Preparing for the RD Exam
Powerful Study & Testing Skills

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California WIC Career Development Coordinator, 2013

Success

PLAN
PREPARE
PRACTICE
POSITIVE
The Purpose of the RD exam

Demonstrate **application** of knowledge in dietetic practice as an entry-level dietitian:

- Situational questions where you make a professional decision based on your knowledge
- May include a few common calculations
- Critical information needed for safe practice is scored higher

Facts you learned in your DPD courses and textbooks.

- Presents a range of important information and data dietitians needs to know
OLD DOMAINS

I. Food and Nutrition Sciences - 12%
   A. Food Science and Nutrient Composition of Foods
   B. Nutrition and Supporting Sciences

II. Nutrition Care Process - 40%
   A. Nutrition Screening and Assessment
   B. Nutrition Diagnosis
   C. Nutrition Intervention (Planning and Intervention)
   D. Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation

III. Counseling, Communication, Education & Research – 10%
   A. Assessment and Planning
   B. Implementation and Evaluation
   C. Research

IV. Foodservice Systems - 17%
   A. Menu Planning
   B. Procurement, Production, Distribution, and Service
   C. Sanitation and Safety
   D. Facility Planning

V. Management - 21%
   A. Human Resources
   B. Finance and Materials
   C. Marketing Products and Services
   D. Functions and Characteristics
   E. Quality Improvement

NEW/REVISED DOMAINS 1-1-12

I. Food and Nutrition Sciences - 12%
   A. Food Science and Nutrient Composition of Foods
   B. Nutrition and Supporting Sciences
   C. Education and Communication
   D. Research
   E. Management Concepts

II. Nutrition Care for Individuals and Groups – 50%
   A. Screening and Assessment
   B. Diagnosis
   C. Planning and Intervention
   D. Monitoring and Evaluation

III. Management of Food and Nutrition Programs and Services – 21%
   A. Functions of Management
   B. Human Resources
   C. Financial Management
   D. Marketing and Public Relations
   E. Quality Improvement

IV. Foodservice Systems – 17%
   A. Menu Development
   B. Procurement, Production, Distribution, and Service
   C. Sanitation and Safety
   D. Equipment and Facility Planning
   E. Sustainability
USE at least 3 different study resources and methods

- Inman Review of Dietetics & CDs 2008
- Breeding & Associates RD Exam Review Notebook
- Textbooks; Krause’s, Foodservice Organizations, Introduction to Foodservice

Free to AND members

Nutrition Care Process online modules at www.eatright.com

- click on “Practice”, then “Nutrition Care Process”.
- go to Practitioners and access NCP Tutorial Modules

Access Fees:

- Breeding Online questions
- Rdexam.com.
- Dietitianexam.com
Study Strength Training

- Keep a positive attitude, you have the knowledge and this is just the last step to your new career
- Ask for support and help from your family, friends, fellow interns and employer
- Have an uninterrupted, relaxing place to study
- Maintain balance in your life; a healthy diet, exercise, recreational and social activities.
PREPARATION-Study Strength Training

- Make a commitment to a consistent routine study schedule—and stick to it
- Don’t cram—cramming leads to lost memory
- Only schedule 2-3 hour study sessions
- Study at the best time for you. Are you a morning person or a night person?
- Don’t study when you’re tired or bored—rest, exercise, change your environment
- Take a 10 minute break every hour—Stretch—get the blood flowing and practice relaxation techniques
SEEING/Visual Learning 65%

- Use positive, pleasant images
- Vivid, colorful images are easier to remember
- Close your eyes or look at a blank wall. Imagine that you see the word written there.
- Try drawing pictures of the words you need to learn
- Make a diagram or map of the information.
- Try using **color** in your notes. Even try different colored paper
Seeing—use colors

Feeling—draw a picture

Hearing—say it out loud
Building Memory Muscle
Seeing---Hearing---Feeling

- Logical memory- associating a new idea immediately with facts or ideas that you already know
- Create your own examples, relating to your own experiences or someone you know
- Think about what you are learning and relate it to whatever is important to you
- Think about what you have studied, write notes, explain it to somebody else or talk it to yourself out loud
- Record your notes in your own voice and listen to it when you’re relaxing or driving or not in the mood to read anymore
- Use flash cards
How to Study Using Powerful Reading Skills

Read and identify the **KEY** points

- **Define** the key words
- **Make it real**--
  see yourself in the situation

- **Put information in your own words**
  and write **productive** notes
Practice Powerful Reading

What are the KEY words describing DKA? Why is this happening?

