

# Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians



Multiple Disciplines. A Single Standard of Excellence

## Candidate Handbook 2023

Application Deadline	Late Application Deadline*	Testing Window
March 22, 2023	April 5, 2023	May 6 – May 20, 2023
August 23, 2023	September 6, 2023	October 7 – October 21, 2023

**\*Applications will not be accepted after this deadline, no exceptions.**

Administered by:



1350 Broadway, Suite 800 | New York, NY 10018  
[www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact)

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*This Handbook contains necessary information about the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians. Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. This Handbook is subject to change.*

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

<p><b>Professional Testing Corporation (PTC)</b>  <a href="http://www.ptcny.com">www.ptcny.com</a>          (212) 356-0660</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply for examination</li> <li>• Obtain general application policy and procedure information</li> <li>• Obtain information about testing policies and procedures</li> <li>• Transfer to a new testing period</li> <li>• Request Special Accommodations</li> <li>• Request Hand Score</li> <li>• Question about score reports</li> <li>• Miscellaneous inquiries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prometric</b>  <a href="http://www.prometric.com/NBNSC">www.prometric.com/NBNSC</a>          (800) 741-0934</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule test appointment</li> <li>• Reschedule test appointment (within the same testing period)</li> <li>• Cancel test appointment</li> <li>• Find directions to test site</li> <li>• Questions regarding testing sites and appointments</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Board of Nutrition Support Clinicians (NBNSC)</b>  <a href="http://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC">http://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC</a>          (301) 587-6315</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recertification information</li> <li>• Exam preparation information</li> <li>• Distributes certificates to passing candidates</li> </ul>

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## ATTENTION CANDIDATES

This handbook contains necessary information about the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians (CNSC®). It is required reading for those applying for and taking the examination. All individuals applying for the examination must comply with the policies, procedures, and deadlines in this Handbook and attest to this by signing the Candidate Attestation found on the application. Please retain this handbook for future reference. This handbook is subject to change. See [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) for handbook updates.

**ACCESSING CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT ANY TIME WHILE YOU ARE TAKING THE EXAM INCLUDING BREAKS DURING THE EXAM SESSION IS PROHIBITED. YOU CAN ONLY REMOVE SNACKS, DRINKS, MEDICINE OR PERSONAL HEALTHCARE ITEMS FROM YOUR LOCKER- NO BACKPACKS, BAGS, POCKETBOOKS OR CLOTHING CAN BE REMOVED WHILE YOUR EXAM IS IN SESSION INCLUDING BREAKS DURING THE EXAM SESSION.**

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## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

NBNSC values diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of our outreach. It includes the diversity of traditional concepts of diversity (age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, personality type), as well as, cultural identity, geographic differences, generational influences, disability, and societal self-expression.

We welcome and respect the unique perspectives, opinions, and experiences of each examinee as this reflects our commitment to serve our stakeholders. We are vested in working towards removing barriers, internally and externally, to achieve true diversity, equity, and inclusion for the professional community we serve.

NBNSC does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.

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## **OBJECTIVES OF CERTIFICATION**

The National Board of Nutrition Support Certification, Inc. (NBNSC) endorses the concept of voluntary, periodic certification by examination for all nutrition support clinicians. Board certification for nutrition support clinicians is highly valued and provides formal recognition of nutrition support knowledge.

Certification is intended to promote enhanced delivery of safe and effective care of qualified clinicians in nutrition support by:

1. Recognizing formally those individuals who meet eligibility requirements of the National Board of Nutrition Support Certification, Inc. and pass the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians.
2. Encouraging continued professional growth in the practice of nutrition support.
3. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification by a nutrition support clinician.
4. Providing a standard of minimum knowledge deemed appropriate for clinicians practicing nutrition support, thereby assisting the employer, public, and health care professionals in the assessment of nutrition support clinicians.

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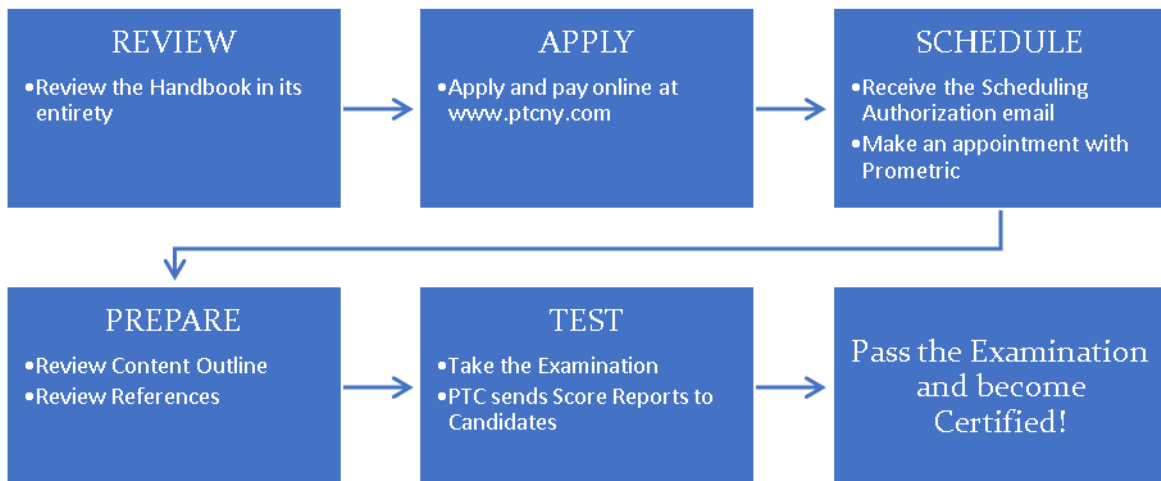
## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS – U.S. & CANADA

Candidates are recommended to have at least two years of experience in nutrition support practice after obtaining professional certification and/or licensure.

1. Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:
  - **Dietitians**  
Currently is a Registered Dietitian (RD/RDN) with the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) or the Canadian equivalent.
  - **Registered Nurses/Nurse Practitioners**  
Currently is licensed as a Registered Nurse (RN), including Nurse Practitioners (NP) in the United States or Canada. A copy of current license must accompany application.
  - **Pharmacists**  
Currently is registered/licensed as a Pharmacist in the United States or Canada. A copy of current license must accompany application.
  - **Physicians**  
Currently is licensed as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) in the United States or Canada. A copy of current license must accompany application.
  - **Physician Assistants**  
Currently is registered/licensed as a Physician Assistant in the United States or Canada. A copy of current license must accompany application.
  - **Doctors of Dental Surgery/Doctors of Medicine in Dentistry**  
Currently licensed as a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry (DMD) in the United States or Canada. A copy of current license must accompany application.
2. Completion and filing of an Application for the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians.
3. Payment of required fee.

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## THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS – U.S. & CANADA



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## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS – INTERNATIONAL

Candidates outside of the US and Canada are able to apply and sit for the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians. International candidates (except from Canada) must meet the following requirements. Please note: all documentation MUST be in English.

Candidates are recommended to have at least two years of experience in nutrition support practice after obtaining professional certification and/or licensure.

1. Candidates must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

### **Dietitians**

Currently registered/licensed or the equivalent in their country\*. A copy of current license or dietetic registration must accompany your application.

### **Registered Nurses/Nurse Practitioners**

Currently is licensed or the equivalent in their country as a nurse or nurse practitioner. A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

### **Pharmacists**

Currently is registered/licensed or the equivalent in their country as a Pharmacist. A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

### **Physicians**

Currently is licensed or the equivalent in their country as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO). A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

### **Physician Assistants**

Currently is registered/licensed or the equivalent in their country as a Physician Assistant. A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

### **Doctors of Dental Surgery/Doctors of Medicine in Dentistry**

Currently licensed in their country as a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry (DMD). A copy of current license must accompany application\*.

\*If your country does not issue licenses, etc. a letter, in English and on letterhead, from your employer confirming your work history and current job description can be submitted.

2. All international candidates must have their credential evaluated by an outside agency. This evaluation must be in English and submitted with the application materials. Failure to submit the credential evaluation can result in not being eligible to sit for the exam<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Credentials must be evaluated by an outside agency. The evaluation must be submitted with the application and must be an original document, not a photocopy. The cost of the evaluation is the responsibility of the individual and is separate from any other fee listed in the Fees section of this handbook. International applications will be reviewed by NBNSC Board members for approval of eligibility. Please see [http://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC/Certification/Certification\\_Policy\\_For\\_International\\_Candidates/](http://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC/Certification/Certification_Policy_For_International_Candidates/) for more information.

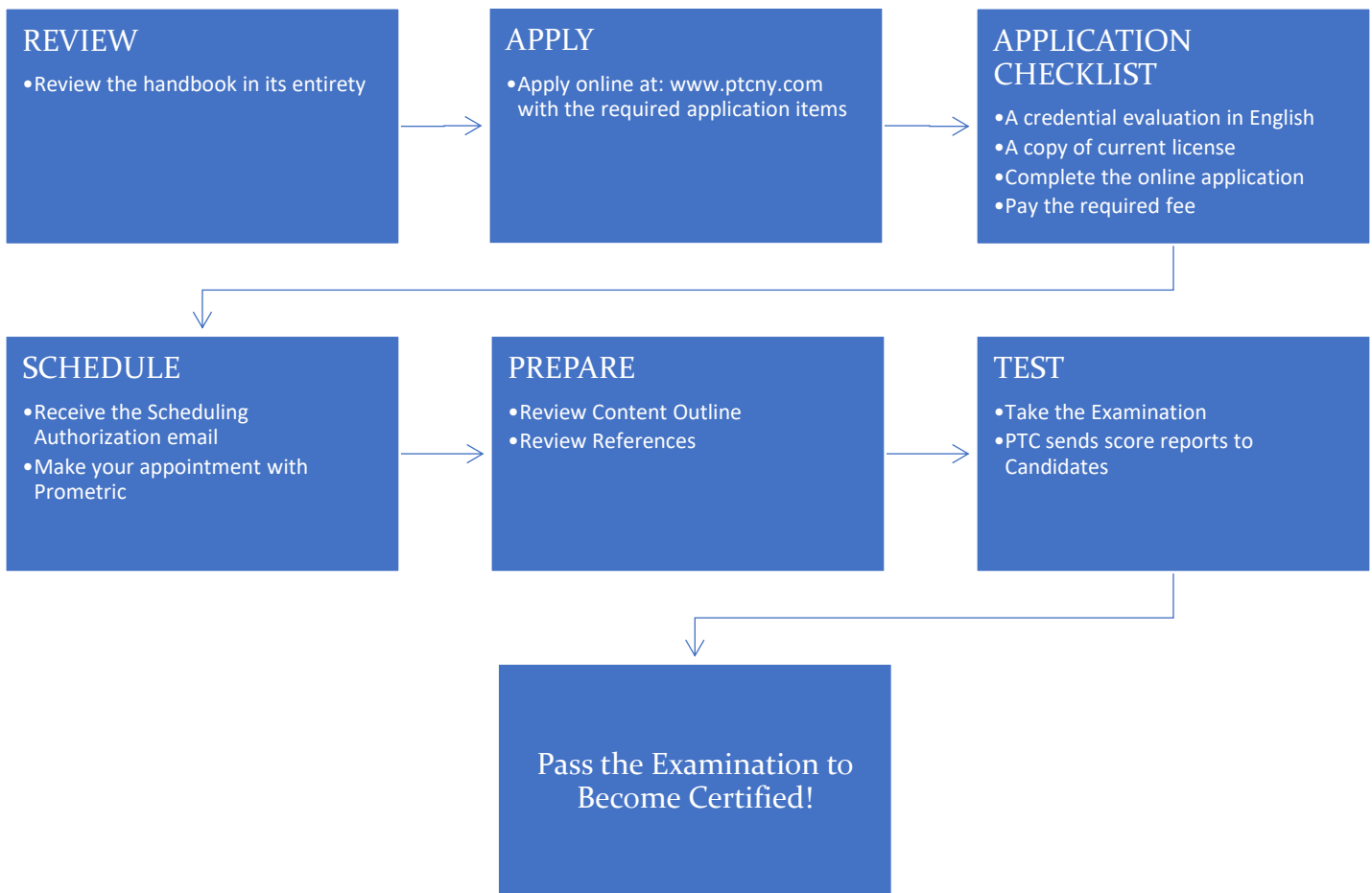
3. Completion and filing of an Application for the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians.
4. Payment of required fee.

