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VICTORIAN NURSING COUNCIL

Nurses Act 1958

Nurses' Final Examination—General Nurse Training

2ND APRIL, 1975

SURGICAL NURSING

Time allowed: Three hours

Important:—

Read the questions very carefully.

Answer only what is asked as no marks will be given for irrelevant material.

ALL questions are compulsory.

1. Jennifer is 18 months old and has been admitted to hospital following severe scalds of her face, chest, arms and hands covering 25 per cent. of her body, which occurred when she fell into a tub of almost boiling water. Her mother accompanies the child, and, naturally enough, is most distressed.
- (a) Explain the treatment and care which would need to be carried out in the first hour. (Omit treatment of burnt areas). —[8 marks]
  - (b) How will you help Jennifer's mother to be less distressed? —[3 marks]
  - (c) The doctor decides on open treatment for the burns, except for the hands, which will be treated by the closed method.  
Describe the nursing care of Jennifer under the following headings:—
    - (i) Measures used to prevent infection of exposed burns. —[5 marks]
    - (ii) Nutritional needs. —[4 marks]
    - (iii) Mouth and eye care. —[2 marks]—[22 marks]
2. Mr. Mathers is admitted to the ward and is diagnosed as having a perforated peptic ulcer.
- (a) List six (6) features likely to be present. —[3 marks]
  - (b) He has been X-rayed prior to arrival in the ward. How would the plain abdominal X-ray have helped to confirm the diagnosis? —[1 mark]
  - (c) Why is it necessary to aspirate the gastric contents as soon as possible? —[1 mark]
  - (d) Following surgery, which included oversewing of the ulcer, explain the care which would need to be given in relation to the fluid and gastric tube management. —[5 marks]
- [10 marks]

3. John Bowes was involved in an industrial accident and sustained a midshaft fracture of his right femur.

John is transferred to theatre where internal fixation is performed. Following this, skin traction is applied and the limb is supported in a Thomas splint.

- (a) What type of internal fixation would be used? —[1 mark]  
 (b) What is the purpose of the skin traction? —[1 mark]  
 (c) In order to maintain traction on the limb, what would you need to check frequently? —[3 marks]  
 (d) Describe the care of the affected limb. —[4 marks]  
 (e) After surgery, John complains of acute dyspnoea and severe chest pain, and is diagnosed as having a fat embolism.  
 (i) Why is this likely to have occurred? —[1 mark]  
 (ii) What other specific observations would help confirm diagnosis? —[3 marks] —[13 marks]

4. A female patient is admitted to hospital with obstructive jaundice due to a stone impacted in the common bile duct. X

- (a) Why is cholecystography contraindicated in patients with obstructive jaundice? —[1 mark]  
 (b) Vitamin K. is ordered prior to surgery.  
 (i) Explain why this drug is necessary. —[2 marks]  
 (ii) By what route is it administered?  
 Following surgery which included cholecystectomy and choledochostomy and insertion of T-tube:—  
 (c) In what position will the patient be nursed after recovery from anaesthetic? Include reason for your answer. —[2 marks]  
 (d) How can tension on the T-tube be avoided? —[2 marks]  
 (e) Which observations will indicate patency of the common bile duct prior to the removal of the T-tube? —[2 marks]  
 (f) State two (2) specific complications of this operation. —[1 mark] —[10 marks]

5. Mrs. Green, a patient in your ward, has had a radical mastectomy for breast carcinoma.

- (a) What specific measures may be employed:—  
 (i) to aid healing of the wound; —[3 marks]  
 (ii) to assist the patient regain maximum use of the arm on the affected side? —[2 marks]  
 (b) List two (2) specific complications which may be associated with the operation of radical mastectomy. —[1 mark] —[6 marks]

6. A patient is admitted with suspected rupture of the spleen. He is alert, reasonably comfortable, and appears satisfactory on admission.

- (a) Read the following records of blood pressure and pulse rate, which are taken following admission, and state at about what time you would suspect bleeding and report to the doctor.

Time	B.P.	Pulse Rate
11 a.m.	130	68
11.30 a.m.	130	80
12 md.	135	88
12.30 p.m.	130	96
1.00 p.m.	130	100
1.30 p.m.	95	120

—[1 mark]

- (b) What other features may be seen in the patient that could indicate bleeding? —[3 marks]
- (c) In what position would you place the patient if bleeding is suspected? —[1 mark]
- (d) State two (2) other aspects of care the nurse could administer to the patient while awaiting the doctor. —[2 marks]
- (e) What equipment may be required by the doctor for commencement of treatment? —[1 mark]
- (f) What operative procedure will be carried out to stop bleeding? —[1 mark] —[9 marks]
7. A youth, eighteen (18) years of age, has been admitted to the ward following a head injury sustained when he was knocked from his bicycle. He is unconscious at the time of admission although is responding to painful stimuli.
- (a) List four (4) important early signs which would lead you to suspect the onset of cerebral compression. —[2 marks]
- (b) What measures would be taken to ensure an adequate airway? —[2 marks]
- (c) Why may fluids be restricted in the first 24 hours? —[1 mark]
- (d) If the patient remains unconscious after 48 hours, his nutritional state will need to be maintained.
- Each day, what will be required in relation to:—
- (i) volume of fluid intake;
- (ii) number of calories;
- (iii) grammes of protein? —[3 marks] —[8 marks]
8. In preparing a patient for a general anaesthetic and for abdominal surgery:—
- (a) Why is adequate skin preparation important? —[1 mark]
- (b) Why is it necessary to fast the patient for 8 hours? —[1 mark]
- (c) Why is premedication desirable prior to anaesthesia? —[2 marks]
- (d) Give an example(s) of the group(s) of drugs used for premedication. Include dosages. —[2 marks] —[6 marks]
9. What are the reasons for the following:—
- (a) using an indwelling urethral catheter following an abdomino-perineal resection of the rectum; —[2 marks]
- (b) performing an intravenous pyelogram prior to a nephrectomy; —[1 mark]
- (c) checking the volume of the radial pulse following injury to the elbow; —[1 mark]
- (d) giving Lugol's Iodine immediately prior to thyroidectomy in a patient with thyrotoxicosis? —[1 mark] —[5 marks]
10. A man, sixty-eight (68) years of age, is admitted to the ward with a 4-year history of intermittent claudication.
- (a) What underlying condition may give rise to the above? —[1 mark]
- (b) (i) What does the term intermittent claudication mean? —[1 mark]
- (ii) Why does it occur? —[1 mark]
- (c) What other signs and symptoms are likely to be present? —[2 marks] —[5 marks]
11. Define the following and give one (1) condition with which each may be associated:—
- (a) Septicaemia.
- (b) Paradoxical respirations.
- (c) Spontaneous pneumothorax.
- (d) Sequestrum. —[6 marks]