



AYURVEDIC PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION EXAM STUDY GUIDE

As an emerging healthcare profession in the U.S., your participation in the Ayurvedic Practitioner National Certification Exam process is important and integral. Building off of educational competencies and standards developed by the National Ayurvedic Medical Association, NAMACB certification is the first well-established credentialing process for Ayurvedic medicine in the United States.

The following study guide will help you successfully prepare for the NAMACB Ayurvedic Practitioner Exam.

Information about the Ayurvedic Practitioner Exam:

- The exam has five sections, outlined here:
 - Foundations of Ayurveda
 - Concepts of Ayurveda
 - Assessment and Diagnosis
 - Recommendations, Treatment, and Other Interventions
 - Categories of Cikitsa
- The exam is comprised of 100 multiple-choice questions.
- ***The exam contains Sanskrit terminology. You may cross-reference study with our AHC Resource Guide to familiarize yourself with Sanskrit that may be on the exam***
 - This study guide holds 15-sample questions.
- You will have 150 minutes to complete the exam.
- The AP Exam costs \$450 USD.
- The exam is Pass/Fail.
- There are two versions of the exam you may choose from:
 - [On-Site Proctored \(OSP\)](#)
 - [On-Line Proctored \(OLP\)](#)
- Please register for the AP exam [here](#).
- You will receive your results for the exam within three weeks of taking it.
- For any questions, please contact namacb@ayurvedanama.org

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FOUNDATIONS OF ĀYURVEDA

Section I

Section Objectives:

1. Identify the definition and scope of Āyurveda.
2. Identify the branches of Āyurveda.
3. Identify the basic topics of the History of Āyurveda and Bṛhat Trayī.
4. Identify the 24 entities mentioned in Sāṃkhya Philosophy.
5. Identify the four Vedas, identify which Veda Āyurveda is from, identify which Vedas have knowledge relevant to the development of Āyurveda.
6. Identify the Śad- Darśana, and identify the philosophy that is the most influential in clinical examination.

Sample Questions:

Question 1: From which of the four Vedas does Āyurveda stem?

- A. Rig Veda
- B. Yajura Veda
- C. Sama Veda
- D. Atharva Veda

Question 2: Which text is part of the Bṛhat Trayī?

- A. Mādhava Nidāna
- B. Bhāva Prakāśa
- C. Caraka Saṃhitā
- D. Saraṅgadhara Saṃhitā

Question 3: Which term means "pure consciousness"?

- A. Manas
- B. Buddhi
- C. Pūruṣa
- D. Prakṛti

Question 4: Understanding the symptoms with inference when examining a client is explained under which Darśana?

- A. Nyāya

- B. Sāmkhya
- C. Vaiśeṣika
- D. Pūrva Mīmāṃsā

CONCEPTS OF ĀYURVEDA

Section II

Section Objectives:

1. Identify the 20 opposing qualities (gurvādi guṇas) in the prakṛti and vikṛti, their role and influence.
2. Given a clinical scenario of a client including a disease, identify the guṇas that are involved.
3. Identify what constitutes excess, deficiency and the imbalance of the guṇas in doṣa vikṛti.
4. Given a clinical scenario including a person with a constitutional type, identify how to balance the guṇas through proper daily and seasonal routines.
5. Given a clinical scenario, identify the information that is most effectively gained from the Three-fold Diagnostic Method (Trividha Parīkṣā).
6. Given a clinical scenario, identify the information that is most effectively gained from the Eight-fold Diagnostic Method (Aṣṭavidha Parīkṣā).
7. Given a clinical scenario, identify the information that is most effectively gained from the Ten-fold Diagnostic Method (Daśavidha Parīkṣā).
8. Given a case study including a doshic imbalance involving the state of doṣas, and sub-doṣas, dhātus, upadhātus, and srotas determined through Interview/Questioning (Prāśna) , interpret the information. (e.g., questions about the current state of digestion, elimination, sleep, stress level, energy level and emotional level).
9. Given a case study involving a disease, the state of doṣas, and sub-doṣas, dhātus, upadhātus, and srotas determined through observation (darśana) , interpret the information.
10. Given a case study involving a disease, the state of doṣas, and sub-doṣas, dhātus, upadhātus, and srotas determined through palpation (sparśana), interpret the information.
11. Given a case study involving a disease, identify the specific doṣas, and sub-doṣas, dhātus, upadhātus, and srotas.
12. Given a case study including questions and answers from a client, identify the current state of agni.
13. Given a case study including questions and answers about the client including symptoms about abnormal agni, identify the clinical state of agni.
14. Given a case study including questions and answers about the digestion of a client including symptoms about abnormal agni, identify the clinical state of agni.