Please note: International individuals who have previously sat for and successfully passed the Nutrition Support Certification Examination will be eligible to retake the examination without providing the above-mentioned documentation as long as there is no lapse in certification. Should a lapse in certification occur for any reason, then that individual must adhere to the above requirements.

For more information regarding NBNSC's International Candidate Policies please go to: [http://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC/Certification/Certification\\_Policy\\_For\\_International\\_Candidates/](http://www.nutritioncare.org/NBNSC/Certification/Certification_Policy_For_International_Candidates/)

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## THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS – INTERNATIONAL



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## COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

### **Step 1 – Fill Out the Application**

- Go to <http://www.ptcny.com/test-sponsors/NBNSC>
  - View Exam testing periods
  - View application deadlines
  - Fill out the online application
    - The application needs to be filled out completely.
    - Use your first and last name exactly as it appears on your current government issued photo ID
      - For example: a driver’s license or a passport.
    - Applications are not complete until all information and payment has been provided.
    - Keep the link to the application and your login info handy.

When you start a new application, you will be asked to create a PIN number. This PIN will be used if you need to come back to the application to finish it later.

### **Step 2 – Submit Exam Fee and Application for Review**

- PTC will send an email that says that your payment and application has been received. This email will also say that your application is being reviewed.
- The application review can take 10 business days.

### **Step 3 – Receive Application Status Update**

- After your application is reviewed PTC will update you with another email.

#### **○ REOPENED FOR MORE DOCUMENTS**

- This means we are missing a copy of your current RD card or state license (if you are not a dietitian). Follow the directions in the email.
- Applications that are incomplete as of 14 days before the start of the testing window will be refunded minus the administration fee (see fees page 12).

#### **○ REJECTED**

- This means you are not eligible to take the exam. The reason will be explained in the email.
- Rejected applications will be refunded minus the administration fee (see fees page 12)

#### **○ APPROVED**

- This means your application is approved. You will move on to Step 4.

### **Step 4 – Receive Scheduling Authorization and Schedule Testing Appointment**

Approved candidates will receive a Scheduling Authorization via email. PTC starts sending these emails about 11 weeks before the start of the testing window. Scheduling Authorization emails come from notices@ptcny.com. **Do not lose this email.** The Scheduling Authorization includes useful information:

- Your Candidate ID (eligibility number)
- Instructions on how to set up your Exam appointment with Prometric.



Candidates must show their driver's license, passport, or U.S. Military ID at the testing center. Candidates who do not have proper identification at the time of their appointment will be refused admission.

**The first and last name on your ID must exactly match the name on the Scheduling Authorization.**

**Applicants who are not approved to sit for the examination or whose applications are incomplete 14 days prior to the first day of the testing window will receive a refund of their application fee minus the \$75 administrative fee. Refunds will be processed approximately 30 days after the end of the testing period.**

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## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION AND SCHEDULING

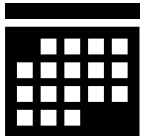
The Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians is administered during an established two-week testing window on a daily basis, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities or via live remote proctoring managed by Prometric.

### Scheduling Authorization

PTC will send approved candidates an email called the Scheduling Authorization. These emails are sent out about 11 weeks before the first day of the testing window. The emails come from [notices@ptcny.com](mailto:notices@ptcny.com).

Candidates cannot make an appointment until they receive a scheduling authorization. If you don't receive your scheduling authorization 3 weeks before the start of your testing window, contact PTC.

### Scheduling Examination Appointments



The Scheduling Authorization will indicate how to schedule your examination appointment with Prometric as well as the dates during which testing is available. Appointment times are first-come, first-served, so schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization to maximize your chance of testing on your preferred date.

**Candidates who wait until the last minute run the risk of missing out on their preferred date and time. Candidates unable to schedule an appointment will forfeit their fees.**

After you make your test appointment, Prometric will send you a confirmation email with the date, time, and location of your exam. Please check this confirmation carefully for the correct date, time, and location. Contact Prometric at (800) 741-0934 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

**Note: International candidates may also schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment online at [www.prometric.com/NBNSC](http://www.prometric.com/NBNSC).**

## Test Center or Live Remote Proctored: What's the Difference?

	Test Center Exam	Live Remote Proctored Exam
<b>Additional cost</b>	No	No
<b>ADA Accommodations offered</b>	Yes	Yes – Extra time and private room accommodations only
<b>Breaks allowed</b>	One 15-minute scheduled break. Unscheduled breaks are permitted, however the exam timer will continue counting down.	One 15-minute scheduled break. Candidates must alert the proctor when they are ready to take their break.
<b>Equipment needed</b>	None – Computer provided at test center	Candidate provides their own laptop or desktop computer to take the exam. The computer must have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webcam</li> <li>• Microphone</li> <li>• Secure, reliable internet</li> </ul> For complete requirements: <a href="http://www.prometric.com/proproctorcandidate">www.prometric.com/proproctorcandidate</a>
<b>Testing space needed</b>	None – testing space provided by the test center	Candidates must test alone at a desk or table in a room with a door and no distractions or interruptions. Other people or pets are not permitted in your testing area.
<b>Check-in procedure</b>	Candidates must show their current Government-issued photo ID; walk through a metal detector or be wanded by staff; and roll up sleeves and turn out pockets for a visual inspection.	Prior to check-in, the candidate's equipment needs to pass a compatibility check.  During check-in, candidates must show their current Government-issued photo ID; perform a 360° scan of the room using their camera; and roll up sleeves and turn out pockets for a visual inspection.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Proctors monitor candidates through video and physical walkthroughs in the testing room.	Remote proctors monitor candidates through video and audio, as well as ProProctor security software.

*This information is provided as a courtesy summary and may not represent full requirements or specifications for in-person testing or live remote proctored testing. For Live Remote Proctored FAQs, visit <https://ptcny.com/remoteproctor-faqs/>*

## Scheduling a Remotely Proctored Examination Appointment

If you prefer to test via live remote proctoring in your home or another quiet distraction free location you must provide a computer with a camera, microphone, and a reliable, stable internet connection to allow real-time communication with a remote proctor.

