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Practice Questions

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1. A barber finishes a haircut on a client with no visible skin issues, then notices a small nick on their own finger. Under bloodborne pathogen standards, what is the FIRST correct action?

- A. Wipe the finger with a disinfectant wipe and continue the service
- B. Complete the service and wash hands afterward to avoid inconveniencing the client
- C. Apply styptic powder to the client's skin immediately
- D. Stop the service, wash hands thoroughly, and apply a bandage or glove before continuing

2. Hair can be simultaneously dried and styled with a ___.

- A. Neck duster
- B. Blow-dryer
- C. Shaving brush
- D. Electric latherizer

3. An EPA-registered hospital-level disinfectant requires a 10-minute contact time on a razor guard. A barber sprays the implement and places it back in the drawer after 6 minutes because it appears dry. This practice is:

- A. A violation, because the full label-mandated contact time must elapse regardless of appearance
- B. Acceptable because visual dryness confirms complete disinfection
- C. Acceptable if the disinfectant is rated for HIV and HBV
- D. Acceptable for metal implements but not for plastic guards

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4. When cutting a ___'s hair, do not expect the client to hold his head still.

- A. Young adult
- B. Middle-aged client
- C. Child
- D. Elderly person



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5. Which of the following processes destroys ALL microbial life, including bacterial spores?

- A. Sanitation
- B. Disinfection
- C. Sterilization
- D. Decontamination

6. The all-purpose comb is used ___.

- A. For general combing purposes
- B. For curly hair only
- C. For very fine hair
- D. Only on dry hair

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7. A client sits in the barber chair and the barber notices the previous client left visible hair clippings on the headrest. What level of infection control is REQUIRED before seating the new client?

- A. Sterilization using an autoclave
- B. Full hospital-level disinfection with a 10-minute soak
- C. Sanitation by removing debris and applying a clean cover or sanitizing the surface
- D. No action is required if the clippings contain no blood

8. Before applying water to your client's head ___.

- A. Test the temperature
- B. Apply the shampoo
- C. Remove the neck strip
- D. Wrap the head with a towel

9. A bottle of quats (quaternary ammonium compound) disinfectant has been in continuous use for two weeks in an open container on the barber station. What is the PRIMARY concern with this practice?

- A. Repeated immersion of implements dilutes the solution below effective concentration
- B. Quats evaporate quickly, leaving a residue that attracts bacteria
- C. Open containers allow organic matter accumulation and dilution, reducing efficacy below the registered concentration
- D. Quats become acidic over time and can etch metal implements



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10. The ___ step in sanitizing a clipper is to hold it with the blades facing downward and brush the blades to remove hair particles.

- A. First
- B. Second
- C. Third
- D. Last

11. During a straight-razor shave, the barber accidentally nicks the client's skin and blood appears. The CORRECT sequence of actions is:

- A. Replace the razor with a new one, continue the shave, and disinfect at the end of the service
- B. Apply an antiseptic to the razor and continue the shave to minimize service interruption
- C. Apply styptic powder, discard the blade, complete the shave, disinfect the area post-service
- D. Stop service, apply pressure with a clean cloth, put on gloves, apply styptic or alum, dispose of the used blade in a sharps container, and clean and disinfect the affected area

12. A spatula should be used to ___.

- A. Smooth antiseptic onto cuts
- B. Disinfect hard surfaces
- C. Remove creams from a jar
- D. Cut hair

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13. Which type of disinfectant is required for multi-use implements in a barber shop by most state boards?

- A. A household bleach solution of any concentration
- B. Any commercial-grade cleaning product labeled 'antibacterial'
- C. An EPA-registered disinfectant used according to label instructions
- D. 70% isopropyl alcohol applied with a cotton ball



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14. Headrest covers and ___ must be changed for each client.

- A. Haircutting capes
- B. All electric tools
- C. Shampoo cape
- D. Neck strips

15. A barber cleans metal shears by wiping them with a phenolic disinfectant wipe immediately after use on each client. What is the critical flaw in this method?

- A. Disinfectant wipes are reserved for surface areas, not implements
- B. Metal shears must only be disinfected using UV light cabinets
- C. Wiping does not allow sufficient contact time and fails to pre-clean organic matter that can neutralize the disinfectant
- D. Phenolic disinfectants are not EPA-registered and cannot be used in a barbershop

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16. Chemical and/or nail-care services require proper ventilation by ___.