15. Given a case study including questions and answers about the elimination of a client including symptoms about abnormal agni, identify the clinical state of agni.
16. Given a case study including signs and symptoms of āma in a client, identify the presence and state of ama given the information in the clinical condition.
17. Given a case study including observations of the tongue and body odor, and the patient's descriptions of their stool and urine, identify pathological conditions including ama and agni.
18. Given a case study including observations of the urination, elimination, sweat patterns, and Doshic influence, identify pathological conditions including ama and agni.
19. Given a case study, identify the symptoms that would be expected in a state of imbalanced ojas (visramsa, vyapat, kṣaya).

Sample Questions:

Question 1:

A 30-year-old female client presents complaining of a severe burning sensation in the abdomen, pain in the chest and a sour taste in the mouth. Occasionally she vomits a greenish, yellowish liquid. The client states that she has been under severe stress for the last 8 months. She sleeps only 4-5 hours a night. During the last 2 days she has noticed rashes and itching all over her body. She weighs 130 lbs. and her height is 5'2". Her tongue has no coating and is red in color. Her pulse shows high pitta and her diet consists of toast with 3-4 cups of coffee for breakfast, a sandwich with spicy chips for lunch, and pizza, spicy soup or other oily fried items for dinner.

Which guna is involved in the pathology of this condition?

- A. Sīta
- B. Uṣṇa
- C. Sthūla
- D. Rūkṣa

Question 2: Which combination of the guṇas indicate a Pitta vikṛti?

- A. Deficient uṣṇa and excess manda
- B. Excess snigdha, uṣṇa, and tikṣṇa
- C. Deficient picchila, laghu, and sthira
- D. Excess sukṣma and deficient khara

Question 3:

A 40-year-old female client comes in because she is stressed, not sleeping well, and states that at least two complaints have been filed by her co-workers saying

that she is difficult to work with. The health practitioner notices that she never complete a sentence without the client interrupting her and she is very disapproving of the practitioner's office and staff.

What is recommended?

- A. Massage with a herbal paste of triphala
- B. Add dried ginger powder to the evening meal
- C. Take a restorative yoga class three times a week
- D. Take a teaspoon of cinnamon with milk at night for sleep

Question 4:

A 61-year-old Pitta Kapha male client presents with gradual worsening of pain down the left leg to the foot. The client denies any recent trauma. The pain has increased over the last three months and is primarily dull with occasional tingling. The client has also gained 10 lbs. over the last 6 months. On further questioning, the client admits to appetite loss, a sense of heaviness overall, and increasing drowsiness. Clinical exam is within normal limits with no muscle wasting.

Which dosa(s) imbalance is inferred using the Ten-fold Diagnostic Method?

- A. Vāta alone
- B. Pitta alone
- C. Vāta and Kapha
- D. Pitta and Kapha

ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSIS

Section III

Section Objectives:

1. Given a case study including information given by the client, identify the questions that should be asked to more precisely determine the vikṛti of the client.
2. Given a case study, identify treatment options that are available and identify how to work with a co-management team to treat the client.
3. Given a case study including a client's vital signs (raktacāpa), identify the course of action the practitioner should take.
4. Given a case study including a portion of a client case history that includes factors leading to disease, identify and interpret the information that would cause the general doṣic imbalance with the client.
5. Given a case study, identify the doṣa vṛddhi, kṣaya, and doṣa gati.
6. Given a case study, identify the dhātu vṛddhi, kṣaya, and duṣṭi.
7. Given a case study, identify the mala vṛddhi and kṣaya.
8. Given a case study, identify the doṣa gati.
9. Given a case study, identify causes of doṣas moving from koṣṭha to śākha and from śākha to koṣṭha.
10. Given a case study, identify relationship between the doṣas, dhātu, and malas.
11. Given a case study, identify srotāmsi involved.
12. Give a case study, identify āvaraṇa pathology and its signs.
13. Given a case study, identify various vyādhis.
14. Given a case study, identify vyādhi classifications.
15. Given a case study, identify nanatmaja vikaras: vataja, pittaja and kaphaja.
16. Given a case study, identify classical diseases including how they are described in Madhav Nidhan, any differences seen in the samhitas regarding these diseases and the opinions of the chief commentators.
17. Given a case study, identify the srota(s) that are most involved.
18. Given a case study, identify the organ systems that are most involved.
19. Given a case study, identify the pathology in terms of the stage of disease (samprapti) along with the involvement of the doṣa, sub-doṣa, dhātu and srotas in the disease and also determine the state of agni in the disease.

Sample Questions: these questions seem like they should come under the next section.

Question 1:

How is prabhāva defined?

