, pulmonary angiography, lung scan, and ECG to rule out myocardial infarction. Management of the client with a pulmonary embolus includes
  - Placing the client in high Fowler’s position
  - Administering oxygen via mask
  - Giving medication for chest pain
  - Using thrombolytics/anticoagulants

Antibiotics are indicated for those with septic emboli. Surgical management using umbrella-type filters is indicated for those who cannot take anticoagulants as well as for the client who has recurrent emboli while taking anticoagulants. Clients receiving anticoagulant therapy should be observed for signs of bleeding. PT, INR, and PTT are three tests used to track the client's clotting time. You can refer to Chapter 13, “Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Cardiovascular System,” for a more complete discussion of these tests.

**CAUTION**

Streptokinase is made from beta strep; therefore, clients with a history of strep infections may respond poorly to anticoagulant therapy with streptokinase because they might have formed antibodies.

Streptokinase is not clot specific; therefore, the client may develop a tendency to bleed from incision or injection sites.

**Emerging Infections**

The CDC (1994) defines emerging infections as diseases of infectious origin with human incidences occurring within the past two decades. Emerging illnesses are likely to increase in incidence in the near future. Two respiratory conditions listed as emerging infections are Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Legionnaire’s disease.

**Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome**

*Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)* is caused by a coronavirus. Symptoms include
  - Fever
  - Dry cough
In identifying SARS, a chest x-ray reveals “ground glass” infiltrates with bilateral consolidation occurring sometimes within 24–48 hours, thus suggesting the rapid development of acute respiratory failure. SARS has occurred with greater frequency in Asia, although cases have also been confirmed in Canada, Switzerland, and Germany; therefore, a history of recent travel is significant.

The SARS virus can be found in nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal secretions, blood, and stool. Diagnostic tests for SARS include:

- Sputum cultures for Influenza A, B, and RSV
- Serum tests to detect antibodies IgM and IgG
- Reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction tests performed to detect RNA of SARS CoV

Two tests on two different specimens must be positive to confirm the diagnosis. Test results are considered negative if no SARS CoV antibodies are found 28 days after the onset of symptoms.

The client suspected of having SARS should be cared for using airborne and contact precautions. Management includes the use of antibiotics to treat secondary or atypical pneumonia. Antivirals or retrovirals can be used to inhibit replication. Respiratory support, closed system for suctioning, and the use of surfactant replacement may be ordered.

**Legionnaire’s Disease**

*Legionnaire’s disease* is caused by gram negative bacteria found in both natural and manmade water sources. Bacterial growth is greater in stored water maintained at temperatures ranging from 77° to 107° F. Risk factors include:

- Immunosuppression
- Diabetes
- Pulmonary disease

Legionnaire’s involves the lungs and other organs. The symptoms include:

- Productive cough
- Dyspnea
Chest pain
Diarrhea
Fever

Diagnostic tests include a urinary antigen test that remains positive after initial antibiotic therapy. Management includes the use of antibiotics, oxygen, provision of nutrition, and hydration. The drug of choice for treating Legionnaire’s disease is Zithromax (azithromycin). Transmission-based precautions are not necessary when caring for the client with Legionnaire’s disease because there is no indication of human-to-human transmission.

Diagnostic Tests for Review

These are simply some of the tests that are useful in diagnosing pulmonary disorders. You should review the normal lab values as well as any special preparations for the client undergoing those tests. In addition, think about the care given to clients after the procedures have been completed. For instance, the client who has undergone a bronchoscopy will have a depressed gag reflex, which increases the chance of aspiration. No food or fluid should be given until the gag reflex returns. The tests for diagnosing pulmonary disorders are as follows:

- CBC
- Chest x-ray
- Pulmonary function tests
- Lung scan
- Bronchoscopy

Pharmacology Categories for Review

The client with a respiratory disorder should be managed with several categories of medications. The client with an acute respiratory condition, such as bacterial pneumonia, is given an antibiotic to fight the infection, antipyretic medication for fever and body aches, and an antitussive for relief of cough. The client with a chronic respiratory condition may receive many of the same medications, with the addition of a steroid or bronchodilator. The following list contains the most commonly prescribed categories of medications used to treat clients with respiratory conditions:

- Antibiotics
- Antivirals
Chapter 3: Caring for the Client with Disorders of the Respiratory System

- Antituberculars
- Antitussives
- Antipyretics
- Bronchodilators
- Expectorants
- Leukotriene modifiers
- Mast-cell stabilizers
- Steroids
Exam Prep Questions

1. When performing an assessment on the client with emphysema, the nurse finds that the client has a barrel chest. The alteration in the client’s chest is due to:
   - A. Collapse of distal alveoli
   - B. Hyperinflation of the lungs
   - C. Long-term chronic hypoxia
   - D. Use of accessory muscles

2. The nurse notes that a client with COPD demonstrates more dyspnea in certain positions. Which position is most likely to alleviate the client’s dyspnea?
   - A. Lying supine with a single pillow
   - B. Standing or sitting upright
   - C. Side lying with the head elevated
   - D. Lying with head slightly lowered

3. When reviewing the chart of a client with long standing lung disease, the nurse should pay close attention to the results of which pulmonary function test?
   - A. Residual volume
   - B. Total lung capacity
   - C. FEV1/FVC ratio
   - D. Functional residual capacity

4. The physician has ordered O₂ at 3 liters/minute via nasal cannula. O₂ amounts greater than 3 liters / minute are contraindicated in the client with COPD because:
   - A. Higher concentrations result in severe headache.
   - B. Hypercapnic drive is necessary for breathing.
   - C. Higher levels will be required later to raise the pO₂.
   - D. Hypoxic drive is needed for breathing.
5. The client taking a bronchodilator tells the nurse that he is going to begin a smoking cessation program when he is discharged. The nurse should tell the client to notify the doctor if his smoking pattern changes because he will:
   - A. Need his medication dosage adjusted
   - B. Require an increase in antitussive medication
   - C. No longer need annual influenza immunization
   - D. Not derive as much benefit from inhaler use

6. Lab results indicate that the client's serum aminophylline level is 17mcg/mL. The nurse recognizes that the aminophylline level is:
   - A. Within therapeutic range
   - B. Too high and should be reported
   - C. Questionable and should be repeated
   - D. Too low to be therapeutic

7. The morning weight for a client with emphysema indicates that the client has gained 5 pounds in less than a week, even though his oral intake has been modest. The client's weight gain may reflect which associated complication of COPD?
   - A. Polycythemia
   - B. Cor pulmonale
   - C. Left ventricular failure
   - D. Compensated acidosis

8. The nurse is teaching the client the appropriate way to use a metered dose inhaler. Which action indicates the client needs additional teaching?
   - A. The client takes a deep breath while depressing the inhaler.
   - B. The client places the inhaler two fingers from the mouth.
   - C. The client waits 15 seconds before using the inhaler a second time.
   - D. The client exhales slowly using purse lipped breathing.
9. The client with COPD may lose weight despite having adequate caloric intake. When counseling the client in ways to maintain an optimal weight, the nurse should tell the client to:

- A. Continue the same caloric intake and increase the amount of fat intake
- B. Increase his activity level to stimulate his appetite
- C. Increase the amount of complex carbohydrates and decrease the amount of fat intake
- D. Decrease the amount of complex carbohydrates while increasing calories, protein, vitamins, and minerals

10. The client has been receiving garamycin 65 mg IVPB every 8 hours for the past 6 days. Which lab result indicates an adverse reaction to the medication?

- A. WBC 7500
- B. Serum glucose 92
- C. Protein 3.5
- D. Serum creatinine 2.0

**Answer Rationales**

1. Answer B is correct. Clients with emphysema develop a barrel chest due to the trapping of air in the lungs, causing them to hyperinflate. Answers C and D are common in those with emphysema but do not cause the chest to become barrel shaped. Answer A does not occur in emphysema.

2. Answer B is correct. The client with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease has increased difficulty breathing when lying down. His respiratory effort is improved by standing or sitting upright or by having the bed in high Fowler’s position. Answers A, C, and D do not alleviate the client’s dyspnea; therefore they are incorrect.

3. Answer C is correct. The FEV1/FVC ratio indicates disease progression. As COPD worsens, the ratio of FEV1 to FVC becomes smaller. Answers A and B reflect loss of elastic recoil due to narrowing and obstruction of the airway. Answer D is increased in clients with obstructive bronchitis.

4. Answer D is correct. In clients with COPD, respiratory effort is stimulated by hypoxemia. Answers A and C are incorrect because higher levels would rob the client of the drive to breathe. Answer B is an incorrect statement.

5. Answer A is correct. Changes in smoking patterns should be discussed with the physician because they have an impact on the amount of medication needed. Answer B is incorrect because clients with COPD are placed on expectorants, not antitussives. Answer C is incorrect because an annual influenza vaccine is recommended for all those with lung disease. Answer D is incorrect because benefits from inhaler use should be increased when the client stops smoking.
6. Answer A is correct. The therapeutic range for aminophylline is 10–20 mcg/ml. Answers B and D are incorrect. There are no indications that the results are questionable; therefore, repeating the test as offered by answer C is incorrect.

7. Answer B is correct. Cor pulmonale, or right sided heart failure, is a possible complication of emphysema. Answers A and D do not cause weight gain, so they're incorrect. Answer C would be reflected in pulmonary edema, so it's incorrect.

8. Answer C is correct. The client should wait 60 seconds before using the inhaler a second time. The client's wait time of 15 seconds indicates that the client needs further teaching. Answers A, B, and D indicate that the client understands the correct use of the inhaler.

9. Answer D. The client with COPD needs additional calories, protein, vitamins, and minerals. Answer A is incorrect because the client needs more calories but not more fat. Answer B is not feasible, will increase the O₂ demands, and will result in further weight loss. Answer C leads to excess acid production and an increased respiratory workload.

10. Answer D is correct. The serum creatinine is elevated, indicating renal impairment. Answers A, B, and C are within normal limits.

