

# VICTORIAN NURSING COUNCIL

Nurses Act 1958

## Registration Examination—(General Nurses)

1ST APRIL, 1981

### SURGICAL NURSING

#### SECTION B

**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. A woman aged 41 years is admitted for a sub-total thyroidectomy.
- (a) Explain the significance of the following pre-operative tests:—
    - (i) Serum thyroxine levels. —[1 mark]
    - (ii) X-ray of neck and chest. —[1 mark]
    - (iii) Thyroid scan. —[1 mark]
  - (b) The patient is to be euthyroid before surgery. What does this mean? —[1 mark]
  - (c) Why is the patient often given iodine before surgery? —[1 mark]
  - (d) Describe in detail the nursing care given this patient in the first 8 hours after operation. Structure your answer to include:—
    - (i) general post-operative care, —[5 marks]
    - (ii) specific post-operative care including the significance of observations which may indicate onset of complications. —[10 marks]
- [20 marks]
2. Explain the reasons for each of the following nursing care measures applicable to an orthopaedic patient:—
- (a) Elevation of a leg in plaster if the patient's toes show signs of swelling. —[1 mark]
  - (b) Ensuring that there is a pillow between the knees prior to turning a patient following the insertion of a nail and plate. —[1 mark]
  - (c) Lifting without turning a patient with a fractured femur, treated by skeletal traction, when giving pressure care. —[1 mark]
  - (d) Checking that weights on traction are hanging free and exerting their full force. —[1 mark]
  - (e) Checking that the hand is slightly above elbow level when supported in a sling with plaster for a Colles' fracture. —[1 mark]
  - (f) Observing the urine of a patient recently admitted with an anterior fracture of pelvis. —[1 mark]
  - (g) Encouraging quadriceps exercises on an hourly basis 48 hours after meniscectomy. —[1 mark]
  - (h) Care of the wound site in a patient in skeletal traction with a Steimann's Pin through the upper end of tibia. —[1 mark]
  - (i) Care that the lower half of a bivalved plaster is never removed. —[1 mark]
  - (j) Checking that adhesive plaster on a patient with flail chest is secure (where this type of treatment has been used). —[1 mark]
- [10 marks]

3. Mr Turner, 60 years of age, is admitted to the ward to be prepared for a transurethral resection of the prostate gland.
- How would you explain to Mr Turner what is meant by the term transurethral resection? —[2 marks]
  - List four (4) pre-operative investigations which would be undertaken. —[2 marks]
  - Following the operation, Mr Turner has a bladder irrigation in progress.
    - What is its purpose? —[1 mark]
    - What observations are made to ensure that the irrigation is achieving its purpose? —[3 marks]
  - What information should be given to Mr Turner prior to his discharge from hospital? —[2 marks]
- [10 marks]
4. A 10-year-old boy has fallen from a roof and is lying injured. He is fully conscious. You are called to give first aid.
- What information can be obtained from the boy to assist in determining whether or not he has a fractured spine? —[2 marks]
  - Describe how the boy should be transferred to an ambulance in a way that will minimise complications. —[3 marks]
- [5 marks]
5. Contrast the difference between superficial epidermal burns and full thickness burns using the following headings: —
- healing, *regeneration of epidermis* —[2 marks]
  - tendency to scarring, —[2 marks]
  - likely development of contractures, *deep - may involve muscles and contractures* —[2 marks]
- [6 marks]
6. You are assigned to care for a patient who has had a partial gastrectomy for peptic ulceration. On return to the ward he has a nasogastric tube in situ.
- What is the main purpose of this tube? —[1 mark]
  - Describe the nursing management of the nasogastric tube. —[3 marks]
  - What are the criteria for the commencement of oral fluids and what subsequent fluid diet regime would be initiated? —[4 marks]
  - Prior to his discharge, what advice would be given to this patient in relation to his diet and daily activities? —[4 marks]
- [12 marks]
7. Regardless of mass immunization programmes, several persons die annually in Australia of tetanus.
- Name the causative organism of tetanus. —[1 mark]
    - In what way does this particular microorganism affect the body tissues? —[1 mark]
  - What features of a wound are conducive to tetanus infection? —[2 marks]
  - Tetanus Vaccine is frequently administered as part of an active immunization programme.
    - Explain what is meant by active immunization. —[2 marks]
    - How many doses of Tetanus Vaccine are given and at what intervals? —[1 mark]
- [7 marks]