- A. Unique effect of herb or food on the individual

- B. Taste of the herb or food perceived by the tongue
- C. End result of transformation of food or herb on the body
- D. Potency of the food or herb with which action takes place

Question 2:

Which food pairing is an incompatible food combination?

- A. Milk and ghee
- B. Rice and beans
- C. Mung dal and quinoa
- D. Yogurt and fresh oranges

Question 3:

A 49-year-old Pitta male client, a software engineer, presents with the symptoms of mild to moderate ocular headaches with additional symptoms of blurriness, pain in the eyes, light sensitivity, and occasional sound sensitivity. The client drinks a lot of coffee and has been getting to bed late this week due to a work project.

What is the most appropriate Ayurvedic Cikitsa to improve this doṣic imbalance?

- A. Sirodhāra and picchu with sesame oil. Meditate, avoid naps, include garlic and white onions in his diet.
- B. Nasya and karna pūrnam with warm sesame oil. Take naps every 90 minutes, include tila, and hiṅgu in his diet.
- C. Eye wash with triphala phāṇṭa, netra tarpana with maha triphala ghṛta. Avoid caffeine and include ghee in the diet.
- D. Eye wash with warm water and neti with saline water. Substitute tea for coffee and eat cooked and spicy vāta pacifying food.

Question 4:

What are two signs of over-oleation in the client in Pūrva Karma? (Choose two.)

- A. Muscle ache
- B. Constipation
- C. Redness of the eyes
- D. Heaviness in the body
- E. Nausea and/or diarrhea

RECOMMENDATIONS, TREATMENT AND OTHER INTERVENTIONS

Section IV

Section Objectives:

1. Identify the qualities and effects exhibited by each of the six tastes.
2. Given a case study, identify specific food and spices the client should and should not eat.
3. Given a case study, identify duration of fasting, when to fast, and which foods are appropriate for preparing for fasting.
4. Given a case study about a client including information about prakṛti, vikṛti, agni and āma, identify how to properly prepare food and meals, identify the proper rituals for eating for the client, and the use of warm water.
5. Given a case study, identify how to adapt the client's diet based on the season, their age, and their geographic location.
6. Identify the definitions of rasa, virya, vipak, and prabhav
7. Identify the definition of prabhav.
8. Identify incompatible food combinations.
9. Given a case study, determine the times the client should rest, how long the client should rest, the time the client should get up, and the time the client should go to bed.
10. Given a case study, determine when the client should rest, eat, the number of meals to be eaten, when different liquids should be consumed, when exercise should be done, and daily hygiene requirements.
11. Given a case study, identify adjustments that should be made to a daily routine based on season and geographical location.
12. Given a case study, identify lifestyle changes that should be made and identify how to support the client who is not being successful in making the changes.
13. Given a case study, identify how the client can improve problems with relationships, personal, spiritual awareness, workplace, etc.
14. Given a clinical scenario, identify how a sense was misused, or how it should be changed to correct use (aromatic, taste, touch, sound, visual).
15. Given a case study, recommend the appropriate herbs to balance agni, eliminate āma and support the malas while protecting and building ojas.
16. Given a case study, identify the custom herbal formulations that include the use of herbs, minerals or other natural substances for internal or external use with consideration of dose (mātra), vehicle (anupāna) and timing (auśadha kāla).
17. Given a case study, recommend herbal and related medicines for the purpose of treating disease.
18. Given a case study, recommend herbal and related medicines for the purpose of treating disease.
19. Given a case study, identify recommendations and identify how to implement the therapy with the goal of pacification of the doṣas specific to herbal therapies.

20. Given a case study, identify the recommendations and implement the therapy with the goal of increasing agni (dīpana) and metabolize āma (pācana) specific to herbal therapies.
21. Identify the foods, food groups, sensory therapies, exercise, and heat therapies that pacify doshas (vata, pitta or kapha) and do not aggravate other doshas (vata, pitta or kapha).
22. Identify signs of over and under oleation in a client.
23. Given a case study, Make recommendations and provide appropriate case management including the following therapies: Pūrva karma diet, Abhyanga, Udvartana, Swedana, Shirodhara, Katibasti, Hridbasti, Udarabasti, and Netrabasti.
24. Given a case study, make recommendations and provide appropriate case management to properly design a pradhāna karma program to manage the patient as he/she goes through the program including Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya, and Rakta moksha.
25. Given a case study, make recommendations and provide appropriate case management to properly design a paścāt karma program and to manage the patient as he/she goes through the program.
26. Given a case study, make recommendations and provide appropriate case management to properly design a paścāt karma program that includes restoration of strong digestive fire to nourish, strengthen and balance the newly detoxified tissues by recommending rasayana herbs according to prakriti.
27. Given a case study, recommend herbal and related medicines for the purpose of rasayana.
28. Given a case study, identify the treatments and interventions to promote tonification including dietary, herbal, internal oil, external oil, daily routines and lifestyle therapies.