Suggested Readings and Resources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov.
Index

A

ABCD assessment, emergency nursing, 366
  airway, 367
  breathing, 367-368
  circulation, 368-369
  deficits, 369
abdominal injuries, 371-372
abducens nerve, 258
abortions, 304-305
abruptio placenta, 307
absence seizures, 252
abstinence (contraception), 319
ACE (angiotensin-converting enzyme) inhibitors, 22-23
acetaminophen overdose, 357
acid/base balance, 90
  influence of aging, 98-99
  metabolic acidosis, 91-93
  metabolic alkalosis, 95-96
  normal electrolyte values, 97-98
  nursing skills, 89
  pH regulation, 91
  practice exam questions, 100-102
  resources, 103, 599
  respiratory acidosis, 93-94
  respiratory alkalosis, 96-97
  terminology, 89
acidosis
  metabolic, 91-93
  respiratory, 93-94
acids, 90
acquired heart disorders, 340
acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome (AIDS), 310
acrocyanosis, 317
acromegaly, 211
ACTH (adrenocorticoid stimulating hormone), 218
active transport, 90
acute disorders
  AOM (acute otitis media), 345
  ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51-52
  ARS (acute radiation syndrome), 378
diarrheal disease, 350
epiglottis, 346-348
pneumonia, 48-49
PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), 275
ADHD (attention deficit hyperactive disorder), 291
glaucoma, 124
PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), 275
subdural hematomas, 253
subdural hematomas, 254

adolescents
  emotional/behavioral disorders
    ADHD, 291
    autistic disorder, 292
    conduct disorder, 294
    eating disorders, 293
    oppositional defiant disorder, 291
growth and development, 333
adrenal gland disorders, 218-219
adrenocortical hypersecretion, 219
adrenocortical insufficiency, 218-219
adrenocorticoid stimulating hormone (ACTH), 218
adrenocorticotropic hormone, 210
adult immunization schedule, 594
adverse effects
  angiotensin receptor blockers, 34
  antihypertensives, 23
  anti-infectives, 25
  anticoagulants, 37
  anticonvulsants, 27
  antiemetics, 28
  antihistamines, 31
  beta adrenergic blockers, 24
  chemotherapy, 145-146
  cholesterol-lowering agents, 32
  glucocorticoids, 30
  histamine 2 antagonists, 35
  magnesium sulfate, 306
  proton pump inhibitors, 36
advocacy, nursing responsibilities, 414
affect, 282
aging, influence on fluid and electrolyte balance, 98-99
agoraphobia, 277
AHA (American Heart Association), 592
AIDS (acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome), 310
air emboli, 52
airborne precautions, 50, 591
airway assessment, 367
Alaskan Natives, cultural influences, 390-391
alcoholism, 286-287
alertness (deficit assessment), 369
alkalosis
  metabolic, 95-96
  respiratory, 96-97
alkylating agents (chemotherapy), 145
allergic asthma, 47
allogenic transplant (bone marrow), 148
allografts, 115
alpha-fetoprotein screening, 301-302
Alzheimer’s disease, 266-267
ambivalence, 282
ambulation of client, 412
American Association of Poison Control Centers, 373
American Cancer Society
  cancer prevention recommendations, 143
  cancer warning signs, 140
American Heart Association (AHA), 592
aminoglycosides, 25-26
aminophylline administration, 47
amniocentesis, 302
amniotic fluid volume, 590
amniotic membrane, 115
amputations, 199-200
amulets, 390
analgesics, 20
anastomosis, 336
anemia
  aplastic, 79
  Cooley’s, 81
  iron deficiency, 80-81
  pernicious, 78-79
  sickle cell, 80
aneurysms, 241
angiotensin receptor blockers, 33-34
angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors, 22-23
anions, 90
anorexia nervosa, 293
Ansler grid, 129
Antabuse (disulfiram), 287
antacids, 19
anthrax, 376
anti-infectives, 19, 25-26
antianemias, 20
antianxiety medications, 26-27
antibiotics, administration, 47
anticholinergics, 20
anticoagulants, 19, 37-38, 590
anticonvulsants, 20, 26-27
antidiarrheals, 19
antidiuretic hormone (ADH), 211
antidotes
  Flumazenil, 94
  Narcan, 94
  protamine sulfate, 37
  sodium warfarin, 590
antiemetics, 28-29
antihistamines, 19
antihypertensives, 19
antipsychotic medications, 28-29, 284
antipyretics, 19
antisocial personality disorder, 280
antistreptolysin (ASO) titer, 62
antistreptolysin-0 (ASLO) titer, 352
antituberculars, 129
antitumor antibiotics (chemotherapy), 145
antivenin, 374
antivirals, 31-32
anxiety-related disorders, 274
  DID (dissociative identity disorder), 275
  GAD (generalized anxiety disorder), 274
anxiety-related disorders

- OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder), 277-278
- panic disorder, 276
- phobic disorders, 277
- PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), 275
- somatoform disorder, 276

AOM (acute otitis media), 345
APGAR scoring, 317-318
aplastic anemia, 79
apothecary system of measurement, 605
Arab-Americans, cultural influences, 393-394
ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51-52
ARS (acute radiation syndrome), 378
artificial skin, burn care, 115
Asian-Americans, cultural influences, 391-393
ASLO (antistreptolysin-O) titer, 352
ASO (antistreptolysin) titer, 62
Asperger's syndrome, 292
aspirin overdose, 357
assault, 411
assessment
  - ABCD assessment, 366
    - airway, 367
    - breathing, 367-368
    - circulation, 368-369
    - deficits, 369
  - abdominal injuries, 371
  - ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51
  - cultural influences, 386-387
  - emphysema, 46
  - fetal heart tones, 303
  - neurological system, 258
    - cranial nerves, 258-259
    - Glasgow coma scale, 259-260
    - increased intracranial pressure, 260
  - skin lesions, 142
assistive devices, musculoskeletal issues, 201
  - canes, 202
  - crutches, 201
  - walkers, 202-203
association, 282
asthma, 47
astigmatism, 127
atopic asthma, 47
atrial septal defect, 341
atrophic macular degeneration, 126
attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), 291
aura, 251
autistic disorder, 282, 292
autologous transplant (bone marrow), 148
automaticisms, 252
autonomic hyperreflexia, 264
avoidant personality disorder, 281

background diabetic retinopathy, 125
balanced suspension traction, 189
Ballance's sign, 372
ballottement, 300
barbiturate withdrawal, 289
barium enema, 165
Barrett's esophagus, 167
barrier methods (contraception), 320
bases, 90
basilar skull fractures, 253
bathing clients, 412
battery, 411
Battle's sign, 254
behavioral disorders, 291
  - ADHD, 291
  - autistic disorder, 292
  - conduct disorder, 291
eating disorders, 293
oppositional defiant disorder, 291
beneficial beliefs, 386
benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), 68-69
benzodiazepines, 26-27
beta adrenergic blockers, 23-24
biliary atresia, 337
bilirubin, 318
Bill of Rights, 408
biologic dressings (burn care), 115
biological agents (bioterrorism), 375-377
biological response modifiers (chemotherapy), 145
biosynthetic dressings (burn care), 115
bioterrorism, 375
chemical/biological agents, 375-377
nuclear warfare, 378
triage categories for victims, 379
bipolar disorders, 284
acute mania, 284-285
major depression, 285-286
birth canal (passageway), 311
bites, 374-375
bivalve treatment, 192
bladder cancer, 69-70, 141
Blalock-Taussig procedure, 343
blood pressure, 589
blood urea nitrogen (BUN), 62
blue bloaters, 46
blue spells, 342
blunt injuries, 371
boards of nursing, 406
body fluids, 591
bone marrow transplantation, 147-149
borderline personality disorder, 280
botulism, 179, 377
BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 68-69
bradycardia, 314
brain injuries, 253-254
BRAT diet, 350
breast cancer, 141
breathing assessment, 367-368
Brethine (terbutaline sulfate), 310
bromocriptine mesylate (Parlodel), 213
bronchiolitis, 348-349
bronchitis, 46
bronchodilators, 19
Buddhism, 392, 396
Buerger’s disease, 240
buffer systems, 91
bulimia nervosa, 293
BUN (blood urea nitrogen), 62
burn care
classifications, 106-108
diagnostic tests, 116
incidence of injury, 106
medications, 116
nursing care, 109
dressings, 114-115
emergent phase, 110-111
intermediate phase, 113-114
rehabilitative phase, 115
nursing skills, 105-106
practice exam questions, 117-120
resources, 120, 599
source of injury, 106
TBSA measurement, 108-109
terminology, 105

C

C spine immobilization, 367
calcium, 97
calculations, 605
apothecary system of measurement, 605
household system of measurement, 605-606
metric measurements, 606
practice, 606
cancer

bladder, 69-70
categories, 140-141
Hodgkin’s lymphoma, 149-150
management, 143
  bone marrow transplantation, 147-149
  chemotherapy, 145-146
  PSCT (peripheral stem cell transplantation), 147-149
  radiation therapy, 144-145
  TPN (total parenteral nutrition), 146-147
nursing skills, 139
pediatric care, 356-357
practice exam questions, 154-157
prevention, 143
resources, 157
risk factors, 141-142
terminology, 139
warning signs, 140

cares

anemia, 78
metabolic acidosis, 91-92
metabolic alkalosis, 95
pneumonia, 48
respiratory acidosis, 93
CDCA (chenodeoxycholic acid), 177
CEA (carcinogenic embryonic acid), 151
Celiac disease, 351
CellCept (mycophenolate), 65
central nervous system (CNS), 239, 250
central venous pressure (CVP), 114
central venous pressure monitoring (CVPM), 412
cephalohematoma, 318
cerebral perfusion pressure (CPP), 260
cerebrovascular accidents (strokes), 262-263
cervical cancer, 141
cervical mucus method (contraception), 319
Chadwick’s sign, 300
CHD (congenital heart defects), 340
  COA (coarctation of the aorta), 342
  TOF (Tetralogy of Fallot), 342-343
chelation therapy, 358
chemical agents (bioterrorism), 375-377
chemical injuries, 106
Chemical Institute Withdrawal Assessment-Alcohol (CIWA-Ar), 287
chemical names (drugs), 22
chemotherapy, 145-146
  agents, 152
  bladder cancer, 70
chenodeoxycholic acid (CDCA), 177
chest injuries, 371
CHF (congestive heart failure), 341
childbirth
  complications
    abruptio placenta, 307
cord prolapse, 307
complex partial seizures

