



# ACE Personal Trainer

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## Practice Questions

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**1. The ACSM/ACE pre-participation screening algorithm bases the recommendation for medical clearance primarily on current exercise habits, known disease, and:**

- A. The client's age and sex
- B. The client's stated fitness goals
- C. The client's body-mass index
- D. The presence of signs or symptoms of cardiovascular, metabolic, or renal disease

**2. Which type of joint is the shoulder (glenohumeral) joint?**

- A. Ball-and-socket
- B. Hinge
- C. Pivot
- D. Gliding

**3. A trainer tells a client to 'drive your heels through the floor' during a squat. What type of cue is this?**

- A. External cue
- B. Internal cue
- C. Kinesthetic cue
- D. Verbal correction cue

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**4. How many kilocalories does one gram of carbohydrate provide?**

- A. 4 kcal
- B. 7 kcal
- C. 9 kcal
- D. 2 kcal



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**5. Cultural competence in personal training means the trainer:**

- A. Respects and adapts to clients' diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and needs
- B. Treats every client identically regardless of context
- C. Avoids working with diverse clients
- D. Imposes their own values on clients

**6. The principle of specificity in program design states that training adaptations are:**

- A. Specific to the type of stress imposed on the body
- B. General and transfer equally to all activities
- C. Determined solely by genetics
- D. Independent of the exercises selected

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**7. A personal trainer is asked by a client to diagnose the cause of their knee pain. What is the appropriate response?**

- A. Refer the client to a qualified healthcare professional
- B. Diagnose the injury based on symptoms described
- C. Recommend a specific anti-inflammatory medication
- D. Prescribe a rehabilitation protocol for the knee

**8. What is the recommended supervision level for children performing resistance training?**

- A. Qualified adult supervision with attention to technique
- B. No supervision needed
- C. Only peer supervision
- D. Supervision only for the first session

**9. A sedentary client with diagnosed type 2 diabetes but no symptoms wishes to begin moderate-intensity exercise. Per current screening guidelines, this client should:**

- A. Begin vigorous exercise immediately
- B. Be permanently barred from exercise
- C. Skip screening because diabetes is well controlled
- D. Obtain medical clearance before beginning exercise

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**10. The knee is classified as what type of joint?**

- A. Ball-and-socket
- B. Hinge
- C. Saddle
- D. Pivot

**11. Feedback a client receives from their own senses (feeling the bar path, seeing themselves in a mirror) is called:**

- A. Augmented feedback
- B. Intrinsic feedback
- C. Knowledge of results
- D. Terminal feedback

**12. How many kilocalories does one gram of dietary fat provide?**

- A. 9 kcal
- B. 4 kcal
- C. 7 kcal
- D. 5 kcal

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**13. Which behavior would MOST clearly violate the ACE Code of Ethics?**

- A. Referring a client to a dietitian for a meal plan
- B. Developing an intimate relationship with a current client
- C. Continuing education to stay current
- D. Maintaining liability insurance

**14. Progressive overload refers to:**

- A. Keeping the training load constant over time
- B. Gradually increasing the demands placed on the body
- C. Always training to muscular failure
- D. Reducing volume each week

**15. Which of the following is WITHIN a certified personal trainer's scope of practice?**

- A. Creating a meal plan with specific calorie and macronutrient prescriptions
- B. Designing a general exercise program based on fitness assessments
- C. Treating a client's muscle strain with manual therapy
- D. Recommending dietary supplements to cure a deficiency



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**16. Which is generally a safe and recommended aerobic activity during an uncomplicated pregnancy?**

- A. Contact sports
- B. Brisk walking or swimming
- C. Scuba diving
- D. High fall-risk activities

**17. During auscultation of blood pressure, the appearance of the first Korotkoff sound corresponds to the:**

- A. Diastolic pressure
- B. Systolic pressure
- C. Mean arterial pressure
- D. Pulse pressure