Sample Questions:

Question 1:

A 60-year-old female client presents with sudden onset of shortness of breath and chest pain radiating to the left arm. The client describes her chest pain as squeezing, aching type and reports lightheadedness, nausea and cold sweat. On examination, the client's pulse is irregular and her blood pressure is high. The client has been treated by an Ayurvedic practitioner for general joint pain for the past two months. No other significant past medical history or family history was recorded.

What is an appropriate management plan for this client?

- A. Suggest anti-vāta diet
- B. Suggest Daśamūla tea with adraka

- C. Call 911 and refer the client to the emergency room
- D. Ask the client to rest and apply some anti-vāta oil for the pain

CATEGORIES OF CIKITSĀ

Section V

Section Objectives:

1. Given a case study, identify the cikitsā category of treatment that should be used in treating the client.
2. Given a clinical scenario, identify recommendations and provide treatments and interventions to safely and supportively apply these practices to the pre natal woman including food, lifestyle, utilize herbs to support and treat, and treat woman who are experiencing illness.
3. Given a clinical scenario, identify recommendations and provide treatments and interventions to safely and supportively apply these practices to the post natal woman including food, lifestyle, utilize herbs to support and treat, and treat woman who are experiencing illness.
4. Given a clinical scenario, identify recommendations and provide treatments and interventions to support couples experiencing infertility to restore normal procreative abilities.
5. Given a clinical scenario, identify recommendations and provide treatments and interventions to provide supportive care for newborn infants.
6. Given a clinical scenario about providing treatments and interventions for an adult, identify what should be done differently for a child of a given age.
7. Given a clinical scenario about a specific disease of the organs around and above the neck region, identify treatments and interventions including herbal formulas or herb preparations.
8. Given a clinical scenario, identify effective daily routines, changes to a person's behavior or lifestyle and herbal remedies to pacify the doṣas, balance prāṇa, tejas and ojas and cultivate sattva.
9. Given a clinical scenario, identify herbal remedies to pacify the doṣas, balance prāṇa, tejas and ojas but also treat specific disease conditions.
10. Given a clinical scenario, identify dietary remedies to pacify the doṣas, balance prāṇa, tejas and ojas but also treating specific disease conditions.
11. Given a clinical scenario, identify conduct correction to pacify the doṣas, balance prāṇa, tejas and ojas but also treat specific disease conditions.
12. Given a clinical scenario, identify sensory therapies that not only balance the doṣas of the mind and restore a healthy balance of prana-tejas and ojas but also are an important part of treating specific disease conditions including visual (color), olfactory (aromas, netī, nasya) , auditory (mantra and music) and touch (massage/oil therapies).
13. Identify situations when a referral should be made.

14. Identify situations when referral to a Jyotiṣi would be appropriate.
15. Identify situations when referral to a Vāstu would be appropriate.
16. Identify situations when referral to a competent Western medical practitioner would be appropriate.

Question 1:

What should be recommend to a client that presents consistently with a blood pressure of 190/110?

- A. Refer to a licensed medical doctor
- B. Incorporate yoga and 20 minutes daily meditation two times a day
- C. Dramatically decrease alcohol consumption and salt intake and start exercising regularly
- D. Start taking herbs such as Arjuna (*Terminalia arjuna*) and Aśvaganda (*Withania somnifera*) on a daily basis

ANSWER KEY

Foundations of Āyurveda:

Question 1:

Correct Answer: D

Question 2:

Correct Answer: C

Question 3:

Correct Answer: C

Question 4:

Correct Answer: A

Concepts of Āyurveda:

Question 1:

Correct Answer: B

Question 2:

Correct Answer: B

Question 3:
Correct Answer: C

Question 4:
Correct Answer: C

Assessment and Diagnosis:

Question 1:
Correct Answer: A

Question 2:
Correct Answer: D

Question 3:
Correct Answer: C

Question 4:
Correct Answer: D, E

Recommendations, Treatment and Other Interventions:

Question 1:
Correct Answer: C

Categories of Chikitsa:

Question 1:
Correct Answer: A

REFERENCE BOOKS FOR AP EXAM

Classical Texts:

- Caraka Saṃhitā C.S.
- Suśurutha Saṃhitā S.S.
- Aṣṭāṅga Samgraha A.S.
- Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdayam A.H.
- Sāraṅgadhara Saṃhitā Sha. Sa.
- Bhāva Prakāśa Nighantu Bha. Pra.
- Mādhava Nidāna M.N.
- Yoga Ratnākara Y.R.

Western References:

- Harrison's Internal Medicine