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@quepublishing.com
diagnostic tests

dietary considerations, 395-396
Hispanics/Latinos, 388-390
Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, 390-391
nursing skills, 386
practice exam questions, 400-403
religious beliefs, 396-398
resources, 403, 604
terminology, 385
cultured skin, 115
cupping practice, 392
Cushing’s disease, 219
CVP (central venous pressure), 114
cyanides, 376
cyanotic congenital heart disease, 341
cyclosporine (Neoral), 65
cystic fibrosis, 349
cytoprotectants (chemotherapy), 145
d
debridement, 114
decelerations (fetal monitoring), 314
decerebrate posture, 255
decorticate posture, 256
deep partial thickness burns, 107
defense mechanisms, 592-593
deficits assessment, 369
degenerative neurological disorders, 266-267
delayed PTSD, 275
denial, 592
dependent personality disorder, 281
depressed skull fractures, 254
depression, 285-286
developmental hip dysplasia (DHD), 338
dextrostix, 222-223
DHD (developmental hip dysplasia), 338
DI (Diabetes Insipidus), 211-212
Diabetes Insipidus (DI), 211-212
diabetes mellitus, 219-222, 305
diabetic retinopathy, 125
Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR), 274
diagnostic tests
  Addison’s disease, 218
  burn injuries, 116
  cancer, 151-152
  Celiac disease, 351
  Crohn’s disease, 163
cirrhosis, 173
Clostridium difficile, 179
cystic fibrosis, 349
diabetes mellitus, 220-221
diverticulitis, 165
emergency nursing, 379
endocrine system disorders, 223
galactosemia, 344
gallbladder disease, 177
gastrointestinal system disorders, 180
genitourinary system disorders
  acute glomerulonephritis, 62
  bladder cancer, 69
  BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 68
  kidney stones, 66
  prostatitis, 68
GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), 166
hematological system disorders, 83
Hepatitis A, 168
Hepatitis B, 169
Hepatitis C, 170
Hepatitis D, 171
Hepatitis E, 171
Hirschsprung disease, 337
Hodgkin’s lymphoma, 150
hyperthyrodis, 215
iron poisoning, 359
KD (Kawasaki’s disease), 353
maternal care, 320-321
musculoskeletal system disorders, 203

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@quepublishing.com
neurological system disorders, 267
pancreatitis, 175
parathyroid disorders, 215
PKU (Phenylketonuria), 343
preeclampsia, 306
prenatal care, 302-303
psychiatric system disorders, 293
RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 196
respiratory system disorders
  ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51
  emphysema, 46
  Legionnaire’s disease, 55
  pulmonary embolus, 53
  SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), 54
  TB (tuberculosis), 50
sensory system disorders, 132
strokes, 262
ulcerative colitis, 164
ulcers, 161
diagnosis tests
  diffusion, 90
digoxin, 589
dilantin, 589
dilation (cervix), 313
disaster victims, 379
disease transmission, 591
disequilibrium syndrome, 64
dislocation of the hip, 338
disorders
cardiac system
  congenital anomalies, 340-343
  nursing skills, 229-230
  pediatric care, 351-354
  resources, 602
  terminology, 229
endocrine system
  adrenal gland disorders, 218-219
  anatomy, 210
  diabetes mellitus, 219-222
diagnostic tests, 223
  parathyroid disorders, 215-217
  pharmacology, 223
  pituitary disorders, 210-213
practice exam questions, 224-227
resources, 227, 601
terminology, 209
thyroid disorders, 213-215
gastrointestinal system (GI)
  cholecystitis, 176-178
  cholelithiasis, 176-178
  Clostridium difficile, 178-179
diagnostic tests, 180
diverticulitis, 165-166
food-borne illnesses, 179
GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), 166-167
inflammatory bowel disorders, 163-165
cultural influences, 395-396
guidelines, 593-594

disease modifications
  Celiac disease, 351
cystic fibrosis, 349
gallbladder disease, 177
gastroenteritis, 350
gout, 195
osteoporosis, 194
PKU (Phenylketonuria), 344
pregnancy, 301
ulcers, 161

dialysate, 64
dialysis, 64-65
dialyzer, 64
diastolic pressure, 230
DIC (disseminated intravascular coagulation), 307
DID (dissociative identity disorder), 275
dietary issues
  cultural influences, 395-396
guidelines, 593-594

disease modifications
  Celiac disease, 351
cystic fibrosis, 349
gallbladder disease, 177
gastroenteritis, 350
gout, 195
osteoporosis, 194
PKU (Phenylketonuria), 344
pregnancy, 301
ulcers, 161
liver-associated diseases, 167-172, 174-175
nursing skills, 159
pediatric care, 350-351
pharmacology, 180-181
practice exam questions, 182-184
resources, 600
terminology, 159
ulcers, 160-162
genitourinary system
  acute glomerulonephritis, 62-63
  bladder cancer, 69-70
  BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 68-69
  chronic glomerulonephritis, 63-64
  diagnostic tests, 70
  ESRD (end stage renal disease), 64-65
  medications, 70
  nephrotic syndrome, 65-66
  nursing skills, 61
  practice exam questions, 72-74
  prostatitis, 67-68
  resources, 75, 598
  terminology, 61
  urinary calculi, 66-67
  UTIs (urinary tract infections), 67
hematological system
  anemia, 78-81
  diagnostic tests, 83
  hemophilia, 81-82
  medications, 83
  nursing skills, 77
  polycythemia vera, 82
  practice exam questions, 85-86
  resources, 87, 598
  terminology, 77
metabolic, 343-344
musculoskeletal system
  assistive devices, 201-203
  congenital anomalies, 338-340
  diagnostic tests, 203
  fractures, 188-193
  gout, 195
  nursing skills, 187
  osteoporosis, 193-195
  pediatric care, 354-356
  pharmacology, 203-204
  practice exam questions, 205-208
  RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 195-197
  resources, 601
  surgical procedures, 197-200
  terminology, 187
neoplastic, 600
neurological system
  assessment, 258-260
  brain injuries, 253-254
  craniotomy care, 260-261
  degenerative disorders, 266-267
  diagnostic tests, 267
  Guillain-Barré, 265-266
  increased intracranial pressure, 255-257
  nursing skills, 249
  pharmacology, 267-268
  practice exam questions, 269-272
  resources, 272, 602
  SCIs (spinal cord injuries), 263-265
  seizures, 250-253
  strokes, 262-263
  terminology, 249
psychiatric system
  anxiety-related disorders, 274-278
  diagnostic tests, 293
  emotional/behavioral disorders, 291-293
  nursing skills, 273-274
  personality disorders, 278-281
  pharmacology, 294
  practice exam questions, 295-298
  psychotic disorders, 282-286
  resources, 603
  substance abuse, 286-290
  terminology, 273
disorders

respiratory system
  acute infections, 47-51
  acute respiratory failure, 51-53
  COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), 46-47
  diagnostic tests, 55
  emerging infections, 53-55
  medications, 55-56
  nursing skills, 45
  pediatric care, 344-349
  practice exam questions, 57-60
  resources, 60, 597
  terminology, 45

sensory system
  diagnostic tests, 132
  ear disorders, 129-132
  eye disorders, 122-129
  nursing skills, 121-122
  pharmacology, 133
  practice exam questions, 134-137
  resources, 137, 599
  terminology, 121
displacement, 593
disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC), 307
dissociative identity disorder (DID), 275
disulfiram (Antabuse), 287
diuretics, 19
diverticulitis, 165-166
documentation, forensic evidence, 372-373
dressings
  burn care, 114-115
  TPN (total parenteral nutrition), 146
droplet precautions, 592
drug levels, therapeutic, 589-590
drug names, 22
dry macular degeneration, 126
DSM-IV-TR (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders), 274
Duchenne muscular dystrophy, 355
dumping syndrome, 162
duodenal ulcers, 160
duration (labor contractions), 590
dysreflexia, 264
dystocia, 313

E

E. coli, 179
EA (esophageal atresia), 335
ear disorders, 129
  hearing loss, 132
  Meniere’s disease, 130-131
  otitis externa, 130
  otitis media, 130
  otosclerosis, 131
  presbycusis, 131
  traumatic injuries, 132
early decelerations (fetal monitoring), 314
eating disorders, 293
ECCE (extracapsular cataract extraction), 123
echinacea, 39
ECSWL (extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy), 67
education of patients
  cancer prevention, 143
  radiation therapy, 145
effacement (cervix), 313
elective abortions, 304
electrical injuries, 106
electrolyte balance, 90
  influence of aging, 98-99
  metabolic acidosis, 91-93
  metabolic alkalosis, 95-96
  normal electrolyte values, 97-98
  nursing skills, 89
  pH regulation, 91
  practice exam questions, 100-102
  resources, 103, 599
  respiratory acidosis, 93-94
respiratory alkalosis, 96-97
terminology, 89
**embolus, 52-53**

**emergency nursing**
- ABCD assessment, 366
  - airway, 367
  - breathing, 367-368
  - circulation, 368-369
  - deficits, 369
- bioterrorism, 375
  - chemical/biological agents, 375-377
  - nuclear warfare, 378
- triage categories for victims, 379
diagnostic tests, 379
medications, 380
nursing skills, 365
poisoning, 373-375
practice exam questions, 381-384
resources, 384
terminology, 365
trauma, 370
  - abdominal injuries, 371-372
  - chest injuries, 371
  - head injuries, 370-371
  - preservation of forensic evidence, 372-373
triage, 366

**emergent phase, burn care, 110-111**

**emerging infections**
- Legionnaire’s disease, 54-55
- SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), 53-54

**emotional disorders, 291**
- ADHD, 291
- autistic disorder, 292
- conduct disorder, 291
- eating disorders, 293
- oppositional defiant disorder, 291

**empacho, 389**

**emphysema, 46-47**

**end stage renal disease (ESRD), 64-65**

**endocrine system disorders**
- adrenal gland, 218-219
- anatomy, 210
- diabetes mellitus, 219-222
- diagnostic tests, 223
- parathyroid disorders, 215-217
- pharmacology, 223
- pituitary disorders, 210-213
- practice exam questions, 224-227
- resources, 227, 601
- terminology, 209
- thyroid disorders, 213-215

