

## SURGICAL NURSING MCQs – NMC GHANA LICENSURE PREP

### 1. Which of the following is the primary purpose of preoperative fasting?

- A. Prevent dehydration
- B. Ensure bowel clearance
- C. Prevent aspiration during anaesthesia
- D. Promote appetite post-surgery

**Answer:** C

**Rationale:** Fasting minimizes the risk of **aspiration of gastric contents** during anaesthesia induction, which could lead to aspiration pneumonia.

### 2. Which condition requires immediate surgical intervention?

- A. Inguinal hernia
- B. Acute appendicitis
- C. Umbilical hernia
- D. Haemorrhoids

**Answer:** B

**Rationale:** **Acute appendicitis** is a surgical emergency to prevent rupture and peritonitis.

### 3. The best way to verify a nasogastric (NG) tube placement before surgery is:

- A. Injecting air and auscultating
- B. Observing drainage
- C. Aspirating gastric contents and checking pH
- D. Asking the patient

**Answer:** C

**Rationale:** Checking **pH of aspirate** ensures proper NG placement;  $\text{pH} \leq 5$  confirms gastric location.

### 4. A major sign of haemorrhage in the immediate post-op period is:

- A. Warm, dry skin
- B. Bradycardia
- C. Hypertension
- D. Rapid, thready pulse

**Answer:** D

**Rationale:** Haemorrhage leads to **hypovolemia**, causing a rapid, weak pulse and hypotension.

### 5. Informed consent for surgery must be obtained by the:

- A. Nurse
- B. Surgeon
- C. Anaesthetist
- D. Ward In-Charge

**Answer:** B

**Rationale:** The **surgeon** is responsible for explaining the procedure and obtaining legal consent.

### 6. A priority nursing diagnosis for a post-op abdominal surgery patient is:

- A. Risk for constipation
- B. Fluid volume excess

- C. Risk for infection
- D. Disturbed body image

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Post-op wounds are susceptible to **infection**, making it a priority concern.

**7. A patient develops wound dehiscence. What is the first nursing action?**

- A. Apply antiseptic
- B. Cover with sterile moist dressing
- C. Administer antibiotics
- D. Notify surgeon after shift

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** **Sterile saline dressing** maintains moisture and protects tissues until surgical review.

**8. Which lab result should be checked before surgery to evaluate bleeding risk?**

- A. Haemoglobin
- B. Platelet count
- C. Blood urea
- D. Blood glucose

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** **Platelets** play a key role in clotting; low counts increase bleeding risk.

**9. Which is a sterile part of a surgical gown?**

- A. Upper sleeves
- B. Back of gown
- C. Under arms
- D. Waist area

**Answer: A**

**Rationale:** Only the **front from chest to waist** and **sleeves above elbow** are considered sterile.

**10. The best way to prevent deep vein thrombosis postoperatively is:**

- A. Massage legs
- B. Encourage early ambulation
- C. Give sedatives
- D. Keep patient flat

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** **Early mobilization** improves venous return and reduces clot formation risk.

**11. The first sign of post-op infection is usually:**

- A. Nausea
- B. Tachycardia
- C. Fever
- D. Vomiting

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** **Fever** is an early systemic indicator of infection.

**12. When preparing a sterile field, the nurse must:**

- A. Open sterile packages away from self
- B. Touch sterile gloves with bare hands
- C. Reach over the sterile field
- D. Blow to dry wet areas

**Answer:** A

**Rationale:** Opening packages **away** avoids contaminating the field.

**13. Which is an early sign of shock in a post-op patient?**

- A. Slow pulse
- B. Increased urine output
- C. Pale, clammy skin
- D. High oxygen saturation

**Answer:** C

**Rationale:** **Peripheral vasoconstriction** in shock leads to pallor and clammy skin.

**14. Why is incentive spirometry used after abdominal surgery?**

- A. To prevent hypertension
- B. To avoid bowel obstruction
- C. To prevent atelectasis and pneumonia
- D. To promote urination

**Answer:** C

**Rationale:** Deep breathing with a spirometer **expands lungs** and prevents **post-op pulmonary complications**.

**15. Which electrolyte is most affected by gastric suctioning?**

- A. Sodium
- B. Potassium
- C. Calcium
- D. Magnesium

**Answer:** B

**Rationale:** **Potassium** is lost through gastric secretions, risking hypokalaemia.

**16. A patient is NPO preoperatively. The nurse should:**

- A. Give IV fluids to hydrate
- B. Encourage chewing gum
- C. Provide water with meds
- D. Allow tea

