



Preparation Guide for  
**THE PROFESSIONAL  
EXAMINATION**

of the Ordre des infirmières  
et infirmiers du Québec

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SUPPLEMENT **3**

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**THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS  
ABOUT THE CLINICAL SITUATION**



Ordre  
des infirmières  
et infirmiers  
du Québec

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The third supplement to the *Preparation Guide for the Professional Examination* explores the third component of the clinical situation, the answers to the questions.

In the exam, the answers to the questions must always take the information in the clinical situation into account and reflect what the candidate would do as a nurse in her daily clinical practice. If the candidate is not familiar with a clinical situation, she can nonetheless formulate an answer based on the knowledge and skills she has acquired and that would apply in similar situations.

To answer a question properly, the candidate must read the clinical situation and identify the important information and the critical information. She must also identify the objective of the question and interpret the information. Lastly, she must determine the various possible answers and consider them based on their relevance and their order of priority in the context.

The candidate's answer must reflect her clinical judgement and demonstrate her aptitude to practice nursing. The answer must go beyond identifying information and demonstrate her ability to analyze and interpret clinical information, determine an assessment finding or make an appropriate clinical decision.



## 1. THE CLINICAL SITUATION

In this part, you will find a clinical situation like those in the exam along with questions about the situation. Please read the situation and answer the questions as if you were in the exam.

Don't forget to use the strategies suggested in Supplements 1 and 2 for reading the scenario and the question. Here is a reminder:

### The scenario

- Identify any information in the clinical situation that is important.  
*Highlight it in the text in the scenario.*
- Identify any information in the clinical situation that is critical.  
*Underline it in the text in the scenario.*
- Consider why this information is important and/or critical.

### The question

- Analyze the question:
  - Circle the key words in the question.
  - Indicate the significance of each key word identified.
  - Based on these elements, identify the objective of the question or the nursing activity the question relates to.
- Interpret the important and critical information in the situation while taking into account the objective of the question that you have identified.

### Context

Ms. Gascon, age 48, was admitted for cellulitis in her left forearm. Her medical history is: type 2 diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia. Her BMI is 25 and she is not a smoker.

Since she was admitted, Ms. Gascon has been having episodes of hyperglycemia when she wakes up in the morning. Therefore, the physician changed the medical orders yesterday:

- Maintain Humulin R insulin at meals and  $\frac{1}{2}$  dose HS, as per scale.
- Maintain Humulin N insulin at 16 units at breakfast and increase Humulin N insulin to 12 units at supper.

Ms. Gascon eats a piece of cheese and two crackers at 21:00.

At 5:00, you see that Ms. Gascon is trembling and that her skin is clammy. She tells you that she is having palpitations. You check her blood glucose with a glucometer and it is 3.0 mmol/L. Ms. Gascon drinks 175 ml of orange juice.

Fifteen minutes later, Ms. Gascon's blood glucose is 3.6 mmol/L. She says to you: "Can you get me a cracker with peanut butter? That's what I take to get my blood sugar level back to normal when I'm at home."



**QUESTION 1 (30 POINTS)**

Will you agree to do as she asks? Give the rationale for your answer.

Yes     No

Rationale:

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Ms. Gascon's condition has stabilized and you are talking with a nursing intern who is paired with you. She is wondering why Ms. Gascon had an episode of hypoglycemia this morning.

**QUESTION 2 (40 POINTS)**

Explain what probably caused Ms. Gascon's hypoglycemia.

Cause: \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

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Two days later, you meet with Ms. Gascon to prepare her discharge. You talked to her about her perception of her disease. She confirms to you that she follows her doctor's orders for taking her medication and checking her blood sugar level. You checked the method that she uses to inject the insulin.

Ms. Gascon says that the doctor gave her her glycated hemoglobin result (HbA<sub>1c</sub>) which is 8.4%. Besides following the dietary recommendations, she asks you what else she can do in connection with this result.

**QUESTION 3 (30 POINTS)**

What priority recommendation will you give Ms. Gascon?

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## 2. EXERCISE

This exercise will help you determine the best answer to each question and show you how doing this exercise can affect your answers.

Now that you have read the situation, identified the objective of each question and answered the questions in the previous section, do the following exercise:

For each question, determine the answer that is most appropriate for Ms. Gascon's clinical situation, making sure you:

- Draw a conclusion from your analysis and interpretation of the clinical information.
- Formulate the answer based on this conclusion and the objective of the question.