**18. Which muscle is the prime mover during elbow flexion?**

- A. Triceps brachii
- B. Deltoid
- C. Biceps brachii
- D. Pectoralis major

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**19. When demonstrating an exercise to a new client, the trainer should perform it:**

- A. As fast as possible to save time
- B. With correct technique at an appropriate tempo
- C. Only partially, leaving out the hard part
- D. With maximal load to impress the client

**20. How many kilocalories does one gram of protein provide?**

- A. 4 kcal
- B. 9 kcal
- C. 7 kcal
- D. 0 kcal



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**21. A trainer feels a client may be showing signs of an eating disorder. The trainer should:**

- A. Confront the client and demand they eat more
- B. Ignore it since nutrition is outside scope
- C. Express concern compassionately and refer the client to a qualified mental-health or medical professional
- D. Design a meal plan to correct the behavior

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**22. The principle of reversibility (detraining) indicates that fitness adaptations:**

- A. Are permanent once achieved
- B. Improve during periods of inactivity
- C. Are lost when training stops
- D. Only apply to cardiovascular fitness

**23. What is the primary purpose of a pre-participation health screening?**

- A. To set the client's training goals
- B. To estimate the client's one-repetition maximum
- C. To identify individuals who may need medical clearance before exercise
- D. To determine body composition

**24. Which statement about exercise and metabolism in clients with obesity is accurate?**

- A. Exercise lowers metabolism permanently
- B. Muscle has no metabolic role
- C. Building and preserving muscle supports a higher resting metabolic rate
- D. Only diet affects metabolism

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**25. A client presents with a resting BP of 165/95 mmHg on two occasions. The trainer should:**

- A. Begin vigorous interval training to lower it
- B. Have the client perform a maximal treadmill test
- C. Ignore it because exercise lowers blood pressure
- D. Refer the client for medical evaluation before exercise testing



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**26. Which of the following muscles is NOT part of the rotator cuff?**

- A. Teres minor
- B. Supraspinatus
- C. Infraspinatus
- D. Deltoid

**27. Information provided by the trainer that supplements the client's own senses is called:**

- A. Augmented (extrinsic) feedback
- B. Intrinsic feedback
- C. Sensory feedback
- D. Proprioceptive feedback

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**28. Which macronutrient should make up the largest percentage of total daily calories per the AMDR?**

- A. Carbohydrate
- B. Protein
- C. Fat
- D. Alcohol

**29. A client reports persistent low-back pain that worsens with daily activities, not just exercise. The trainer should refer to a:**

- A. Personal chef
- B. Group fitness instructor
- C. Strength coach
- D. Physician or physical therapist

**30. Individual differences as a training principle means that program design should:**

- A. Be identical for all clients of the same age
- B. Ignore client preferences
- C. Follow a single universal template
- D. Account for each client's unique response to training



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## Answer Key & Explanations

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**1. D — The presence of signs or symptoms of cardiovascular, metabolic, or renal disease**

The current algorithm uses current activity level, known CV/metabolic/renal disease, and the presence of signs/symptoms to decide on medical clearance.

**2. A — Ball-and-socket**

The glenohumeral joint is a ball-and-socket joint, allowing movement in all three planes including flexion, extension, abduction, adduction, and rotation.

**3. A — External cue**

External cues direct attention to the effect of the movement on the environment (the floor), which research shows generally improves motor learning and performance more than internal cues.

**4. A — 4 kcal**

Carbohydrate yields 4 kcal per gram, the same as protein. Fat provides 9 and alcohol 7.

**5. A — Respects and adapts to clients' diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and needs**

Cultural competence involves respecting clients' diverse backgrounds and adapting communication and programming appropriately to serve them effectively.

**6. A — Specific to the type of stress imposed on the body**

Specificity (SAID — Specific Adaptation to Imposed Demands) means the body adapts precisely to the demands placed on it, so training should mirror the client's goal.