Please see our Live Remote Proctoring FAQs for more info: <https://ptcny.com/remote-proctor-faqs/>

**PLEASE BE ADVISED:** It is the candidate's responsibility to be sure their equipment and workspace meet all the requirements for Live Remote Proctoring. If a candidate makes an appointment for remote proctoring and is unable to test due to not meeting technical requirements or physical requirements of the workspace, the candidate will forfeit their examination fees and will need to follow the transfer policies in place for their exam. Please see your exam's transfer policies on page 11.

### IMPORTANT!

You **MUST** present your current driver's license, passport, or U.S. military ID at the test center. Expired, temporary, or paper driver's licenses will **NOT** be accepted.

Your first and last name on your Scheduling Authorization **MUST** exactly match your first and last name on your photo ID.

**Fees will not be refunded for exams missed because of invalid ID.**

## Rescheduling Examination Appointments within a Testing Period

Candidates are able to reschedule their examination appointments within the same testing period as long as the request is submitted within the timeframe described below. Reschedule within the permitted time frame by calling or going to the Prometric website: [www.prometric.com/NBNSC](http://www.prometric.com/NBNSC).

Time Frame	Reschedule Permitted?	Stipulations
Requests submitted 30 days or more before the original appointment	Yes	None
Requests submitted 29 to 5 days before the original appointment	Yes	Candidate must pay Prometric a rescheduling fee of \$50.
Requests submitted less than 5 days before the original appointment	No	Candidates who do not arrive to test for their appointment will be considered a no-show and all their examinations fees will be forfeited. Candidates will need to reapply and pay fees for a future testing period.

## Transferring to a New Testing Period

Candidates unable to take the examination during their scheduled testing period may request a **ONE-TIME** transfer to a future testing period. **There is a transfer fee of \$230.00.** After you have transferred once by paying the \$230.00 fee, you will need to pay the full examination fee in order to transfer a second time; so, *please plan carefully.*

**Please note:** requests to transfer to a new testing period should be received within 30 days of your originally scheduled testing period.

Candidates wishing to transfer to a new testing period need to follow the steps below.

1. Go to <http://secure.ptcny.com/apply>.
2. Click "Start New Application."
3. Choose NBNSC-CNSC® in the first drop-down menu; then choose the new examination period in the second drop down menu and fill out the rest of the information on the page.
4. Fill out the application making sure you answer yes to the question asking if you are transferring.
5. When you have finished the application, click "Submit Transfer Request."
6. PTC Support will send you an email letting you know your transfer application was approved and that you can log back into your application and pay the one-time \$230.00 transfer fee.

Call 212-356-0660 if you have any questions regarding the transfer process.

If candidates are unable to attend the examination on the date for which they registered and elect not to transfer to another testing period, the application will be closed and all fees will be forfeited. There will be no refund of fees.

The transfer fee is based on costs and is not punitive in nature. The transfer fee must be paid at the time the request is approved.

**If a candidate has been found to have violated security policies they may not transfer and must pay the exam fees in full if they're granted a reexamination.**

Please note: Transferring your Examination only refers to instances when a candidate is unable to take their exam during a testing period for which they have already applied. Candidates who did not pass their examination and are retaking the examination need to pay the full Examination Fee.

## EXAMINATION FEES

Fee Type	Amount	Details
Application Fee – ASPEN Members	US \$330.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-refundable<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Non-transferable</li> <li>• Includes testing center fees</li> <li>• Includes non-refundable \$75 administrative fee</li> </ul>
Application Fee – Non-members	US \$430.00	
Late Fee	US \$50.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies to applications submitted after the application deadline listed on the cover of this handbook</li> </ul>
Rescheduling Fee (29-5 days prior to scheduled appointment; see page 10)	US \$50.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Applies to candidates who need to move their appointment within their current testing period</b></li> <li>• Payable directly to Prometric</li> <li>• Reschedule with Prometric online or over the phone</li> </ul>
Transfer Fee (For candidates moving to a new testing period; see page 11)	US \$230.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Applies to candidates who need to move to a new testing period</b></li> <li>• Must submit new application &amp; fee to PTC</li> </ul>



- **There will be no refund of fees unless applicants are ineligible for the examination.**
- **Ineligible candidates will be refunded their fees minus the administrative fee.**
- **No refunds will be issued for applying for the incorrect examination or testing period, for failing to make an examination appointment, or for failing to appear at your scheduled appointment.**

**Please be advised: Prometric does not have the authority to grant transfers to another testing period or refunds.**

### NOVA Members

Active members of the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA) may sit for the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians at a rate that is \$50 less than the non-ASPEN member rate.

Active NOVA members, at the time of application submission should submit documentation of active NOVA membership with their application. Active NOVA members who are also ASPEN members may not combine the discounts, only one discounted application fee may be used, either the ASPEN member fee or the discount for NOVA members.

<sup>1</sup> Applicants who are ineligible to take the examination or whose applications are incomplete by the application deadline will have their examination fees returned minus an administrative fee.

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## TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

NBNSC and PTC support the intent of and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). PTC will take steps reasonably necessary to make certification accessible to persons with disabilities covered under the ADA. According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (such as seeing, hearing, learning, reading, concentrating, walking) or a major bodily function (such as neurological, endocrine, or digestive system). The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and test accommodations will be held in strict confidence.

All approved testing accommodations must maintain the psychometric nature and security of the examination. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature or security of the exam will not be granted.

Testing arrangements may be made upon receipt of the Application, examination fee, and a completed and signed Request for Test Accommodations Form, available from [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660.

This Form must be uploaded with the online application no later than 8 weeks prior to the start of your chosen testing window. Candidates who do not submit their Test Accommodations Form with their application may not be able to test during their chosen testing period and therefore be subject to rescheduling or transfer fees.

**Only those requests made and received on the official Request for Test Accommodations Form will be reviewed.** Letters from doctors and other healthcare professionals must be accompanied by the official Form and will not be accepted without the Form. All requests must be made at the time of application. Accommodations cannot be added to an existing exam appointment.