**endotracheal care, 413**

**engrafted bone marrow, 148**

**enteric-coated tablets, 20**

**envenomation, 374**

**epidural block, 316**

**epidural hematomas, 254**

**epiglottitis, 347-348**

**equivalents, 605-606**

**erythema marginatum, 352**

**erythroblastosis fetalis, 318**

**eschar, 114**

**esophageal atresia (EA), 335**

**esophageal cancer, 141**

**ESRD (end stage renal disease), 64-65**

**ESWL (extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy), 178**

**ethics, 409-410**

**evil eye, 389**

**Exam I (practice exam), 421-473**

**Exam II (practice exam), 475-526**

**exam prep questions**
- burn care, 117-120
- cancer, 154-157
- cultural influences, 400-403
- emergency nursing, 381-384
- endocrine system disorders, 224-227
fluid and electrolyte balance, 100-102
Gastrointestinal system disorders, 182-184
Genitourinary system disorders, 72-74
Hematological system disorders, 85-86
Legal issues, 417-420
Maternal/infant clients, 322-325
Musculoskeletal system disorders, 205-208
Neurological system disorders, 269-272
Pediatric clients, 360-362
Pharmacology, 41-43
Psychiatric system disorders, 295-298
Resources, 420
Respiratory system disorders, 57-60
Sensory system disorders, 134-137
Strategies, 13-15
Terminology, 405
Explanations (practice exams), 529-587
External bleeding, 368
External radiation (nuclear warfare), 378
Extracapsular cataract extraction (ECCE), 123
Extracellular fluid, 90
Extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy (ESWL), 67, 178
Extrinsic asthma, 47
Exudative macular degeneration, 126
Eye disorders, 122
Intraocular disorders, 122
Cataracts, 122-123
Glaucoma, 123-125
Pharmacology, 129
Refractive errors, 127-128
Retinal disorders, 125
Diabetic retinopathy, 125
Hypertensive retinopathy, 125
Macular degeneration, 126
Retinal detachment, 126-127
Traumatic injuries, 128
Visual tests, 129
F
Facial nerve, 258
Farsightedness (hyperopia), 127
Fasciotomy, 192
Fasting blood glucose, 220, 223
Fat emboli, 52
Felony, 407
Fetal bradycardia, 313
Fetal heart rate
  Assessment, 303
  Normal ranges, 590
Fetal lie, 313
Fetal monitoring, 314-316
Fetal tachycardia, 313
Feverfew, 38
Filtration, 90
First degree burns, 107
Flail chest, 371
Fluid and electrolyte balance, 90
  Influence of aging, 98-99
  Metabolic acidosis, 91-93
  Metabolic alkalosis, 95-96
  Normal electrolyte values, 97-98
  Nursing skills, 89
  pH regulation, 91
  Practice exam questions, 100-102
  Resources, 103
  Respiratory acidosis, 93-94
  Respiratory alkalosis, 96-97
  Terminology, 89
Flumazenil (Romazicon), 94
Focal seizures, 252
Folk medicine, 386
Follicle-stimulating hormone, 210
Food-borne illnesses, 179
Foreign bodies, eyes, 128
Forensic evidence preservation, 372-373
Forteo, 217
four-foot adjustable canes, 202
four-point gait (crutch-walking), 201
fractures, 188
  basilar skull, 253
  compartment syndrome, 191-192
  depressed skull fractures, 254
  hip replacement, 197-198
  nondepressed skull fractures, 254
  osteomyelitis, 192-193
  treatment, 188-189
    casts, 191
    traction, 189-191
fraud, 411
Fredet-Ramstedt procedure, 351
frequency (labor contractions), 590
fright sickness, 389
full thickness burns, 107

G
GAD (generalized anxiety disorder), 274
gait belt, 203
gaits, 201
galactosemia, 344
gallbladder disease, 176
garamycin, 49
Gardasil vaccine, 141
gastrectomy, 162
gastric ulcers, 161
gastroenteritis, 350
gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), 166-167
gastrointestinal (GI) system disorders. See GI system disorders
gastrostomy feedings, 336
general anesthesia, 317
generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), 274
generalized seizures, 250-252
generic names (drugs), 22
Genital herpes, 309
genitourinary system
  acute glomerulonephritis, 62-63
  bladder cancer, 69-70
  BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 68-69
  chronic glomerulonephritis, 63-64
  diagnostic tests, 70
  ESRD (end stage renal disease), 64-65
  medications, 70
  nephrotic syndrome, 65-66
  nursing skills, 61
  practice exam questions, 72-74
  prostatitis, 67-68
  resources, 75, 598
  terminology, 61
  urinary calculi, 66-67
  UTIs (urinary tract infections), 67
GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), 166-167
gestational diabetes, 305
GH-RH (growth hormone releasing hormone), 210
GI (gastrointestinal) system disorders
  cholecystitis, 176-178
  cholelithiasis, 176-178
  Clostridium difficile, 178-179
  congenital anomalies, 334-338
  diagnostic tests, 180
  diverticulitis, 165-166
  food-borne illnesses, 179
  gastroenteritis, 350
    Celiac disease, 351
    intussusception, 351
    pyloric stenosis, 350
  GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), 166-167
  inflammatory bowel disorders, 163
    Chrohn's disease, 163-164
    ulcerative colitis, 164-165

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GI (gastrointestinal) system disorders

growth hormone, 210
growth hormone releasing hormone (GH-RH), 210
GTT (glucose tolerance test), 220, 223
Guillain-Barré, 265-266
Guthrie test, 344

H

H. influenza
  acute epiglottitis, 347
  acute otitis media, 345
H. influenza B conjugate vaccine, 347
H. Pylori bacteria, 160
hallucinogen abuse, 290
halo vest, 264
hazardous substances, pediatric clients
  acetaminophen overdose, 357
  iron poisoning, 358
  lead poisoning, 358
  salicylate overdose, 357
HbA1c (glycosylated hemoglobin assays), 221-223
HCG (human chorionic gonadotropin), 304
head injuries, 370-371
healers, 388
Health Information Protection Privacy Act (HIPPA), 408
hearing loss, 132
heart block, 231-233
heart rate, 589
heat application, 412
Hegar’s sign, 301
HELLP syndrome, 306
hematological system
  anemia, 78
    aplastic, 79
    Cooley’s, 81
  iron deficiency, 80-81
  pernicious, 78-79
  sickle cell, 80

adolescents, 333
infants, 328-329
preschoolers, 331-332
school age children, 332-333
toddlers, 330

liver-associated diseases, 167
cirrhosis, 172-174
hepatitis, 167-172
pancreatitis, 174-175
nursing skills, 159
pediatric care, 350
pharmacology, 180-181
practice exam questions, 182-184
resources, 600
terminology, 159
ulcers, 160-162
gigantism, 211
gingko, 39
ginseng, 39
Glasgow coma scale, 259-260
glaucoma, 123-125
glomerulonephritis, 62-64
glossopharyngeal nerve, 258
glucocorticoids, 29-30
glucose tolerance test (GTT), 220, 223
gluten-induced enteropathy, 351
glycosylated hemoglobin assays (HbA1c), 221-223
goiter, 214
gonadotrophic hormone, 211
gonorrhea, 308
Goodell’s sign, 300
gout, 195
grand mal seizures, 250
Grave’s disease, 214-215
green stick fractures, 188
ground glass infiltrates (SARS), 54
Group A beta hemolytic streptococcus, 346
growth and development (pediatric care), 328
heaters, 388
diagnostic tests, 83
hemophilia, 81-82
medications, 83
nursing skills, 77
polycythemia vera, 82
practice exam questions, 85-86
resources, 87, 598
terminology, 77
immunization schedule, 594
hepatitis, 167
Hepatitis A, 168
Hepatitis B, 169-170
Hepatitis C, 170-171
Hepatitis D, 171
Hepatitis E, 171
Hepatitis G, 171
stages, 171-172
herbs, 38-39
heterografts, 115
HHNKS (hyperosmolar hyperglycemic nonketoic syndrome), 220
Hinduism, 392, 397
hip replacement, 197-198
HIPPA (Health Information Protection Privacy Act), 408
Hirschsprung disease, 336-337
Hispanics, cultural influences, 388-390
histamine 2 antagonists, 34-35
histrionic personality disorder, 279
HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), 310
Hodgkin’s lymphoma, 149
diagnosis, 150
prognosis, 150
risk factors, 141
treatment, 150
homografts, 115
hormones, 210
chemotherapy, 145
contraception, 320
hot diseases (Hispanic culture), 388
hot/cold theory, Asian-Americans, 392
household system of measurement, 605-606
human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG), 304
human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), 310
hydatidiform mole, 304
hymenopterans, 374
hyperbilirubinemia, 318
hyperemesis gravidarum, 303
hyperkalemia, 93
hyperopia (farsightedness), 127
hyperosmolar hyperglycemic nonketoic syndrome (HHNKS), 220
hyperparathyroidism, 217
hypertension, 230
hypertensive retinopathy, 125
hyperthyroidism, 214-215
hyphema, 128
hypochondriasis, 276
hypoglossal nerve, 259
hypokalemia, 92
hypoparathyroidism, 216-217
hypothalamus, 210
hypothyroidism, 213-214
hypovolemic shock, 368
ICP (intracranial pressure), 254-257, 260
icteric stage (hepatitis), 171-172
identification helpers (drugs), 38
Imferon (intramuscular iron), 81
immunization schedule, 594

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@quepublishing.com
immunizations, 51
imperforate anus, 336
inadequate breathing, 368
incompetent cervix, 303
incomplete abortions, 304
incomplete spinal injuries, 263
incorporation (nuclear warfare), 378
increased intracranial pressure, 254-257, 260
inevitable abortions, 304
Infalyte, 350
infants
growth and development, 328-329
hypothyroid symptoms, 214
immunization schedule, 594
increase intracranial pressure symptoms, 256
maternal/infant care, 299
meningitis, 340
preterm, 311
infections
acute respiratory infections, 47
influenza, 50-51
pleurisy, 49
pneumonia, 48-49
TB (tuberculosis), 50
burn victims, 114
control, 414
maternal, 308-310
UTIs (urinary tract infections), 67
infective endocarditis, 239
inflammatory bowel disorders, 163
Chrohn's disease, 163-164
ulcerative colitis, 164-165
influence of culture
Arab-Americans, 393-394
Asian-Americans, 391-393
assessment, 386-387
case studies, 398-399
dietary considerations, 395-396
Hispanics/Latinos, 388-390
Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, 390-391
nursing skills, 386
practice exam questions, 400-403
religious beliefs, 396-398
terminology, 385
influenza, 50-51
informed consent, 411
infratentorial surgery, 261
ingestion of hazardous substances, pediatric clients
acetaminophen overdose, 357
iron poisoning, 358
lead poisoning, 358
salicylate overdose, 357
INR (international normalizing ratio), 590
insulin, 221
intact corneal ring, 128
Integra, 115
intensity (labor contractions), 590
intentional tort, 411
intermediate phase (burn care), 113-114
international normalizing ratio (INR), 590
intra-abdominal bleeding, 372
intracellular fluid, 90
intracranial pressure (ICP), 254-257, 260
intramuscular iron (Imferon), 81
intraocular disorders
cataracts, 122-123
 glaucoma, 123-125
intrapartal care, 311-313, 590
intrauterine device (IUD), 320
intrinsic asthma, 47
intussusception, 351
iron deficiency anemia, 80-81
iron poisoning, 358
ischemic strokes, 262
Ishihara polychromatic chart, 129
isoimmunization, 318
IUD (Intrauterine device), 320
IV therapy, 413
jaundice, 319
jaw-thrust maneuver, 367
Jehovah’s Witnesses, 397
Judaism, 397
Kasai procedure, 338
kava-kava, 39
KD (Kawasaki’s disease), 353-354
Kehr’s sign, 372
kernicterus, 318
ketonuria, 220
keywords, 10
kidneys
  buffer system, 91
  stones, 66-67
knee replacements, 198-199
L/S (lecithin/sphingomyelin) ratios, 302
lab values, therapeutic drug levels, 589-590
labor (pregnancy)
  pharmacological management, 316-317
  phases of, 312
  stages of, 311
language assessment, 387
Laparoscopic Nissen Fundoplication (LNF), 167
laryngotracheobronchitis (LTB), 347
larynx cancer, 141
laser in-situ keratomileusis (LASIK), 127
LASIK (laser in-situ keratomileusis), 127
late decelerations (fetal monitoring), 315
Latinos, cultural influences, 388-390
laws. See legal issues
laxatives, 19
lead poisoning, 358
lecithin/sphingomyelin (L/S) ratios, 302
left occiput anterior (LOA), 312
legal issues, 406
  case study, 414-416
  civil laws, 407
  client care management, 411-414
  common laws, 407-408
  criminal laws, 407
  legal theories, 410-411
  practice exam questions, 417-420
  resources, 420, 604
  statutory laws, 407
  terminology, 405
legal theories, 410-411
Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease, 355
Legionnaire’s disease, 54-55
leukemia, 141
  pediatric care, 356
  risk factors, 141
life support guidelines (AHA), 592
lithium, 285, 589
liver cancer, 141
liver-associated diseases, 167
  cirrhosis, 172-174
  hepatitis, 167
    Hepatitis A, 168
    Hepatitis B, 169-170
    Hepatitis C, 170-171
    Hepatitis D, 171
    Hepatitis E, 171
    Hepatitis G, 171
    stages, 171-172
  pancreatitis, 174-175
LNF (Laparoscopic Nissen Fundoplication), 167
LOA (left occiput anterior), 312