- Acute Complications of Diabetes
  - Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA) - uncontrolled diabetes due to inadequate insulin for glucose utilization, resulting in severe disturbances in protein, fat, and CHO metabolism. Seen primarily in Type 1 diabetics.
    - The primary clinical indicators for DKA are:
      - High blood glucose (>250 mg/dl)
      - Ketones in the urine. The body depends on fat for energy because glucose cannot be utilized. Utilization of fatty acids for energy causes ketone formation. Because ketone bodies are acids, the blood pH decreases and the individual develops acidosis. Ketones eventually spill into the urine.

- What else do you know about this disease?
A system is defined as a collection of interrelated parts unified by design to obtain one or more objectives—it is simply keeping the organization’s objectives in mind throughout the performance of all activities. It requires a communication network and coordination among all parts of the organization.

- Viewing a foodservice operation as a system is a way to understand interrelatedness of work in a foodservice operation
- The systems approach keeps the organization’s objectives in mind in all activities.

What is a system?
Why do we have a system?
What does a system require?
What are some objectives of your food service organization?
MAKE IT REAL - how would you describe the symptoms to a patient and why they are happening and how it will be treated?

- Symptoms of DKA include:
  - **Polyuria** - kidney tubules reach their maximum for glucose at 160-200 mg/dL, causing glycosuria. Urinary glucose has osmotic activity, thereby increasing urine volume, leading to sodium & potassium loss and dehydration.
  - **Polydipsia** - this osmotic activity on extracellular fluid causes withdrawal of water from the cells, stimulating thirst.
  - **Polyphagia** - impaired utilization of fuel leads to hunger.
  - **Hyperventilation** - respirations increase to excrete excess CO2, and become progressively more labored until deep and gasping – known as Kussmaul respirations.

- Treatment of DKA:
  - Suplemental insulin
  - Fluid (non-dextrose) and electrolyte replacement
FEELING/Tactual-Hands-On Learner

- Draw pictures that represent the material
- Walk around the room while you read or study your notes
- Keep your hands active, try using a squish ball or keep a pen or pencil in your hand
- Trace spelling or vocabulary words
- Write flash cards for vocabulary terms or review
- Try making up a rhyme or a song to remember key points

HEARING/Auditory Learner

- Try studying with a friend and explaining to each other
- Record your notes, lie back in a comfortable spot and listen to them
- State each fact out loud
- Say the word with emphasis
- Try putting the fact to music and sing it
PRACTICE – which ones diagnose and which ones monitor?

- **Self-Monitoring of Blood Glucose (SMBG)** is encouraged for persons with diabetes to improve self-management skills. Blood sugar levels are frequently checked and recorded, usually 4 or more and up to 8 times each day. Testing is done with reagent strips (Dextrostix®, Chemstrip®) using finger-prick blood samples read by a glucometer. Results may indicate a need to adjust the disease management program (insulin and/or diet). Some patients have **insulin pumps** that allow insulin to be released into the bloodstream (based on monitored blood sugar values) in either basal or bolus amounts without injections.

- **Fasting Plasma Glucose (FPG)** is the preferred test for diagnosis because of its ease of administration, convenience, acceptability to patients and lower cost. It is done after not eating for at least 10 hours. Diagnosis for type 1 and type 2 diabetes is based on two fasting blood glucose tests of greater than 126 mg/dL (7.0 mmol/L). Impaired fasting homeostasis is indicated if the fasting glucose is greater than 110 mg/dL and less than 126 mg/dL. Normal fasting glucose is less than 110 mg/dL.

- **Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT)** is another method used for diagnosing diabetes. The patient should not be ill or taking medication or vitamin supplements that may affect the test. For the test, a standard glucose drink (Glucoola®) containing 75 g of carbohydrate is given. If the patient weighs less than 50 kg, then 50 g is given; if the patient weighs 50-100 kg, then 75 g is given; if the patient weighs more than 100 kg, then 100 g is given. Blood glucose is tested at the beginning, at ½, 1, 1½ and 2 hours after the carbohydrate load. Normal pre-prandial fasting glucose levels are less than 110 mg/dL. See chart p.102

- **Random Blood Glucose Test** can be taken at any time of the day. A diagnosis for type 1 and type 2 diabetes is a level of greater than 200 mg/dL plus symptoms such as excess urination, thirst or unexplained weight loss.