**QUESTION 1**

**Identify the objective of the question**

Will you agree to do as she asks? Give the rationale for your answer.

**OBJECTIVE OF THE QUESTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Analyze and interpret the important and critical clinical information in Ms. Gascon's situation**

**Determine the answer that is most appropriate for Ms. Gascon's clinical situation**

Conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information



[Empty box for analysis]



Answer formulated based on the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information and the objective of the question



[Empty box for final answer]



**QUESTION 2**

**Identify the objective of the question**

Explain what probably caused Ms. Gascon's hypoglycemia.

**OBJECTIVE OF THE QUESTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Analyze and interpret the important and critical clinical information in Ms. Gascon's situation**

**Determine the answer that is most appropriate for Ms. Gascon's clinical situation**

Conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information



Answer formulated based on the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information and the objective of the question





**QUESTION 3**

**Identify the objective of the question**

What priority recommendation will you give Ms. Gascon?

**OBJECTIVE OF THE QUESTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Analyze and interpret the important and critical clinical information in Ms. Gascon's situation**

**Determine the answer that is most appropriate for Ms. Gascon's clinical situation**

Conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information



[Empty box for analysis]



Answer formulated based on the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information and the objective of the question



[Empty box for final answer]



### 3. SOLUTION TO THE EXERCISE

#### Context

Ms. Gascon, age 48, was admitted for cellulitis in her left forearm. Her medical history is: type 2 diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia. Her BMI is 25 and she is not a smoker.

Since she was admitted, Ms. Gascon has been having episodes of hyperglycemia when she wakes up in the morning. Therefore, the physician changed the medical orders yesterday:

- Maintain Humulin R insulin at meals and ½ dose HS, as per scale.
- Maintain Humulin N insulin at 16 units at breakfast and increase Humulin N insulin to 12 units at supper.

Ms. Gascon eats a piece of cheese and two crackers at 21:00.

At 5:00, you see that Ms. Gascon is trembling and that her skin is clammy. She tells you that she is having palpitations. You check her blood glucose with a glucometer and it is 3.0 mmol/L. Ms. Gascon drinks 175 ml of orange juice.

Fifteen minutes later, Ms. Gascon's blood glucose is 3.6 mmol/L. She says to you: "Can you get me a cracker with peanut butter? That's what I take to get my blood sugar level back to normal when I'm at home."

**QUESTION 1**
**Identify the objective of the question**

Will you agree to do as she asks? Give the rationale for your answer.

The answer must indicate a **CLINICAL DECISION**

The answer must **GIVE THE RATIONALE FOR** or **EXPLAIN** the decision to agree or refuse to do as Ms. Gascon asks

**OBJECTIVE OF THE QUESTION:** Make a clinical decision and give the rationale for it

**Analyze and interpret the important and critical clinical information in Ms. Gascon's situation**

The medical orders for Ms. Gascon's insulin administration were changed yesterday. This morning, at 5:00, she has clinical manifestations of hypoglycemia and her blood glucose is 3.0 mmol/L. After taking 15 g of simple carbohydrates, Ms. Gascon's blood glucose is 3.6 mmol/L and the client would like to eat a snack that contains protein.

In cases of mild to moderate hypoglycemia, administering 15 g of simple carbohydrates raises blood glucose quickly, i.e., in 15 to 20 minutes. If the person's blood glucose is still below 4 mmol/L 15 minutes after being given a first serving of 15 g of simple carbohydrates, another 15 g of simple carbohydrates must be given. Giving foods that contain protein or fat would slow the body's absorption of carbohydrates.

The answer must indicate the clinical decision made regarding Ms. Gascon's request and provide an explanation to support the decision. The explanation must be based on scientific considerations and provide the reason for the nurse's clinical decision in the situation.

**Determine the answer that is most appropriate for Ms. Gascon's clinical situation**

Conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information



Do not give Ms. Gascon the food that she asks for, i.e., a cracker with peanut butter, because her blood glucose is still below 4 mmol/L 15 minutes after she was given a first serving of 15 g of simple carbohydrates. Giving foods that contain protein or fat would slow the body's absorption of carbohydrates.



Answer formulated based on the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information and the objective of the question



No.  
Giving foods that contain protein (such as a cracker with peanut butter) would slow the body's absorption of carbohydrates.



**Scenario**

Ms. Gascon's condition has stabilized and you are talking with a nursing intern who is paired with you. She is wondering why Ms. Gascon had an episode of hypoglycemia this morning.