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@quepublishing.com
local infiltration (nerve block), 316
lochia alba, 317
lochia rubra, 317
lochia serosa, 317
LTB (laryngotracheobronchitis), 347
Lund and Browder method (TBSA determination), 108
lungs
buffer system, 91
cancer, 142
luteinizing hormone, 210
lymphoid tissue, 346
lymphoma, 140, 149-150
Ma Huang, 39
macular degeneration, 126
magnesium, 98
magnesium gluconate, 306
magnesium sulfate, 306, 310
magnetic resonance images (MRIs), 151
major burns, 106, 109-111
major depression (bipolar disorders), 285-286
maladaptive beliefs, 386
malignancy. See cancer
malignant cells, 140
malpractice, 410
management
acute glomerulonephritis, 63
Addison’s disease, 218
airway, 367
anemia, 79-81
anxiety disorders, 277
ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51
asthma, 47
autism, 292
biliary atresia, 338
bladder cancer, 70
BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 68
bronchiolitis, 348
cancer, 143
bone marrow transplantation, 147-149
chemotherapy, 145-146
PSCT (peripheral stem cell transplantation), 147-149
radiation therapy, 144-145
TPN (total parenteral nutrition), 146-147
cannabis abuse, 290
casts, 191
chronic glomerulonephritis, 64
cirrhosis, 173
client care, 411-414
COA (coarctation of the aorta), 342
Crohn’s disease, 163
Cushing’s disease, 219
DHD (developmental hip dysplasia), 338
DI (diabetes insipidus), 212
diabetes mellitus, 221
diverticulitis, 166
dysreflexia, 265
epidural hematomas, 254
fractured hip, 197
gallbladder disease, 177-178
GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), 166
glaucoma, 124-125
gout, 195
Guillain-Barré, 266
hallucinogen abuse, 290
hemophilia, 82
hepatitis, 167
Hepatitis A, 168
Hepatitis B, 169
Hepatitis C, 170
Hirschsprung disease, 337
Hodgkin’s lymphoma, 150
hyperparathyroidism, 217
hyperthyroidism, 215

M
hypoparathyroidism, 217
hypothyroidism, 214
increased intracranial pressure, 257
influenza, 51
KD (Kawasaki's disease), 353
kidney stones, 66
Legionnaire's disease, 55
Meniere’s disease, 131
metabolic acidosis, 92-93
metabolic alkalosis, 96
nephrotic syndrome, 66
nuclear warfare radiation disasters, 378
opiate abuse, 289
osteogenic sarcoma, 357
osteoarthritis, 175
osteoporosis, 194-195
ototoxicosis, 131
pancreatitis, 175
personality disorders, 281
pituitary tumors, 212
pleurisy, 49
pneumonia, 48-49
polycythemia vera, 82
preeclampsia, 306
prostatitis, 68
pulmonary embolus, 53
pyloric stenosis, 350
RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 196-197
respiratory acidosis, 94
respiratory alkalosis, 97
retinal detachment, 126-127
SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), 54
sedative-hypnotic abuse, 289
seizures, 252
SIADH (syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone), 211
spina bifida, 340
stimulant abuse, 289
stings/bites, 374
strokes, 262
subdural hematomas, 254
TB (tuberculosis), 50
TOF (Tetralogy of Fallot), 343
tonsillitis, 346-347
ulcerative colitis, 165
ulcers, 161-162
UTIs (urinary tract infections), 67
venomous snake bites, 374
manic episodes (bipolar disorders), 284-285
Mantoux skin test, 50
manual traction, 189
MAOIs (monoamine oxidase inhibitors), 285
MAP (mean arterial pressure), 260
marijuana abuse, 290
maternal infections, 308-310
maternal/infant clients
abortions, 304-305
complications, 303-304
abruptio placenta, 307
cord prolapse, 307
diabetes, 305
DIC (disseminated intravascular coagulation), 307
maternal infections, 308-310
placenta previa, 307
preeclampsia, 306-307
preterm labor, 310-311
contraception, 319-320
diagnostic tests, 320-321
fetal monitoring, 314-316
intrapartal care, 311-313
normal newborn terminology, 317-318
nursing skills, 299
pharmacological management of labor, 316-317
pharmacology, 321
postpartum care, 317
practice exam questions, 322-325
prelabor testing, 313-314
prenatal care, 301

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alpha-fetoprotein screening, 301-302
diagnostic tests, 302-303
diet and weight control, 301
fetal heart tone assessment, 303
ultrasonography, 303
resources, 603
Rh incompatibility, 318-319
signs of pregnancy, 300-301
terminology, 299
math calculations, 605-606
mean arterial pressure (MAP), 260
measurements, TBSA (burns), 108-109
medications, 18
administration, 21, 413
angiotensin receptor blockers, 33-34
angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, 22-23
anti-infectives, 25-26
anticoagulants, 37-38
anticonvulsants, 26-27
antiemetics, 28-29
antivirals, 31-32
beta adrenergic blockers, 23-24
bone marrow transplant, 149
burn care, 114
burn injuries, 116
cancer, 152-153
cardiac system, 243
cholesterol-lowering agents, 32-33
cirrhosis, 173
classifications, 19-20
craniotomy care, 261
drug identification helpers, 38
drug names, 22
drug schedules, 39-40
emergency nursing, 380
endocrine system disorders, 223
eye disorders, 129
gastrointestinal system disorders, 180-181

maternal/infant clients

genitourinary system disorders
acute glomerulonephritis, 63
bladder cancer, 70
BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 68
chronic glomerulonephritis, 64
glucocorticoids, 29-30
gout, 195
hematological system disorders, 83
histamine 2 antagonists, 34-35
hypertension, 230
increased intracranial pressure, 257
labor, 316-317
maternal care, 321
medicinal properties of herbs, 38-39
most-prescribed medications in U.S., 609-611
musculoskeletal system disorders, 203-204
neurological system disorders, 267-268
nursing skills, 17-18
osteoporosis, 194
pancreatitis, 175
pediatric care, 359
pharmacodynamics, 18
pharmacokinetics, 18
pharmacotherapeutics, 18
pneumonia, 48
practice exam questions, 41-43
pregnancy categories, 40
preterm labor, 310
proton pump inhibitors, 36
psychiatric system disorders, 294
RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 196
renal transplantation, 65
resources, 597
respiratory system disorders
asthma, 47
emphysema, 46
influenza, 51
Legionnaire’s disease, 55
pleurisy, 49
pneumonia, 48-49
pulmonary embolus, 53
narcissistic personality disorder, 279

multiple personality disorder, 275

multiple sclerosis, 266-267

muscular dystrophies, 355-356

musculoskeletal system disorders

assistive devices, 201-203
congenital anomalies, 338-340
diagnostic tests, 203
fractures, 188

compartment syndrome, 191-192
osteomyelitis, 192-193
treatment, 188-191
gout, 195
nursing skills, 187
osteoporosis, 193-195
pediatric care, 354-356
pharmacology, 203-204
practice exam questions, 205-208
RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 195-197
resources, 601
surgical procedures, 197
amputations, 199-200

hip replacement, 197-198
total knee replacements, 198-199
symptoms, 191
terminology, 187