**Please note: do not go to [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com) or contact Prometric to request test accommodations as Prometric is not authorized to approve accommodations. All requests for test accommodations must be submitted on the PTC Request Form.**

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## PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

- Check your government issued photo ID (driver's license, passport or U.S. Military ID) when you make your examination appointment. Is it expired? Does the name on your ID match the name on your Scheduling Authorization email? Proctors at the Prometric testing center will refuse admission to candidates with expired IDs, IDs with names that do not match their records, and temporary paper IDs. Candidates will be marked as no-shows and will forfeit their exam fees.
- Check your PTC Scheduling Authorization email and Appointment Confirmation email from Prometric to make sure everything is accurate (i.e. your name, exam name, appointment date, time and location).
- In the event of inclement weather, check the Prometric website for site closures: <https://www.prometric.com/closures>.
- This Handbook provides the Content Outline for the Examination and references. Use these to help you start studying for the examination.
- Make yourself familiar with the location of your chosen testing site and any requirements they may have for parking and check the weather and traffic conditions before you leave for the testing center. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to arrive as late arrival may prevent you from testing.
- Prometric's website provides information on what you can expect on your test day, including a walkthrough of check in and security procedures: [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com).
- Review What to Expect at the Test Center and Rules for the Examination on the next pages before your appointment.

### IF YOU ARE TESTING VIA LIVE REMOTE PROCTORING

- Be sure to check your system compatibility BEFORE you schedule and again before your appointment.
- The check in process is about 30 minutes long and is not factored into your appointment. Be sure to log into ProProctor to start your exam at least 30 minutes prior to your appointment time.
- There is a 15 minute break in between sections of the exam. Candidates are not to leave the testing area except during this break.
- **CANDIDATES MUST VERBALLY NOTIFY THE PROCTOR BEFORE LEAVING CAMERA VIEW FOR THEIR 15 MINTUE SCHEDULED BREAK.** Failure to do so may result in termination of your examination and nullifying scores. Candidates will need to be checked in again by a proctor before beginning the second section of the exam.
- **No scratch paper is allowed.** Be sure your workspace is clear of any extra items and electronic devices except for your government issued photo ID.
- Read the Live Remote Proctoring FAQs here: <https://ptcny.com/remote-proctor-faqs/>

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## WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE TESTING CENTER

PTC has partnered with Prometric Testing Centers to deliver examinations to candidates. Here is what you can expect when you arrive at your Prometric Testing Center.

- Candidate Check-In
  - Candidates will be asked to present their IDs
  - Candidates will be asked to empty and turn out their pockets
  - Candidates will be “wanded” or asked to walk through a metal detector
  - Inspection of eyeglasses, jewelry, and other accessories will be conducted. Jewelry other than wedding and engagement rings is prohibited
  - Religious headwear may be worn into the testing room; however, it may be subject to inspection by a testing center administrator before entry into the testing room is permitted
  - Prometric provides lockers for candidates to store their purses, mobile phones, jackets, food, drinks and medical supplies
  
- During the Exam
  - There is one 15-minute break during the exam. Candidates who must leave the testing room outside of the break will not be given extra time on the exam
  - Candidates are only permitted to leave the testing room to use the restroom or access food, drink, or medicine from their assigned locker
  - Candidates who take an unscheduled break are subject to additional security screenings before being permitted to reenter the testing room
  - Accessing mobile phones, study materials, or anything other than food, drink, or medicine/healthcare supplies during the examination is prohibited including during the scheduled break.
  - Smoking is prohibited at the testing center
  - All examinations are monitored and may be recorded in both audio and video format

Please keep in mind: other exams will be administered at the same time as your examination. Therefore, examinees may hear ambient noises such as typing, coughing, or people entering and exiting the testing room that cannot be avoided. Proctors periodically walk through the testing room for security monitoring. Prometric is unable to provide a completely noise-free environment. However, headphones may be requested to minimize impact.

Please see [Prometric’s website](#) for more information about what to expect on testing day.



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## RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

Please read the information below carefully. You are responsible for adhering to the examination rules while at the testing center.

- ⇒ You must present your current driver's license, passport, or US Military ID at the testing center. Candidates without valid ID will NOT be permitted to test. Temporary or paper copies of your ID will not be accepted.
- ⇒ Cell phones, watches, and all other electronic devices are strictly prohibited at the testing center. Please leave these items in your car or in your assigned locker at the testing center. You may NOT access your cell phone, electronic devices, or study materials from your locker at any time.
- ⇒ No papers, books, or reference materials may be accessed during a break at a locker, taken into or removed from the testing room.
- ⇒ You may ONLY access snacks, drinks, medicines or personal healthcare items from your locker.
- ⇒ No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the examination session. The candidate should read carefully the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.
- ⇒ Candidates are prohibited from writing on their body parts during the examination.
- ⇒ Candidates testing at a physical testing center are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, except for going to the restroom, or accessing their locker for food, drink, or medicine/personal healthcare only.
  - Those testing via Live Remote Proctoring may not leave the testing area except during the 15-minute break. **Candidates must verbally alert the proctor before leaving camera view.**
- ⇒ Bulky clothing, such as sweatshirts (hoodies), jackets, coats, and hats (except hats worn for religious reasons), and most types of jewelry may not be worn while taking the examination. Proctors will ask you to remove such items and place them in your locker. Please see [Prometric's statement on Test Center Security](#) for more information.
- ⇒ All watches, including fitness/smart watches and similar devices, cannot be worn during the examination.
- ⇒ Food/beverages are not permitted inside the testing room or at your workspace if testing via live remote proctoring. Leave these items in your assigned locker. You may access these items during your break.



Contact PTC at (212) 356-0660 or [www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact) with any questions about the Examination Rules.

**Irregular or improper behavior that is observed, made apparent by statistical analysis, or uncovered by other means before, during or after the examination will be considered a violation of these rules and may constitute grounds for invalidation of a candidate's examination. NBNSC will initiate an investigation and request suitable analyses and appropriate documentation.**

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## REPORT OF RESULTS

Candidates will be notified by PTC via email when their score reports are available online. Score reports will be available approximately four weeks after the close of the testing period. Scores on the major areas of the examination and on the total examination will be reported. Examination scores cannot be provided verbally over the phone. Score Reports will be available online only for 30 days. Be sure to save a copy of your score report in your permanent files. Successful candidates will also receive certificates from the NBNSC.