**QUESTION 2**

**Identify the objective of the question**

Explain what probably caused Ms. Gascon's hypoglycemia.

- The answer must provide an **EXPLANATION** concerning the most likely
- **CAUSE** of Ms. Gascon's hypoglycemia this morning

**OBJECTIVE OF THE QUESTION:** Explain a change in a client's clinical condition

**Analyze and interpret the important and critical clinical information in Ms. Gascon's situation**

The medical orders for Ms. Gascon's insulin administration were changed yesterday because had been having episodes of hyperglycemia on waking in the morning. Her orders are as follows:

- Maintain Humulin R insulin at meals and ½ dose HS, as per scale.
- Maintain Humulin N insulin at 16 units at breakfast and increase Humulin N insulin to 12 units at supper.

This morning, when she wakes up at 5:00, Ms. Gascon has clinical manifestations of hypoglycemia and her blood glucose is 3.0 mmol/L.

Humulin R insulin is a fast-acting insulin; its peak action occurs between 2 h and 3-4 h after subcutaneous injection. This type of insulin does not have any effect on blood glucose levels on waking in the morning.

Humulin N insulin is an intermediate-acting insulin with a time to peak action of 4 to 12 h. Therefore, it can have an effect on blood glucose levels on waking in the morning.

The answer must provide a reason for Ms. Gascon's episode of hypoglycemia this morning that takes the analysis and interpretation of the information into account.

**Determine the answer that is most appropriate for Ms. Gascon's clinical situation**

Conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information



The hypoglycemia this morning was caused by the higher dose of Humulin N insulin at supper because it is an intermediate-acting insulin with a time to peak action of 4 to 12 h.



Answer formulated based on the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information and the objective of the question



**Cause:** Higher dose of Humulin N insulin at supper.

**Explanation:** Humulin N insulin is an intermediate-acting insulin with a time to peak action of 4 to 12 h. Therefore, it can have an effect on blood glucose levels on waking in the morning.

**Scenario**

Two days later, you meet with Ms. Gascon to prepare her discharge. You talked to her about her perception of her disease. She confirms to you that she follows her doctor's orders for taking her medication and checking her blood sugar level. You checked the method that she uses to inject the insulin.

Ms. Gascon says that the doctor gave her her glyated hemoglobin result (HbA<sub>1c</sub>) which is 8.4%. Besides following the dietary recommendations, she asks you what else she can do in connection with this result.



### QUESTION 3

#### Identify the objective of the question

What priority recommendation will you give Ms. Gascon?

The answer must identify the **RECOMMENDATION** the nurse will give Ms. Gascon in connection with her glycated hemoglobin result

The answer must identify **ONE PRIORITY** recommendation

**OBJECTIVE OF THE QUESTION:** Give the teaching (clinical intervention)

#### Analyze and interpret the important and critical clinical information in Ms. Gascon's situation

Ms. Gascon's glycated hemoglobin (HbA<sub>1c</sub>) result is higher than the target value in the treatment of diabetes which is usually  $\leq 7\%$  or  $\leq 6.5\%$ . The result indicates that Ms. Gascon's mean blood glucose is nearly 11.4 mmol/L.

Ms. Gascon's BMI is 25 and she is not a smoker. Therefore, the main way she can improve her blood glucose control is by making sure she has a regular, balanced diet, performing self-monitoring of blood glucose, taking the medications as prescribed and doing at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic physical activity every week. Ms. Gascon already follows the recommendations for self-monitoring of blood glucose and for taking the medications. Besides following the dietary recommendations, she asks you what else she can do in connection with her hemoglobin result.

The answer must take the important information into account and identify the priority recommendation the nurse will give Ms. Gascon to help her to get her blood glucose results back to normal and improve her glycated hemoglobin result.

#### Determine the answer that is most appropriate for Ms. Gascon's clinical situation

Conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information

Doing at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic physical activity every week is the priority recommendation to give.

Answer formulated based on the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the information and the objective of the question

**Do at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic physical activity every week.**

## KEY MESSAGES FOR THE EXAM

- Read the clinical situation carefully and use the strategies suggested in Supplement 1 to identify important information and critical information.
  - Read the question carefully and use the strategies suggested in Supplement 2 to identify the objective of the question so that you clearly understand what is being asked.
  - Analyze and interpret the important and critical information in the clinical situation while taking into account the objective of the question that you have identified.
  - Formulate, precisely and concisely, the answer that is most appropriate out of the possible answers based on the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the important and critical information.
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