**Answer:** A

**Rationale:** **IV fluids** prevent dehydration when oral intake is restricted.

**17. Which of the following increases surgical wound healing?**

- A. High fat diet
- B. Smoking
- C. Diabetes
- D. Adequate protein intake

**Answer:** D

**Rationale:** **Protein** is essential for **tissue repair** and collagen formation.

**18. A Jackson-Pratt drain works by:**

- A. Passive drainage
- B. Gravity suction
- C. Negative pressure
- D. Irrigation

**Answer:** C

**Rationale:** A closed, negative-pressure system collects wound drainage.

**19. Which position is used for abdominal surgery post-op to ease breathing?**

- A. Supine
- B. High Fowler's
- C. Prone
- D. Trendelenburg

**Answer:** B

**Rationale:** High Fowler's aids lung expansion post-abdominal surgery.

**20. The term "dehiscence" refers to:**

- A. Delayed healing
- B. Wound bleeding
- C. Wound edges separating
- D. Surgical site infection

**Answer:** C

**Rationale:** Dehiscence means separation of surgical wound edges.

**21. A post-op patient complains of gas pain and abdominal distension. The nurse should first:**

- A. Give pain meds
- B. Insert NG tube
- C. Encourage ambulation
- D. Limit fluids

**Answer:** C

**Rationale:** Walking stimulates peristalsis and relieves gas pain.

**22. A patient is restless and has low oxygen saturation post-op. What's the priority action?**

- A. Call the surgeon
- B. Give oxygen
- C. Check blood pressure
- D. Administer IV fluids

**Answer:** B

**Rationale:** Hypoxia is suspected; give oxygen immediately to restore saturation.

**23. Which vitamin is essential for wound healing?**

- A. Vitamin A
- B. Vitamin D
- C. Vitamin C
- D. Vitamin K

**Answer:** C

**Rationale:** Vitamin C supports collagen synthesis and tissue repair.

**24. Which condition is a contraindication to spinal anaesthesia?**

- A. Appendicitis
- B. Infection at injection site
- C. Hypotension
- D. Hernia

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** Local **infection at the injection site** increases risk of meningitis or abscess.

**25. Which sign indicates a paralytic ileus post abdominal surgery?**

- A. Frequent bowel movements
- B. Hypoactive bowel sounds
- C. Abdominal cramping
- D. Diarrhoea

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** **Paralytic ileus** causes **absence or reduction** in bowel sounds.

**26. The most effective method to control the spread of infection in surgery is:**

- A. Hand hygiene
- B. Wearing gloves
- C. Using antiseptics
- D. Patient isolation

**Answer: A**

**Rationale:** **Handwashing** is the single most important infection control method.

**27. Post-op urinary retention is suspected when the patient:**

- A. Reports frequent urination
- B. Has a full bladder and no voiding
- C. Voids 100ml/hour
- D. Complains of thirst

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** **Retention** is indicated by **bladder distension** without urination.

**28. Which drug is most commonly used for general anaesthesia induction?**

- A. Diazepam
- B. Midazolam
- C. Propofol
- D. Morphine

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** **Propofol** acts quickly and is widely used for induction.

**29. What is the term for a surgical opening into the colon?**

- A. Ileostomy
- B. Colostomy
- C. Urostomy
- D. Tracheostomy

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** **Colostomy** refers to creating a stoma from the **colon** to the abdominal wall.

**30. A sign of early wound infection is:**

- A. Foul-smelling drainage
- B. Purulent discharge
- C. Redness and warmth
- D. Bleeding

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** **Redness and warmth** are early inflammatory signs of infection.

**31. A patient develops a fever 2 days after surgery. This most likely suggests:**

- A. Wound infection
- B. Urinary infection
- C. Pulmonary atelectasis
- D. Sepsis

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** **Atelectasis** often causes low-grade fever within 24–48 hours post-op.

**32. Which condition delays wound healing?**

- A. High protein intake
- B. Diabetes mellitus
- C. Early ambulation
- D. Good blood supply

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** **Diabetes impairs circulation** and immune response, slowing healing.