- **Glycated Hemoglobin (GHB)** tests reflect the exposure of hemoglobin and other proteins to circulating glucose. Because glucose attaches to protein in a slow, concentration-dependent and irreversible manner, glycated hemoglobin tests reflect average plasma glucose concentrations over time. Glycated hemoglobin can be measured by different methods that look at different components of the product.
  Hemoglobin A1C (HbA1c) is one measure of glycated hemoglobin. It is an integrated measure of long-term (2-3 months) mean glycemia. For non-diabetics, the normal range is 4-6%, the goal for diabetics is <7%. If blood glucose is high, the level will be high. This level is not used to adjust daily insulin nor should it be used for diagnosis.
# Visual Learning

## PRACTICE-Writing Powerful notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY WORDS</th>
<th>DEFINE</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write key words in column to</td>
<td>Write a simple definition of key words to</td>
<td>Write brief notes with the main points about the key words and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remember the main ideas in</td>
<td>clarify meaning</td>
<td>important facts to remember. Put it in your own words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your notes</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUESTIONS** – make notes of any questions that you may want to look up.
MEMORIZE— See the food, associate with other groups

### Diabetic Food Exchange List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>CHO g</th>
<th>PRO g</th>
<th>FAT g</th>
<th>kcal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starch</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NF Milk</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&gt;3</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean Meat</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HF Meat or cheese</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COOL DOWN CALCULATIONS

- Look for quick ways to calculate answers to save time.
- Round off numbers for easier calculations.
- Put all units of measurements in the same form for calculating.
- Mix it up. Calculate it backwards, start from the answer.
- Draw it out if it helps you see the answer.
Q. How many 5 oz servings of meat will you get from 10 pounds of meat if it has a 65% yield

**FACTS YOU NEED**

ozs per pound = ?

10 pounds meat = 160 ozs  \( (160 \times 16) \)

65% yield = 160 oz. \( \times 0.65 = 104 \) oz usable meat

5 oz servings = \( 104 \div 5 \) oz serv = 20.8 or 20 servings
PRACTICE—Break it down—Mix it up

FACTS

ozs per pound = 16
16 x 10 pounds meat = 160 ozs

Q. How many 5 oz servings of meat will you get from 10 pounds of meat if it has a 35% shrinkage?

Number of Servings = total ozs of meat x 35% shrinkage/loss = 56 oz
160 – loss of 56 = 104 oz EP ÷ 5 oz serv = 20 serv

Q. You have 10 pounds of meat with a 65% yield, you need 20 serv, what will the serving size be?

Serving Size = 160 ozs x .65 = 104 yeild ÷ 20 = 5.1 oz
PRACTICE
Q. A tube feeding with 1.2 kcal/cc is to run at 100cc q hr at full strength for 12 hours, how many calories will it provide?

BREAK IT DOWN

Q. How many cc’s formula is needed?

100ml q hr X 12 hr = 1200 cc Formula

Q. How many calories from the formula?

1.2 kcal/cc x 1200 cc formula X = 1440 total kcal
60 second Freeze-Frame exercise to move your energy back into balance

- Focus your attention to your heart and breathe slowly and deeply
- Recall a feeling of joy, love, gratitude, let yourself really experience this
- Give yourself a positive message – like “I am calm,” return and focus on the task in front of you
Without looking at the answers—Carefully read the question, identify key words

What do you know about the key words?

What is the question asking, in your words?

What do you think the answer is?
Q. Like glucagon, this hormone elicits the release of glucose from the liver cells:

What are the KEY words and what do you know about the key words?

What else do you know about “release of glucose”?

Are there any other “clues” in the question?

What do you think the answer is?

Hormone—releases glucose—from liver

- Like glucagon? Glucagon breaks down glycogen in the liver in starvation
- “What other hormone releases glucose from the liver? When would you need this extra supply of glucose?
PRACTICE-TESTING FITNESS
Analyzing Choices

Read each answer choice completely--eliminate the wrong choices first

Think about the key words in the question and what you know--look carefully at the remaining choices.

There are often 2 choices that appear correct—analyze each one and pick the BEST answer

If you don’t see the right answer—go back and look for clues in the question and in the answer
Analyzing Choices

Q. Like glucagon, this hormone elicits the release of glucose from the liver cells:

   a. Insulin
   b. Aldosterone
   c. Epinephrine
   d. Antidiuretic hormone (ADH)

Consider each answer and eliminate the wrong choices-first

Think about the key words and define remaining choices

   a. Insulin - Anabolic hormone, glucose from blood into cells and for glucose oxidation to glycogen in the liver.
   b. Aldosterone - secreted by adrenal gland
   c. Epinephrine - remember “fight” or “flight”
   d. Antidiuretic hormone (ADH) – break down the word for the meaning
Q. The terms “nutrition education and nutrition counseling” are purposefully separated. What is the main difference in meaning behind these two intervention categories?