Muslims, 393

MVAs (motor vehicle accidents), 370

myasthenia gravis, 266-267

mycophenolate (CellCept), 65

mydriatics, 20

myelomeningocele, 339

myocardial infarction, 234-238

myopia (nearsightedness), 127

N

naloxone hydrochloride (Narcan), 94

Narcan (naloxone hydrochloride), 94

narcissistic personality disorder, 279

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@quepublishing.com
narcotics, 20, 94
narrow-angle glaucoma, 124
nasogastric (NG) tubes, 413
National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), 406, 411
Native Americans, cultural influences, 390-391
Navajo medicine men, 390
NCSBN (National Council of State Boards of Nursing), 406, 411
nearsightedness (myopia), 127
negative symptoms, schizophrenia, 282
negligence, 410
neoplastic disorders, 600
Neoral (cyclosporine), 65
nephroblastoma, 356
nephrotic syndrome, 65-66
nerve agents, 375
nerve blocks, 316
neural tube defects, 339
neurological system disorders
assessment, 258-260
brain injuries, 253-254
craniotomy care, 260-261
degenerative disorders, 266-267
diagnostic tests, 267
Guillain-Barré, 265-266
increased intracranial pressure, 255-257
nursing skills, 249
pharmacology, 267-268
practice exam questions, 269-272
resources, 272, 602
SCIs (spinal cord injuries), 263-265
seizures, 250
  generalized, 250-252
  partial, 252
  status epilepticus, 253
  treatment, 252
strokes, 262-263
terminology, 249
neurotic disorders. See anxiety-related disorders
neurotransmitters, 274
neutral beliefs, 386
newborns
care, 603
  normal blood pressure, 589
  normal heart rate, 589
  terminology, 317-318
NG (nasogastric) tubes, 413
Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, 142
non-stress test, 313
nonallergenic asthma, 47
noncardiogenic pulmonary edema, 51-52
nondepressed skull fractures, 254
nonverbal communication, cultural influences
  Arab-Americans, 394
  Asian-Americans, 393
  Hispanics/Latinos, 389
  Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, 391
NPH insulin, 221
nuclear warfare (bioterrorism), 378
Nurse Practice Acts, 406-407, 414
nursing boards, 613-627
nursing considerations. See also nursing skills
  alcohol withdrawal, 287
  angiotensin receptor blockers, 34
  angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, 23
  anti-infectives, 25
  anticoagulants, 37
  anticonvulsants, 27
  antiemetics, 29
  antivirals, 32
  anxiety disorders, 277
  beta adrenergic blockers, 24
  bone marrow transplant, 148-149
  chelation therapy, 358
  cholesterol-lowering agents, 33
  cleft lip/palate surgical patients, 334-335
client care management, 411-414
craniotomy care, 260-261
eating disorders, 293
glucocorticoids, 30
histamine 2 antagonists, 35
increased intracranial pressure, 257
KD (Kawasaki's disease), 353-354
major depression, 285
mania, 285
metabolic acidoses, 93
neurological system disorders, 268
osteomyelitis treatment, 193
post operative care for fractured hips, 198
post-operative care for total knee replacements, 198
proton pump inhibitors, 36
RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 197
radiation therapy, 144
schizophrenia, 283
SIADH (syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone), 211
spinal cord injuries, 263
thyroid surgery, 215
tonic-clonic seizures, 251
TPN (total parenteral nutrition), 147

nursing guidelines, standard precautions, 591-592

nursing process, 8

nursing skills. See also nursing considerations
burn care, 105-109
dressings, 114-115
emergent phase, 110-111
intermediate phase, 113-114
rehabilitative phase, 115
cancer, 139
cardiac system disorders, 229-230
cultural influences, 386
emergency nursing, 365
fluid and electrolyte balance, 89

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obstetric clients

postpartum care, 317
practice exam questions, 322-325
prelabor testing, 313-314
prenatal care, 301
alpha-fetoprotein screening, 301-302
diagnostic tests, 302-303
diet and weight control, 301
fetal heart tone assessment, 303
ultrasonography, 303
Rh incompatibility, 318-319
signs of pregnancy, 300-301
terminology, 299
occiput anterior (OA), 312
OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder), 277-278
OCT (oxytocin challenge test), 313
offset adjustable canes, 202
olfactory nerve, 258
open head trauma, 370
opiate abuse, 289
oppositional defiant disorder, 291
optic nerve, 258
osmosis, 90
osteogenic sarcoma, 357
osteomyelitis, 192-193
osteoporosis, 193-195
otitis externa, 130
otitis media, 130
otorrhea, 253
otosclerosis, 131
ovarian cancer, 142
oxytocin, 211
oxytocin challenge test (OCT), 313

pain response, cultural influences
Arab-Americans, 394
Asian-Americans, 393
Hispanics/Latinos, 390
Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, 391
Palivizumab (Synagis), 349
palm method (TBSA determination), 109
pancreatic cancer, 142
pancreatic enzyme replacement, 349
pancreatitis, 174-175
panic disorder, 276
Papanicolaou (Pap) test, 143
paranoid personality disorder, 278
parathormone, 216
parathyroid disorders, 215-217
Parkinson’s disease, 266-267
Parkland formula, 111-112
Parlodel (Bromocriptine mesylate), 213
partial seizures, 252
partial thromboplastin time (PTT), 590
passageway (birth canal), 311
passenger (labor process), 311
patent ductus arteriosus, 341
pathological fractures, 188
patient teaching
cancer prevention, 143
radiation therapy, 145
Patient’s Bill of Rights, 21, 408
Pavlik harness, 339
peak and trough levels, 26
Pedialyte, 350
pediatric clients
cancer, 356
ingestion of hazardous substances, 357-358
leukemia, 356
osteogenic sarcoma, 357
Wilm’s tumor, 356
cardiovascular system disorders, 351
  KD (Kawasaki's disease), 353-354
  rheumatic fever, 352
congenital anomalies, 334
  cardiovascular system disorders, 340-343
GI system disorders, 334-338
  metabolic disorders, 343-344
musculoskeletal system disorders, 338-340
diagnostic tests, 359
gastrointestinal system disorders, 350-351
growth and development, 328
  adolescents, 333
  infants, 328-329
  preschoolers, 331-332
  school age children, 332-333
  toddlers, 330
musculoskeletal system disorders, 354
  Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease, 355
  muscular dystrophies, 355-356
  scoliosis, 354-355
nursing skills, 327-328
pharmacology, 359
practice exam questions, 360-362
resources, 363, 603
respiratory system disorders, 344
  acute epiglottitis, 347-348
  AOM (acute otitis media), 345
  bronchiolitis, 348-349
  cystic fibrosis, 349
  LTB (laryngotracheobronchitis), 347
tonsillitis, 346-347
terminology, 327
penetrating injuries, 128, 371
pericarditis, 239
peripheral stem cell transplantation (PSCT), 147-149
peripherally inserted central venous catheters (PICCs), 413
peritoneal dialysis, 64
permanent grafts, 115

pernicious anemia, 78-79
personality disorders, 278
  Cluster A disorders, 278-279
  Cluster B disorders, 279-280
  Cluster C disorders, 280-281
  management, 281
petit mal seizures, 252
pH regulation, 91
pharmacodynamics, 18
pharmacokinetics, 18
pharmacology. See medications
pharmacotherapeutics, 18
phases of labor, 312
phenothiazines, 28-29
phenylalanine, 343
Phenylketonuria (PKU), 343-344
phobic disorders, 277
phosphorus, 98
photorefractive keratotomy (PRK), 127
physical assessment
  ABCD assessment, 366
  airway, 367
  breathing, 367-368
  circulation, 368-369
  deficits, 369
  abdominal injuries, 371
  ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51
  emphysema, 46
physical therapy, knee replacements, 199
physiologic jaundice, 319
PICCs (peripherally inserted central venous catheters), 413
PIH (prolactin inhibiting hormone), 210
pinching practice, 392
pink puffers, 46
pit vipers, 374
pituitary disorders, 210-213

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@quepublishing.com
PKU (Phenylketonuria), 343-344
placenta previa, 307
plague, 376
plasmapheresis, 266
pleurisy, 49
plumbism, 358
pneumonia, 48-49
pneumothorax, 49
POAG (primary open-angle glaucoma), 123
Poison Prevention Packaging Act of 1970, 357
poisoning	pediatric care, 357-358
stings and bites, 373-375
polycythemia vera, 82
polydipsia, 220
polymigratory arthritis, 352
polyphagia, 220
polyuria, 220
position (fetal), 312
position (labor process), 311
positional congenital clubfoot, 339
positive signs of pregnancy, 301
positive symptoms, schizophrenia, 282
post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), 275
postictal period (seizures), 251
postpartum care, 317
potassium, 93, 97
powers (labor process), 311
PPD (Purified Protein Derivative), 50
practice exam questions
burn care, 117-120
cancer, 154-157
cultural influences, 400-403
emergency nursing, 381-384
endocrine system disorders, 224-227
fluid and electrolyte balance, 100-102
gastrointestinal system disorders, 182-184
genitourinary system disorders, 72-74
hematological system disorders, 85-86
legal issues, 417-420
maternal/infant clients, 322-325
musculoskeletal system disorders, 205-208
neurological system disorders, 269-272
pediatric clients, 360-362
pharmacology, 41-43
psychiatric system disorders, 295-298
respiratory system disorders, 57-60
sensory system disorders, 134-137
strategies, 13-15
practice exams
answers and explanations, 529-587
Exam I, 421-473
Exam II, 475-526
precipitate delivery, 313
preeclampsia, 306-307
pregnancy
abortions, 304-305
complications, 303-304
abruptio placenta, 307
cord prolapse, 307
diabetes, 305
DIC (disseminated intravascular coagulation), 307
maternal infections, 308-310
placenta previa, 307
preeclampsia, 306-307
preterm labor, 310-311
contraception, 319-320
diagnostic tests, 320-321
drug categories, 40
fetal monitoring, 314-316
intrapartal care, 311-313
normal newborn terminology, 317-318
nursing skills, 299
pharmacological management of labor, 316-317
pharmacology, 321
postpartum care, 317
psychiatric system disorders

practice exam questions, 322-325
prelabor testing, 313-314
prenatal care, 301
  alpha-fetoprotein screening, 301-302
diagnostic tests, 302-303
diet and weight control, 301
fetal heart tone assessment, 303
ultrasonography, 303
Rh incompatibility, 318-319
signs of, 300-301
terminology, 299
prelabor testing, 313-314
premature rupture of membranes, 304
prenatal care, 301
  alpha-fetoprotein screening, 301-302
diagnostic tests, 302-303
diet and weight control, 301
fetal heart tone assessment, 303
ultrasonography, 303
prep questions. See practice exam questions
presbycusis, 131
presbyopia, 127
preschoolers, growth and development, 331-332
presentation (fetal), 312
preservation of forensic evidence, 372-373
presumptive signs of pregnancy, 300
preterm infants, 311
preterm labor, 310-311
prevention
cancer, 143
  Hepatitis B, 169
primary brain injuries, 370
primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG), 123
PRK (photorefractive keratotomy), 127
probable signs of pregnancy, 300-301
prodromal stage (hepatitis), 171
projection, 593
prolactin, 210
prolactin inhibiting hormone (PIH), 210
proliferative diabetic retinopathy, 125
prostate cancer, 142
prostate specific antigen (PSA), 142, 151
prostatitis, 67-68
protamine sulfate, 37
proton pump inhibitors, 36
PSA (prostate specific antigen), 142, 151
PSCT (peripheral stem cell transplantation), 147-149
psychiatric system disorders
  anxiety-related disorders, 274
    DID (dissociative identity disorder), 275
    GAD (generalized anxiety disorder), 274
    OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder), 277-278
    panic disorder, 276
    phobic disorders, 277
    PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), 275
    somatoform disorder, 276
diagnostic tests, 293
emotional/behavioral disorders, 291
  ADHD, 291
  autistic disorder, 292
  conduct disorder, 291
  eating disorders, 293
  oppositional defiant disorder, 291
nursing skills, 273-274
personality disorders, 278
  Cluster A disorders, 278-279
  Cluster B disorders, 279-280
  Cluster C disorders, 280-281
  management, 281
pharmacology, 294
practice exam questions, 295-298
psychotic disorders, 282
  bipolar disorders, 284-286
  schizophrenia, 282-284
resources, 603