### Scoring Process

The passing score for the CNSC® Examination is determined using the modified Angoff technique. This technique is a criterion referenced methodology where a panel of subject matter experts carefully evaluate each item on the examination and estimate the probability that each individual question will be answered correctly by a minimally competent/just qualified candidate. The recommended passing score is then reviewed and approved by NBNSC. Once the passing score is set, this standard is upheld for all future forms of the examination. To ensure fairness and consistency across examination forms, a statistical process called equating is used to account for any slight variations in difficulty level across forms. Scores on the CNSC® Examination are reported using scaled scoring, which converts the candidates' raw score (i.e., total number of correct questions) onto a consistent and standardized scale. Scaled scores allow candidate scores to be comparable from one exam form to the next. The scale range for the examination is 200 to 800 with a passing point of 500.

### Examination Comments

Any candidate who feels that the examination effort was negatively impacted by the test center conditions should notify the proctor immediately. The situation should also be reported to PTC at [www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact) within 15 days of the test appointment. Any comments about the test itself should also be reported to PTC at [www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact) within 15 days of the test appointment.

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## REQUESTING A HANDSCORE

Candidates who fail the examination may request a hand scoring of their data file. Hand scoring is a manual check of the data file by the testing service to determine if there have been any errors in scoring. Although the probability of such an error is extremely remote, this service is available. Requests for hand scoring must be received by PTC no later than 90 days after the date of the examination by completing and returning the [Request of Handscore](#) form with payment of \$25. Candidates who fail the examination will not be permitted to see the examination questions. For reasons of test security, no candidate is allowed to review the examination or any of its items.

To ensure correct reporting of results, PTC automatically performs handscores of examinations of candidates who score within 3 points of passing as a quality control measure. Thus, it is extremely doubtful that any examination results will change from "fail" to "pass" through handscoring.

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## **PROTECTION OF CANDIDATE AND CERTIFICANT INFORMATION**

Candidate and certificant information shall be kept confidential and not publicly disclosed without the expressed consent of the candidate/certificant unless required by law or court order. By applying for or maintaining certification, candidates consent to the following disclosures of their personal information:

1. Name and state included in recent listing of certified individuals in printed form;
2. For confirmation of certification status and dates of testing from employers or prospective employers;
3. For sharing with vendors involved in the development and administration of tests;
4. To NBNSC volunteers, staff, and consultants as needed.

PTC and NBNSC will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate. Aggregate exam data may be used for research and other purposes.

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## **REEXAMINATION**

The Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians may be taken as often as desired, upon filing of a new Application and fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

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## **ATTAINMENT OF REGISTRATION & RECERTIFICATION**

Eligible candidates who pass the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians are entitled to use the registered designation CNSC® after their names and will receive certificates from the NBNSC. A registry of Certified Nutrition Support Clinicians will be maintained by the NBNSC and may be reported in publications.

Nutrition support clinician certification is recognized for a period of five years at which time the candidate must retake and pass the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians in order to retain certification.

The purpose of requiring recertification renewal is to measure continued competent and knowledgeable nutrition support practice. Certification demonstrates to your patients, colleagues, and employers that you have the skills necessary to provide the best care possible.

Should an individual with a current CNSC® credential opt to take the certification examination early, all maintenance of the CNSC® credential will be based upon when the individual most recently took the certification examination.

- Scenario 1: Certificant A is currently certified as a CNSC® from October 2011 – October 2016. Certificant A wants to become recertified and opts to take the certification examination in April 2016 instead of October 2016. Certificant A successfully passes the certification examination, then the certification period is April 2016 – April 2021.
- Scenario 2: Certificant A is currently credentialed as a CNSC® from October 2011 – October 2016. Certificant A wants to become recertified and opts to take the certification examination in April

2016 instead of October 2016. Certificant A is unsuccessful in passing the certification examination. Upon receiving the exam results Certificant A is no longer a CNSC® and cannot use the credential until the certification examination is again taken and successfully passed. In summary, anytime the certification examination is taken and not passed, certification lapses.

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## DISCIPLINARY POLICY

### **Candidate/Certificant Responsibilities and Misconduct**

Disruptive, abusive, or uncooperative behavior of any kind before, during, or after the examination is strictly prohibited. Irregular behavior constitutes an attempted violation of the testing rules regarding any part of the examination process. NBNSC, PTC, and Prometric staff have the authority to enforce disciplinary action for candidate misconduct.

### **Examples of Violations**

Examples of violations before testing include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Falsification of any information in the certification application
- Altering documentation submitted with the certification application
- Requesting information about the exam or exam items from previous test takers
- Enlisting a proxy test taker

**Examples of violations during testing and breaks, include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- Misrepresenting identity
- Using a camera, with the exception of remote proctoring which requires that a web camera remain on for the duration of the exam
- Using a recording device
- Using a phone or other unauthorized device at any time during the test administration, including breaks
- Cheating on the exam
- Violating test center or remote proctoring rules
- Using a proxy test taker
- Impersonating another candidate
- Communicating with other candidates during an in-person exam
- Communicating with any third party other than the proctor during a remote proctored exam
- Attempting to gain access to exam content during exam administration
- Giving or receiving help during the exam
- Being uncooperative or abusive with test center staff or proctor
- Tampering with exam computer or software
- Removing anything from your assigned locker except food, drink, medicine, or personal healthcare items
- Bringing anything into the remote testing environment except food, drink, medicine, or personal healthcare items unless authorized and pre-approved
- Leaving the test center
- Leaving the in person testing area excluding the allowed break during the exam administration
- Leaving the camera view of the remote proctor without proctor permission for the allowed break during the exam administration

**Examples of violations after testing include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- Sharing exam items or content with others
- Taking exam notes or materials from the test administration
- Using or divulging information about the exam
- Altering exam results
- Misrepresenting or misusing certification status
- Engaging in behavior that results in revocation of license in a primary profession
- Conduct that leads to limitations or sanctions imposed by another professional organization
- Violation of professional code of ethics

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## **SANCTIONS**

NBNSC may deny, suspend, revoke, or take other action regarding an application or certification if an individual is not in compliance with this Disciplinary Policy. Violations of any testing rules may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Termination/dismissal of the exam
- Investigation, including a review of audio and video recordings of the exam administration
- Cancellation of exam registration
- Cancellation of exam scores
- Forfeiture of exam fees
- Denial, suspension, or revocation of certification or recertification
- Prohibition from future certification-related activities, including examination, recertification, or volunteer activities within NBNSC
- Denial or suspension of eligibility
- Notification to other parties as necessary

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## **EXAMINATION SECURITY**

Candidates seeking admission to take the examination do so for the purpose of pursuing certification, and for no other purpose. Because of the confidential nature of the examination, candidates may not make or keep copies, excerpts, or notes of examination materials, and to not use or divulge information learned from the examination. The examination is the exclusive property of NBNSC and candidates may not use examination information in any way without the express prior written consent of NBNSC.