FIND THE KEY WORDS
DEFINE THE WORDS
ASK THE QUESTION IN YOUR OWN WORDS
Q. The terms “nutrition education and nutrition counseling” are purposefully separated. What is the main difference in meaning behind these two intervention categories?

a. The use of skill development in nutrition education, but not in nutrition counseling.

b. There is no difference between the two as most often RDs will use both intertwined.

c. Nutrition counseling is more theoretical whereas nutrition education is more practical.

d. Nutrition education works to fill a knowledge deficit, whereas nutrition counseling works to facilitate the client identifying what changes to make and how*. 
PRACTICE- QUESTION

Q. You have identified individuals at a local clinic at risk for type 2 diabetes that need nutrition education. Which step of screening have you completed?

- What are the KEY words?
- Put yourself in the situation, now explain what you already know about this group--in your own words.
- What step have you done?
  Did you select? Did you establish parameters?
  Did you decide methodology?
  Did you determine the purpose?
Q. You have identified individuals at a local clinic at risk for type 2 diabetes that need nutrition education. Which step of screening have you completed?

Look at each choice—define the meaning of the word. What choices are NOT correct?

a. Selection— to choose? Not sure look again
b. Parameters— a boundary-NO
c. Methodology- a procedure-NO
d. Purpose – the intention-YES
Q. You have just eaten a slice of pizza. Which of the following does the pancreas excrete to aid in fat digestion?

What are the KEY words?

What are KEY words in the answers? What is NOT the answer?

a. chyme and pancreatic lipase
b. chyme and gastric lipase
c. cholesterol esterase and gastric lipase
d. cholesterol esterase and pancreatic lipase
Q. You receive a food order with 200 lbs of beef roast containing high amounts of yellow connective tissue that is unaffected by heat. This tissue is known as:

Cross out what you know is wrong

a. collagen
b. Marbling
c. hemoglobin
d. elastin
Q. All of the following are functions of soluble fiber except:

What is the difference between soluble and insoluble fiber?

a. aids in reducing cholesterol levels
b. aids in slower glucose absorption
c. provides a feeling of fullness
d. aids in reducing constipation
Q. An athlete is concerned about eating too much fat. You respond with:

What is the recommendation for all healthy adults? Is it different for athletics?

a. there is no advantage athletically by reducing fat to less than 15%
b. most athletes should consume 10-20% fat
c. most athletes require 30-35% fat
d. very little fat is required by athletes
Tough questions

Relax, breathe, visualize a situation

Eliminate wrong answers then make a choice

Don't get bogged down racking your brain and stressing out--move on and don't look back
• **Read carefully** - read all the choices carefully, there are usually more than one good answer—but one is a better choice and the correct answer

• **Don’t pick the first answer**- there might be a BETTER choice

• **Eliminate wrong answers** – each one you eliminate, increases your odds of selecting the right answer

• **Look for clues** – key words or terms can give you clues and remember everything you need to answer the question is provided

• **Watch out words** - likely, may, can, or always, never

• **Don’t know a word or term**--try replacing it with one you know and see if that helps you understand what the question is asking.

• **Paraphrase the question** - in your own words, what is the question asking

• **Facts or decision-making** – is it about a fact or is it about a situation and you need to make a decision?

• **Visualize the problem** - most questions are based on real life situations so and think about the best solution.
Next Steps
Before the Exam

- Visit the testing site, sit in the lobby and “feel”.
- Put all study materials away at least 24 hours before the exam.
- Next, spend the rest of the time relaxing, taking care of yourself, positive energy.
- If your mind wonders to “that” place, STOP and practice the relaxation techniques.

- Ask for ear plugs/head phones to block out noise
- Request paper, pencil and calculator
- Don’t forget to take a bathroom break before.
- Use the full 30 minutes allowed before the exam starts to prepare yourself for the exam.
- Carefully review exam procedures.
- Write down a timing schedule to keep you on track and make full use of the 150 minutes you have for the exam.
- Clear your mind by writing any data you think you need to remember on your paper.
- Sit back, breathe and practice relaxation techniques.
Timing Your Success - reduces anxiety about going too slow and keeps you from going too fast and missing key information. Write down the time you will start and in 30 min intervals the question number you will be on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTES</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write down any data that you’re holding in your head to clear your mind and focus on the question in front of you.</td>
<td>Start</td>
<td>1 pm</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>1:30</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<td>120</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>145</td>
<td>3:30</td>
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Breathe
Relax

Keep a positive attitude

Focus on your many accomplishments

Create a state of relaxed concentration

Stay calm and confident
POSITIVE-WINNING ATTITUDE

Energy flows where attention goes

...where is your energy going?