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@quepublishing.com
psychiatric system disorders

substance abuse, 286
alcoholism, 286-287
cannabis, 290
hallucinogens, 290
opiates, 289
sedative-hypnotics, 288-289
stimulants, 289
terminology, 273

psychological care, burn victims, 110

psychotic disorders, 282
bipolar disorders, 284-286
schizophrenia, 282-284

PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), 275

PTT (partial thromboplastin time), 590

pudendal block, 316
pulmonary embolus, 52-53
Purified Protein Derivative (PPD), 50
pyloric stenosis, 350
pyloromyotomy, 351

Q fever, 376
questions. See practice exam questions

R

RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 195-197
raccoon eyes, 254
radial keratotomy (RK), 127
radiation injuries, 106, 378
radiation therapy, 144-145
rape trauma kit, 373
rationalization, 593
Raynaud’s syndrome, 241
reaction formation, 593
readings
  burn care, 120
cancer, 157
cultural influences, 403
emergency nursing, 384
endocrine system disorders, 227
fluid and electrolyte balance, 103
genitourinary system disorders, 75
hematological system disorders, 87
legal issues, 420
neurological system disorders, 272
pediatric clients, 363
respiratory system disorders, 60
sensory system disorders, 137
re refractive errors, 127-128
refusal of care considerations, 396-398
regional enteritis, 163-164
regression, 593
regular insulin, 221
regulation, pH, 91
regulatory laws, 407
rehabilitative phase (burn care), 115
religious beliefs, 396-398
renal cancer, 142
renal transplantation, 65
repression, 593
resources
  acid/base balance, 599
  burn care, 120, 599
cancer, 157
  cardiac disorders, 602
  connective tissue disorders, 601
cultural influences, 403, 604
electrolyte balance, 599
emergency nursing, 384
endocrine system disorders, 227, 601
fluid and electrolyte balance, 103
gastrointestinal disorders, 600
genitourinary system disorders, 75, 598
hematological system disorders, 87, 598
legal issues, 420, 604
maternal/newborn care, 603
musculoskeletal disorders, 601
neoplastic disorders, 600
neurological system disorders, 272, 602
pediatric care, 363, 603
pharmacology, 597
psychiatric disorders, 603
respiratory system disorders, 60, 597
sensory system disorders, 137, 599

**Respigam (RSV-IGIV), 349**

**respiratory acidosis, 93-94**

**respiratory alkalosis, 96-97**

**respiratory failure, 51**

ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51-52
pulmonary embolus, 52-53

**respiratory rate, 589**

**respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), 348**

**respiratory system disorders**

acute infections, 47
influenza, 50-51
pleurisy, 49
pneumonia, 48-49
TB (tuberculosis), 50

**acute respiratory failure, 51**

ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51-52
pulmonary embolus, 52-53

**COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), 46**

asthma, 47
chronic bronchitis, 46
emphysema, 46-47
diagnostic tests, 55

**emergency infections, 53**

Legionnaire's disease, 54-55
SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), 53-54
medications, 55-56
nursing skills, 45

pediatric care, 344
acute epiglottitis, 347-348
AOM (acute otitis media), 345
bronchiolitis, 348-349
cystic fibrosis, 349
LTB (laryngotracheobronchitis), 347
tonsillitis, 346-347

practice exam questions, 57-60
resources, 60
terminology, 45

**restraints, 412**

**retinal detachment, 126-127**

**retinal disorders, 125**
diabetic retinopathy, 125
hypertensive retinopathy, 125
macular degeneration, 126
retinal detachment, 126-127

**Rett's disorder, 292**

**Rh incompatibility, 318-319**

**rhabdomyolysis, 33**

**rheumatic fever, 352**

**rheumatoid arthritis (RA), 195-197**

**rhinorrhea, 253**

**Rhythm method (contraception), 319**

**ribavirin (Virazole), 348**

**Ricin, 377**

**right occiput anterior (ROA), 312**

**Rinne test, 132**

**riot control agents, 376**

**risk factors**

AOM (acute otitis media), 345
bladder cancer, 69
cancer, 141-142
CHD (congenital heart defects), 340
Clostridium difficile, 178
DHD (developmental hip dysplasia), 338
DI (diabetes insipidus), 212
gallbladder disease, 176
gastroenteritis, 350
Hepatitis B, 169
increased intracranial pressure, 255
Legionnaire’s disease, 54
osteoporosis, 193
pancreatitis, 174
pulmonary embolus, 52
SIADH (syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone), 211
stroke, 262
ulcers, 160
RK (radial keratotomy), 127
ROA (right occiput anterior), 312
Romazicon (Flumazenil), 94
ROME acronym, 97
RSV (respiratory syncytial virus), 348
RSV-IGIV (Respigam), 349
Rule of Nines, 108
Russian Orthodox Church, 397

Safe Effective Care segment, 411-414
safety, standard precautions, 591-592
salicylate overdose, 357
saline, administer drug, saline (SAS) procedure, 47
salmonella, 179
santero/a (healers), 388
sarcoma, 140
SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), 53-54
SAS (saline, administer drug, saline) procedure, 47
saw palmetto, 69
schedules, drug, 39-40
Schilling test, 83
schizoid personality disorder, 279
schizophrenia, 282-284
schizotypal personality disorder, 279
school age children, growth and development, 332-333
SCIs (spinal cord injuries), 263-265
scoliosis, 354-355
second degree burns, 107
secondary brain injuries, 370
secondary glaucoma, 124
sedative-hypnotic abuse, 288-289
sedatives, 316
seizures
  generalized, 250-252
  partial, 252
  status epilepticus, 253
  treatment, 252
selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), 285
sensorineural hearing loss, 131
sensory system
  diagnostic tests, 132
  ear disorders, 129
  hearing loss, 132
  Meniere’s disease, 130-131
  otitis externa, 130
  otitis media, 130
  otosclerosis, 131
  presbycusis, 131
  traumatic injuries, 132
  eye disorders, 122
  intraocular disorders, 122-125
  pharmacology, 129
  refractive errors, 127-128
  retinal disorders, 125-127
  traumatic injuries, 128
  visual tests, 129
  nursing skills, 121-122
  pharmacology, 133
  practice exam questions, 134-137
  resources, 137, 599
  terminology, 121
sepsis, 92  
septic abortions, 304  
serotonin syndrome, 286  
seven rights, medication administration, 21  
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), 53-54  
sexual assault, 373  
shaman, 390  
SIADH (syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone), 211  
sickle cell anemia, 80  
side effects  
angiotensin receptor blockers, 34  
angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, 23  
anti-infectives, 25  
anticoagulants, 37  
anticonvulsants, 27  
antiemetics, 28  
antivirals, 31  
beta adrenergic blockers, 24  
chemotherapy, 145-146  
cholesterol-lowering agents, 32  
glucocorticoids, 30  
histamine 2 antagonists, 35  
magnesium sulfate, 306  
proton pump inhibitors, 36  
signs and symptoms. See symptoms  
signs of pregnancy, 300-301  
Sikhism, 392, 397  
simple fractures, 188  
simple partial seizures, 252  
skeletal traction, 189  
skin cancer, 142  
skin lesions, 142  
skin traction, 189  
smallpox, 377  
snake venom, 374  
Snellen chart, 129  
social phobia, 277  
sodium, 97  
sodium warfarin, 590  
somatization disorder, 276  
somatotropin, 210  
southern belle syndrome, 279  
spansules, 20  
specific phobia, 277  
specimen collection, 412  
spina bifida, 339  
spina bifida cystica, 339  
spina bifida occulta, 339  
spinal accessory nerve, 259  
spinal cord injuries (SCIs), 263-265  
spinal headache, 316  
spinal narcotics, 317  
spinal shock, 264  
splitting (defense mechanism), 280  
SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors), 285  
St. John’s Wort, 39  
stages  
alcohol withdrawal, 286  
Hepatitis, 171-172  
labor, 311  
nursing process, 8  
stair gait (crutch-walking), 201  
standard precautions, 591-592  
standard wound dressings, 115  
stapedectomy, 131  
Staphylococcus, 179  
Staphylococcus enterotoxin B, 377  
state boards of nursing, 406  
station (fetal presenting part), 313  
status epilepticus, 253  
statutory laws, 407  
steatorrhea, 349
sterilization (contraception), 320
stimulant abuse, 289
stings, 374-375
stomach cancer, 142
strategies for testing, 9-15
streptokinase, 53
stress, defense mechanisms, 592-593
string sign, 163
strokes, 262-263
stump wrapping, 200
subacute subdural hematomas, 254
subarachnoid anesthesia, 316
subcutaneous nodules, 352
subdural hematomas, 254
sublimation, 593
substance abuse, 286
alcoholism, 286-287
cannabis, 290
hallucinogens, 290
opiates, 289
sedative-hypnotics, 288-289
stimulants, 289
suggested readings. See readings
superficial partial thickness burns, 107
suppression, 593
supratentorial surgery, 261
surgical management
biliary atresia, 338
bladder cancer, 69
BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 69
cancer, 143
cataracts, 123
cleft lip/palate, 334
COA (coarctation of the aorta), 342
compartment syndrome, 192
craniotomy, 260-261
EA (esophageal atresia), 335-336
gallstones, 178
GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), 167
glaucoma, 124
Hirschsprung disease, 337
hyperthyrodism, 215
imperforate anus, 336
Meniere's disease, 131
musculoskeletal issues, 197
amputations, 199-200
hip replacement, 197-198
total knee replacements, 198-199
otosclerosis, 131
pyloric stenosis, 350
refractive errors, 127
retinal detachment, 126
scoliosis, 355
spina bifida, 340
strokes, 262
TEF (tracheoesophageal fistula), 335-336
TOF (Tetralogy of Fallot), 343
tonsilitis, 346-347
ulcers, 162
susto (fright sickness), 389
sweat test, 349
swimmer's ear, 130
swing through gait (crutch-walking), 201
symptoms
absence seizures, 252
acute glomerulonephritis, 62
Addison's disease, 218
alcohol withdrawal, 286
anemia, 78-79
aspirin overdose, 357
asthma, 47
autism, 292
basilar skull fractures, 253
biliary atresia, 337
bladder cancer, 69
BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 68
bronchiolitis, 348
cannabis abuse, 290
cataracts, 122
Celiac disease, 351
CHD (congenital heart defects), 341
CHF (congestive heart failure), 341
chronic glomerulonephritis, 63
cirrhosis, 172
Clostridium difficile, 178
COA (coarctation of the aorta), 342
compartment syndrome, 191
Crohn's disease, 163
Cushing's disease, 219
cystic fibrosis, 349
DHD (developmental hip dysplasia), 338
diabetes mellitus, 220
diverticulitis, 165
duodenal ulcers, 160
dysreflexia, 264
EA (esophageal atresia), 335
emphysema, 46
epidural hematomas, 254
fractures, 188, 197
galactosemia, 344
gallbladder disease, 176
gastric ulcers, 161
GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), 166
gout, 195
Guillain-Barré, 265
hallucinogen abuse, 290
hemophilia, 81
Hepatitis A, 168
Hepatitis B, 169
Hepatitis C, 170
Hepatitis D, 171
Hepatitis E, 171
Hirschsprung disease, 336
Hodgkin's lymphoma, 149-150
hyperglycemia, 221
hyperparathyroidism, 217
hyperthyroidism, 214
hypoglycemia, 222
hypoparathyroidism, 216
hypothyroidism, 213-214
increased intracranial pressure, 255-256
influenza, 50
intra-abdominal bleeding, 372
intussusception, 351
KD (Kawasaki's disease), 353
kidney stones, 66
Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease, 355
Legionnaire's disease, 54
leukemia, 356
LTB (laryngotracheobronchitis), 347
major depression, 285
mania, 284
Meniere's disease, 130
meningitis, 340
metabolic acidosis, 92
metabolic alkalosis, 95
muscular dystrophies, 355
nephrotic syndrome, 66
opiate abuse, 289
osteomyelitis, 192
osteoporosis, 194
otosclerosis, 131
pancreatitis, 174
peritonitis, 64
pituitary tumors, 212
PKU (Phenylketonuria), 343
pleurisy, 49
pneumonia, 48
polycythemia vera, 82
pregnancy, 300
prodromal stage (hepatitis), 172
prostatitis, 68
PTSD, 275
pulmonary embolus, 52
pyloric stenosis, 350
RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 195
respiratory acidosis, 94
respiratory alkalosis, 96
retinal detachment, 126
rheumatic fever, 352
SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), 53-54
schizophrenia, 282
sedative-hypnotic abuse, 289
serotonin syndrome, 286
spinal injuries, 263
spinal shock, 264
stimulant abuse, 289
strokes, 262
subdural hematomas, 254
substance abuse, 286
TEF (tracheoesophageal fistula), 335
TOF (Tetralogy of Fallot), 342
tonic-clonic seizures, 250
tonsillitis, 346
ulcerative colitis, 164
UTIs (urinary tract infections), 67
Synagis (Palivizumab), 349
syndeham's chorea, 352
syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone (SIADH), 211
syngeneic transplant (bone marrow), 148
synthetic thyroid hormone (synthroid), 214
synthroid (synthetic thyroid hormone), 214
syphilis, 308
systems of measurement, 605-606
systolic pressure, 230
teaching
cancer prevention, 143
nursing responsibilities, 413
radiation therapy, 145
TEF (tracheoesophageal fistula), 335
temperature, 589
teratogenic agents, 302
teratologic congenital clubfoot, 339
terbutaline sulfate (brethine), 310
test plan, CAT (Computerized Adaptive Testing), 8-9
testicular cancer, 142
testing strategies, 9-15
tests
diagnostic. See diagnostic tests
Papanicolaou (Pap), 143
peak and trough levels, 26
prelabor, 313-314
tet attacks, 342
tetracycline, 38, 49
Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF), 342-343
theophylline, 589
theories, legal, 410-411
therapeutic drug levels, 589-590
thermal injuries, 106
third degree burns, 107
thoracentesis, 49
thoracotomy, 336
threatened abortions, 304
three-point gait (crutch-walking), 201
thrombophlebitis, 240
thunderbird, 390
thyroid disorders, 213-215
thyroid stimulating hormone, 210
thyroid storm, 215
thyrotropin releasing hormone, 210
time considerations, cultural influences
Arab-Americans, 394
Asian-Americans, 393