**33. The primary role of the scrub nurse is to:**

- A. Monitor vital signs
- B. Maintain sterile field
- C. Record operative notes
- D. Assist with anaesthesia

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** The **scrub nurse** directly assists with instruments and **ensures sterility**.

**34. What is the main purpose of surgical asepsis?**

- A. Prevent cross-infection
- B. Promote wound healing
- C. Reduce pain
- D. Maintain nutrition

**Answer: A**

**Rationale:** **Surgical asepsis** aims to **eliminate all microorganisms**, preventing infection.

**35. Which solution is best for wound irrigation?**

- A. Normal saline
- B. Hydrogen peroxide
- C. Iodine
- D. Alcohol

**Answer: A**

**Rationale:** **Isotonic saline** is non-irritating and maintains tissue integrity.

**36. Which of the following is a sign of internal bleeding post-surgery?**

- A. Bright red blood on dressing
- B. Bradycardia
- C. Distended abdomen
- D. High urine output

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Internal bleeding can cause abdominal distension and rigidity.

**37. Surgical hand scrub should last at least:**

- A. 1 minute
- B. 2 minutes
- C. 3 minutes
- D. 5 minutes

**Answer: D**

**Rationale:** A full 5-minute scrub is required for effective hand asepsis.

**38. What is evisceration?**

- A. Drain leakage
- B. Bleeding from wound
- C. Exposure of abdominal organs
- D. Skin rash

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Evisceration involves protrusion of internal organs from a surgical wound.

**39. A common complication of immobility post-surgery is:**

- A. Hypotension
- B. Deep vein thrombosis
- C. Tachycardia
- D. Seizures

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** Stasis of blood from immobility promotes DVT formation.

**40. A patient with a urinary catheter post-op is at risk for:**

- A. Kidney stones
- B. UTI
- C. Incontinence
- D. Diuresis

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** Indwelling catheters increase risk of urinary tract infections.

**41. When is surgical dressing usually changed post-op (first time)?**

- A. 12 hours
- B. 24 hours
- C. As per surgeon's order
- D. When saturated

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Initial dressing change timing is determined by the surgeon.

**42. What is the purpose of applying TED stockings post-surgery?**

- A. Prevent oedema
- B. Prevent blood clots
- C. Improve comfort
- D. Reduce infection

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** Compression stockings aid in venous return, preventing DVT.

**43. Who is responsible for ensuring the patient identity before surgery?**

- A. Ward nurse
- B. Surgeon
- C. Circulating nurse
- D. Anaesthetist

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** The circulating nurse confirms patient identity and procedure details.

**44. Which is NOT a sign of wound infection?**

- A. Redness
- B. Swelling
- C. Foul odour
- D. Pale edges

**Answer: D**

**Rationale:** Pale wound edges suggest poor circulation, not necessarily infection.

**45. What type of isolation is used for a surgical wound with MRSA?**

- A. Droplet
- B. Contact
- C. Airborne
- D. Neutropenic

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** MRSA spreads through contact, so contact isolation is essential.

**46. The best indicator of tissue perfusion post-op is:**

- A. Temperature
- B. Skin colour
- C. Capillary refill
- D. Pulse oximetry

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Capillary refill < 2 seconds indicates adequate peripheral perfusion.

**47. The most important intervention for a patient with spinal anaesthesia is:**

- A. Head elevation
- B. Leg massage
- C. Fluid restriction
- D. Monitor for hypotension

**Answer: D**

**Rationale:** Spinal anaesthesia may cause vasodilation and hypotension.

**48. When documenting a surgical wound, the nurse should include:**



- A. Number of sutures
- B. Drain colour only
- C. Size, drainage, appearance
- D. Surgeon's name

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Proper wound documentation includes **size, colour, drainage, and condition**.

**49. One sign of wound healing in the proliferative phase is:**

- A. Bleeding
- B. Formation of granulation tissue
- C. Oedema
- D. Necrosis

**Answer: B**

**Rationale:** **Granulation tissue** indicates **new blood vessel and tissue growth**.

**50. Which measure promotes post-op bowel movement recovery?**

- A. NPO status
- B. IV antibiotics
- C. Early ambulation
- D. Morphine use

**Answer: C**

**Rationale:** **Mobilization** stimulates bowel motility.