**7. A — Refer the client to a qualified healthcare professional**

Diagnosing injuries is outside a personal trainer's scope of practice. Trainers must refer clients with pain or suspected injury to a licensed healthcare professional.

**8. A — Qualified adult supervision with attention to technique**

Children should perform resistance training under qualified adult supervision that ensures proper technique and appropriate loads, maximizing safety and benefit.

**9. D — Obtain medical clearance before beginning exercise**

Known metabolic disease (e.g., type 2 diabetes) in someone not currently exercising warrants medical clearance before starting exercise.

**10. B — Hinge**

The knee is a hinge (modified) joint that primarily allows flexion and extension in the sagittal plane.

**11. B — Intrinsic feedback**

Intrinsic feedback is the sensory information inherently available to the performer during and after a movement.



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**12. A — 9 kcal**

Fat is the most energy-dense macronutrient at 9 kcal per gram, more than double carbohydrate or protein.

**13. B — Developing an intimate relationship with a current client**

Engaging in a romantic/intimate relationship with a current client is an ethical violation because it compromises professional boundaries and objectivity.

**14. B — Gradually increasing the demands placed on the body**

Progressive overload means systematically increasing volume, intensity, frequency, or other variables so the body continues to adapt and improve.

**15. B — Designing a general exercise program based on fitness assessments**

Designing exercise programs from assessment data is a core trainer function. Prescribing specific diets, treating injuries, and recommending supplements to treat conditions require other licensed professionals.

**16. B — Brisk walking or swimming**

Low-risk aerobic activities like brisk walking and swimming are safe and recommended in uncomplicated pregnancy. Scuba diving and contact/fall-risk sports are contraindicated.

**17. B — Systolic pressure**

The first Korotkoff sound, the first audible tapping, marks systolic pressure; sounds disappearing marks diastolic.

**18. C — Biceps brachii**

The biceps brachii is the primary agonist for elbow flexion, while the triceps acts as the antagonist.

**19. B — With correct technique at an appropriate tempo**

A demonstration must model correct, full-range technique at a controlled tempo so the client forms an accurate movement picture.

**20. A — 4 kcal**

Protein provides 4 kcal per gram, equal to carbohydrate and less than fat (9 kcal/g).

**21. C — Express concern compassionately and refer the client to a qualified mental-health or medical professional**

Eating disorders are clinical conditions outside a trainer's scope. The appropriate role is to recognize warning signs, show concern, and refer to qualified professionals.

**22. C — Are lost when training stops**

Reversibility ('use it or lose it') means physiological gains decline when the training stimulus is removed, often within a few weeks of inactivity.

**23. C — To identify individuals who may need medical clearance before exercise**

Pre-participation screening identifies risk factors and signs/symptoms of disease so that those at higher risk receive medical clearance before starting or progressing exercise.

**24. C — Building and preserving muscle supports a higher resting metabolic rate**

Muscle tissue is metabolically active, so resistance training that preserves or builds lean mass helps maintain resting metabolic rate during weight loss.



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**25. D — Refer the client for medical evaluation before exercise testing**

Stage 2 hypertension readings warrant referral and medical management before exercise testing, per safety guidelines.

**26. D — Deltoid**

The rotator cuff consists of the supraspinatus, infraspinatus, teres minor, and subscapularis. The deltoid is a separate, larger shoulder muscle.

**27. A — Augmented (extrinsic) feedback**

Augmented feedback is externally provided information from a coach, mirror, or device that adds to the learner's intrinsic feedback.

**28. A — Carbohydrate**

Carbohydrate has the highest AMDR (45-65%), making it the primary energy source in a balanced diet.

**29. D — Physician or physical therapist**

Persistent pain affecting daily living warrants evaluation by a physician or physical therapist; diagnosing and treating pain is outside the trainer's scope.

**30. D — Account for each client's unique response to training**

Clients adapt to training at different rates due to genetics, training history, and lifestyle, so programs must be individualized.



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