The CNSC examination is confidential. Candidates are required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to the start of the examination.

Candidates agree to abide by the testing rules in effect at the time of their test appointment. NBNSC, PTC, and/or Prometric staff may refuse a candidate admission to the examination if they do not have the proper identification as detailed in the Candidate Handbook. Candidates who do not abide by the testing rules may have their exam terminated during the exam administration in order to maintain a secure and proper exam administration and/or exam scores invalidated.

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## CONTENT OF THE EXAMINATION

The Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians is a computer-based examination composed of 220 scored items, plus 30 pre-test items with a total testing time of four (4) hours. The test questions are multiple-choice, objective questions. The exam is broken into two 2-hour sections with a 15-minute break in between sections. The content for the examination is described in the Content Domains and Task Statements starting on the next page. Items on the examination will be presented in a random order.

The pre-test questions are randomly distributed throughout the examination and do not count towards a candidate's score. The pre-test items are being evaluated to determine if they perform well enough statistically to be introduced as scored items on a future examination. Only the scored items count towards the candidate's final score.

The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in nutrition support and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the NBNSC. NBNSC, with the advice and assistance of the Professional Testing Corporation, prepares the examination.

The Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians will be weighted in the following manner:

I.	Nutrition Assessment	32%
II.	Clinical Management	55%
III.	Process Management	3%
IV.	Professional Practice	10%

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## CONTENT DOMAINS AND TASK STATEMENTS

<b>I. Nutrition Assessment</b>
<b><i>A. Screening</i></b>
T1. Identify patients with malnutrition.
T2. Identify patients with risk factors for developing malnutrition.
<b><i>B. Evaluation</i></b>
T3. Review patient history.
T4. Review patient current clinical status.
T5. Review diet, medication, and supplements for potential impact on nutritional status.
T6. Evaluate anthropometric data.
T7. Identify potential or existing nutrition support access sites.
T8. Perform nutrition-focused physical exam.
T9. Evaluate patient for potential complications of initiating nutrition support therapy.
T10. Determine fluid, nutrient, and electrolyte intake from all sources.
T11. Determine fluid, electrolyte, macronutrient, and micronutrient requirements for nutrition support therapy.
T12. Evaluate psychosocial, economic, developmental, functional, behavioral, and quality of life factors.
T13. Evaluate indication for, timing, and route of administration for nutrition support therapy.
T14. Determine etiology, degree, and type of malnutrition.
T15. Determine nutritional diagnosis.
T16. Assess patient and caregiver capabilities and limitations related to nutrition support therapy.
<b>II. Clinical Management</b>
<b><i>A. Initiation</i></b>
T17. Recommend administration route and access for nutrition support therapy.
T18. Recommend formulation, rate, and/or volume of nutrition support therapy.
T19. Recommend use of pharmacologic adjunctive agents.
T20. Recommend cost-effective and safety strategies in the provision of nutrition support therapy.
T21. Recommend short-term nutrition support therapy goals.
T22. Recommend long-term nutrition support therapy goals.
T23. Recommend diagnostic tests, procedures, or consultations that may modify the nutrition support plan.
T24. Recommend laboratory tests that may modify the nutrition support plan.
T25. Recommend regimen for initiation, advancement, and discontinuation for nutrition support therapy.
<b><i>B. Monitoring</i></b>
T26. Verify position of nutrition access device.
T27. Evaluate tolerance of nutrition support therapy.
T28. Evaluate fluid status.
T29. Monitor compliance with nutrition support therapy plan.
T30. Monitor for complications of nutrition support therapy.

T31. Evaluate laboratory test results to assess adequacy and tolerance of nutrition support therapy.

T32. Monitor nutritional and metabolic response to nutrition support therapy.

T33. Evaluate status of nutrition access device.

T34. Assess nutrition support therapy for safety concerns.

T35. Monitor for drug-nutrient interaction.

T36. Monitor for enteral or parenteral formula stability.

### ***C. Modification of Therapy***

T37. Modify nutrition support therapy based on changes in patient clinical status and medical plan of care.

T38. Manage complications related to nutrition support therapy.

T39. Reevaluate nutrition support therapy goals.

T40. Reevaluate adjunctive drug therapy.

T41. Transition or discontinue nutrition support therapy.

T42. Transition patient from one care setting to another.

T43. Educate patient and/or caregiver on nutrition support therapy management.

### **III. Process Management**

T44. Develop or update policies and procedures to guide patient care.

T45. Implement current guidelines and standards of practice in the provision of nutrition support therapy.

T46. Develop or update patient education materials.

T47. Utilize a continuous process improvement model to evaluate nutrition care.

### **IV. Professional Practice**

T48. Apply ethical principles in the application of nutrition support therapy.

T49. Provide nutrition support therapy in compliance with legal and regulatory standards.

T50. Evaluate scientific literature according to evidence-based guidelines.

T51. Apply principles of evidence-based practice in provision of nutrition support therapy.



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## SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

1. In a patient receiving intravenous fat emulsion, which of the following levels should be monitored?
  1. Serum glucose
  2. Serum ammonia
  3. Serum cholesterol
  4. Serum triglyceride

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2. Increased acetate supplementation in parenteral nutrition is most likely to be required in
  1. respiratory failure.
  2. intractable diarrhea.
  3. prolonged vomiting.
  4. furosemide treatment.

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3. Dermatitis and alopecia are symptoms of
  1. hypophosphatemia.
  2. magnesium deficiency.
  3. vitamin A deficiency.
  4. essential fatty acid deficiency.

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4. A 58-year-old patient has acute renal failure following abdominal aortic aneurysm repair. Dialysis is planned. If the patient's BUN is 90 mg/dL and creatinine 8 mg/dL, the most appropriate enteral formula for this patient would provide
  1. 0.5 g protein/kg/day mainly as essential amino acids.
  2. 1 g protein/kg/day mainly as essential amino acids.
  3. 0.5 g protein/kg/day as both essential and nonessential amino acids.
  4. 1 g protein/kg/day with both essential and nonessential amino acids.