T
t-2 mycotoxins, 377
talipes equinovarus (congenital clubfoot), 339
TB (tuberculosis), 50
TBSA (total body surface area) measurement for burns, 108-109
Hispanics/Latinos, 389
Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, 391

time-released drugs, 20
toddlers, growth and development, 330
TOF (Tetralogy of Fallot), 342-343
tonic-clonic seizures, 250-252
tonsilitis, 346-347
tonsillectomy, 346
topoisomerase inhibitors (chemotherapy), 145
TORCHS syndrome, 303
tort, 411
total knee replacements, 198-199
total parenteral nutrition (TPN), 146-147
toxicity, magnesium sulfate, 307
TPN (total parenteral nutrition), 146-147
tracheoesophageal fistula (TEF), 335
tracheostomy care, 413
traction
fractures, 189-191
nursing responsibilities, 413
trade names (drugs), 22
traditional healers, 388
transmission of disease, 591
transphenoidal surgery, 213
transplantation
bone marrow, 147-149
PSCT (peripheral stem cell transplantation), 147-149
renal, 65
transposition of the major vessels, 341
transurethral prostatectomy (TURP), 69

trauma care, 370
abdominal injuries, 371-372
chest injuries, 371
ears, 132
eyes, 128
head injuries, 370-371
preservation of forensic evidence, 372-373
treatment
abruptio placenta, 307
acute glomerulonephritis, 63
acute otitis media, 130
Addison’s disease, 218
anemia, 79-81
anxiety disorders, 277
ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), 51
asthma, 47
biliary atresia, 338
bladder cancer, 70
BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), 68
bronchiolitis, 348
cancer, 143
bone marrow transplantation, 147-149
chemotherapy, 145-146
PSCT (peripheral stem cell transplantation), 147-149
radiation therapy, 144-145
TPN (total parenteral nutrition), 146-147
cannabis abuse, 290
Celiac disease, 351
chronic glomerulonephritis, 64
cirrhosis, 173
compartment syndrome, 192
congenital clubfoot, 339
cord prolapse, 307
Crohn’s disease, 163
Cushing’s disease, 219
cystic fibrosis, 349
diabetic retinopathy, 125
DIC (disseminated intravascular coagulation), 307
diverticulitis, 166
dumping syndrome, 162
dysreflexia, 265
epidural hematomas, 254
fractured hip, 197
fractures, 188-191

How can we make this index more useful? Email us at indexes@quepublishing.com
galactosemia, 344
gallbladder disease, 177-178
gastroenteritis, 350
GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease), 166
gout, 195
Guillain-Barré, 266
hallucinogen abuse, 290
hemophilia, 82
Hepatitis A, 168
Hepatitis B, 169
Hepatitis C, 170
Hepatitis D, 171
Hepatitis E, 171
Hodgkin’s lymphoma, 150
hyperparathyroidism, 217
hyperthyroidism, 215
hypoparathyroidism, 217
hypothyroidism, 214
increased intracranial pressure, 257
influenza, 51
KD (Kawasaki’s disease), 353
kidney stones, 66
Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease, 355
Legionnaire’s disease, 55
leukemia, 357
LTB (laryngotracheobronchitis), 347
macular degeneration, 126
metabolic acidosis, 92-93
metabolic alkalosis, 96
muscular dystrophies, 356
nephrotic syndrome, 66
opiate abuse, 289
osteomyelitis, 193
osteoporosis, 194-195
otitis externa, 130
pancreatitis, 175
PKU (Phenylketonuria), 344
placenta previa, 307
pleurisy, 49
pneumonia, 48-49
polycythemia vera, 82
prostatitis, 68
pulmonary embolus, 53
RA (rheumatoid arthritis), 196-197
respiratory acidosis, 94
respiratory alkalosis, 97
rheumatic fever, 352
SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), 54
SCIIs (spinal cord injuries), 263-264
scoliosis, 355
sedative-hypnotic abuse, 289
seizures, 252
stimulant abuse, 289
stings/bites, 374
strokes, 262
subdural hematomas, 254
TB (tuberculosis), 50
ulcerative colitis, 165
ulcers, 161-162
UTIs (urinary tract infections), 67
venomous snake bites, 374
triage
disaster victims, 379
emergency nursing, 366
trigeminal nerve, 258
Trousseau’s sign, 96, 216
ttrue clubfoot, 339
truncus arteriosus, 341
tubal ligation, 320
tuberculosis (TB), 50
tularemia, 376
tumors, pituitary disorders, 211-213
Turner’s sign, 372
TURP (transurethral prostatectomy), 69
two-point gait (crutch-walking), 201
Tylenol overdose, 357
tympanic membrane rupture, 130
tyrosine, 343
U

U.S. nursing boards, 613-627
UAP (unlicensed assistive personnel), 411
UDCA (ursodeoxycholic acid), 177
ulcerative colitis, 164-165
ulcers, 160-162
ultrasoundography, 303
umbilical cord prolapse, 307
uncompensated acidosis, 91
uncompensated alkalosis, 91
unintentional tort, 411
unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP), 411
unresponsiveness (deficit assessment), 369
urinary calculi, 66-67
urinary catheters, 413
urinary tract infections (UTIs), 67
urolithiasis, 66-67
ursodeoxycholic acid (UDCA), 177
UTIs (urinary tract infections), 67

V

vaccinations
Gardasil, 141
H. influenza B conjugate, 347
influenza, 51
vaginal nerve stimulator (VNS), 253
vagus nerve, 258
variability (fetal monitoring), 590
variable decelerations (fetal monitoring), 315
vasectomy, 320
vasocclusive crisis, 80
vasopressin (antidiuretic hormone), 211
venomous snakes, 374
ventricular fibrillation, 237
ventricular septal defect, 341
ventricular tachycardia, 236

verbal communication, cultural influences
Arab-Americans, 394
Asian-Americans, 393
Hispanics/Latinos, 389
Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, 391
verbal stimuli (deficit assessment), 369
vesicants, 376
vestibulocochlear nerve, 258
viral encephalitides, 377
viral hemorrhagic fevers, 377
Virazole (ribavirin), 348
visual tests, 129
vital signs
normal ranges, 589
nursing responsibilities, 413
VNS (vagal nerve stimulator), 253

W

walkers, 202-203
warning signs, cancer, 140
Weber test, 132
weight control, pregnancy, 301
wet macular degeneration, 126
Wilm’s tumor, 356
witnessing informed consent, 411
wound care, 413
wrapping stumps (amputations), 200

X-Z

xenografts, 115

Z-track method, 28

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