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5. Complaints of altered taste and smell are common symptoms of deficiency of which trace element?
  1. Zinc
  2. Copper
  3. Selenium
  4. Chromium

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6. Indirect calorimetry provides a measure of
1. basal metabolic rate.
  2. past 24-hour dietary intake.
  3. energy expenditure.
  4. calorie needs for weight gain.
- 
7. Which of the following is most appropriate during transition from central parenteral nutrition support to enteral nutrition support?
1. Dextrose should be infused peripherally to avoid hypoglycemia
  2. Transition to enteral nutrition should be discontinued if diarrhea develops
  3. Some parenteral nutrition should be maintained until the patient has demonstrated tolerance to enteral nutrition
  4. Central venous access should be discontinued as soon as the patient's nutritional requirements are met by a combination of enteral and peripheral parenteral support
- 
8. During parenteral nutrition, the infusion of large amounts of dextrose increases electrolyte requirements for
1. sodium and potassium.
  2. sodium and phosphorus.
  3. potassium and chloride.
  4. potassium and phosphorus.
- 
9. Metabolic consequences of the refeeding syndrome include
1. hyperkalemia.
  2. hypoglycemia.
  3. hypermagnesemia.
  4. hypophosphatemia.
- 
10. An 85-year-old man receiving tube feeding due to dysphagia develops increased stooling and has a temperature of 38.3° C. Which of the following should be done?
1. Obtain stool cultures
  2. Decrease water flushes
  3. Begin diphenoxylate/atropine
  4. Change to a fluid-restricted tube feeding formula
- 
11. Which of the following is a metabolic adaptation to simple starvation?
1. Decrease in urinary nitrogen losses
  2. Increase in hepatic glucose production
  3. Decrease in utilization of body fat stores
  4. Increase in cerebral glucose utilization
-

12. The small bowel usually has an absorption capacity of approximately

1. 400 mL/day.
  2. 1 L/day.
  3. 2 L/day.
  4. 9 12 L/day.
- 

ANSWER KEY	
Q	A
1	4
2	2
3	4
4	4
5	1
6	3
7	3
8	4
9	4
10	1
11	1
12	4

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## ONLINE PRACTICE TEST

A practice test is available to provide candidates with a better understanding of what the actual certification examination is like. The practice test consists of 50 questions, has a testing time of two hours, and is taken online available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. The practice test is developed according to the content outline.

After completing the online practice test, you will receive an instant score report showing overall test score as well as a score for each content area. The score report does not provide correct answers or indicate which questions were answered correctly or incorrectly. Once the practice test is scored, you cannot return to the test to review the questions. The results of the practice test should not be interpreted as a predictor of performance on the actual examination. The scores do not provide a valid or reliable indicator of how well you will perform on the actual examination.

The PTC Online Testing System does not demonstrate the testing software used during the certification examinations. Those who purchase the online practice test should be aware that they will use a different testing platform when they take the actual examination.

The online practice test is an optional tool candidates may use as they prepare for the certification examination. The practice test is not a requirement for certification eligibility, nor does it contribute in any way to success on the certification examination. There are many ways candidates should prepare for the certification examination. Candidates should use a variety of resources and consider their own education and experiences. Review the content outline and reference materials listed in the handbook for additional exam-related information. Since the practice test is NOT intended to be a study guide nor the sole source of preparation for the actual certification examination, candidates are NOT provided with the answer key, rationales for each question, nor notification of which specific items were answered correctly or incorrectly.

**FEE:** \$70 by credit card

**APPLY:** Go to <https://secure.ptcny.com/webtest/> and select Online Practice for Nutrition Support Clinicians

**FURTHER INFO:** Visit [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) or call Professional Testing Corporation at 212-356-0660

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## REFERENCES

The following references may be of some help in preparing for the examination. The list does not attempt to include all acceptable references nor is it suggested that the Certification Examination for Nutrition Support Clinicians is necessarily based on these references. The NBNSC does not endorse any reference or resource as an official study guide for the certification exam.

Practice Recommendations, Clinical Guidelines and Standards for Nutrition Support:

[https://www.nutritioncare.org/Clinical\\_Practice\\_Library/](https://www.nutritioncare.org/Clinical_Practice_Library/)

American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN) Board of Directors and Clinical Practice Committee. Definition of Terms, Styles, and Conventions Used in ASPEN Board of Directors-Approved Documents. American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition.

[https://www.nutritioncare.org/Clinical\\_Practice\\_Library/](https://www.nutritioncare.org/Clinical_Practice_Library/)

Ayers P, Adams S, Boullata J, et al. ASPEN Parenteral Nutrition Safety Consensus Recommendations. JPEN J Parenter Enteral Nutr, March 2014; vol. 38, 3: pp. 296-333.

Boullata, J, Carrera A, Harvey, L, et al. ASPEN Safe Practices for Enteral Nutrition Therapy. JPEN J Parenter Enteral Nutr, 2017; vol 41, 1: pp 15-103.

Corkins M.R. et al. (Eds.) The ASPEN Pediatric Nutrition Support Core Curriculum, 2nd Edition. Silver Spring, MD: ASPEN, 2015.

Mueller, C. et al. (Eds.) The ASPEN Adult Nutrition Support Core Curriculum, 3rd Edition. Silver Spring, MD: ASPEN, 2017.

### **Ultimate Authority**

If it appears that an answer to an exam question may vary depending on the reference used the following policy will be followed:

- 1) The ASPEN Practice Guidelines and Standards and Practice papers will be considered the final authority when questions of answers are raised. These papers are available at no charge on the ASPEN website: [http://www.nutritioncare.org/guidelines\\_and\\_clinical\\_resources/](http://www.nutritioncare.org/guidelines_and_clinical_resources/)
- 2) If the NBNSC determines that a guideline or standard from another organization differs from those published by ASPEN, it will only be considered authoritative if it is a peer reviewed document from a recognized organization and has been published after the publication date of the ASPEN document it disagrees with.
- 3) In the event that a question's answer is challenged the question and answer will be reviewed by the exam chairperson, the chairperson of the Executive board and, if necessary, by a third person with special knowledge of the field.

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