- A. Advising clients to breathe deeply
- B. Using a window fan
- C. Using an air-filtration system
- D. Opening windows

17. A single-use neck strip falls to the floor before being placed on a client. The correct action is to:

- A. Pick it up and use it since the floor is swept and clean
- B. Discard it and use a fresh strip, as single-use items cannot be reprocessed
- C. Place it in disinfectant solution for 10 minutes before use
- D. Disinfect it with alcohol spray and then use it

18. A folded towel can cushion the client's ___ when washing an adult client's hair at the shampoo bowl.

- A. Forehead
- B. Neck
- C. Back
- D. Ears



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19. State board rules typically require that disinfected implements be stored:

- A. In a sealed plastic bag on the barber station counter for quick access
- B. In a UV sanitizing cabinet, which also maintains their disinfected state
- C. In a clean, covered container or drawer that protects them from recontamination until use
- D. Submerged in disinfectant solution at all times until needed

20. Chemical disinfectants are the ___ agents used most often in barbershops.

- A. Sanitizing
- B. Autoimmune
- C. Treating
- D. Storage

21. A client reveals they are HIV-positive before a service. Under OSHA and state board standards, the barber should:

- A. Wear a face shield in addition to gloves for the entire service
- B. Use the same universal precautions applied to every client, because all clients are treated as potentially infectious
- C. Request a physician's clearance note before proceeding
- D. Refuse service to protect themselves and other clients

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22. A tail comb is used ___.

- A. For general purposes
- B. During blow-drying
- C. For sectioning long hair
- D. For very short hair

23. Which term describes reducing the number of pathogens on a surface to a safe level without necessarily killing all of them?

- A. Sanitation
- B. Disinfection
- C. Sterilization
- D. Fumigation



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24. Use a biohazard sticker when discarding items contaminated by ___.

- A. Hair
- B. Blood
- C. Chemicals
- D. Soap

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25. A barber shop uses sodium hypochlorite (bleach) as a disinfectant for combs. The bleach solution was mixed at the correct 1:10 ratio yesterday morning. Today, should the barber use the same solution?

- A. Yes, as long as the solution still has a detectable chlorine smell it is effective
- B. Yes, bleach solutions remain effective for up to one week if stored in a covered container
- C. No, bleach is not an EPA-registered disinfectant and should never be used on implements
- D. No, bleach solutions must be mixed fresh daily because they degrade rapidly and lose efficacy

26. In barbering, what is the purpose of tapering when creating a fade?

- A. Adds bulk
- B. Increases density
- C. Blends hair lengths
- D. Creates sharp lines

27. An implement that touches only intact skin — such as a cape or towel — is classified under the Spaulding Classification system as:

- A. Semi-critical, requiring high-level disinfection
- B. Critical, requiring sterilization
- C. Non-critical, requiring low-level disinfection or sanitation
- D. Exempt from infection control requirements

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28. If you ___, you must sanitize it before reuse.

- A. Use a tool at the beginning of a haircut
- B. Drop a tool on the floor
- C. Put a tool in a UV sterilizer
- D. Put a tool in a clean, airtight cabinet



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29. A new barber notices that the shop's wet disinfectant jar holding combs has a pink tint and visible floating debris. The MOST likely consequence of continuing to use this solution is:

- A. The combs will corrode faster due to increased acidity
- B. The disinfectant has been neutralized by organic load and will not achieve the kill claims stated on the label
- C. Floating debris is normal and does not affect the solution's efficacy
- D. The pink color indicates the solution has become a stronger concentration

30. Hard rubber combs are ____.

- A. Not as popular as metal combs
- B. Durable and cost effective
- C. Very breakable
- D. Impossible to clean



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Answer Key & Explanations

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1. D — Stop the service, wash hands thoroughly, and apply a bandage or glove before continuing

OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Standard requires that any open wound on a service provider be covered with a bandage or glove before continued client contact to prevent cross-contamination.

2. B — Blow-dryer

3. A — A violation, because the full label-mandated contact time must elapse regardless of appearance

EPA regulations require that disinfectants be used strictly according to label directions, including full contact time; removing an implement before that time invalidates the disinfection process.

4. C — Child

5. C — Sterilization

Sterilization is the only process that eliminates all forms of microbial life including the most resistant bacterial endospores, distinguishing it from sanitation and disinfection.

6. A — For general combing purposes

7. C — Sanitation by removing debris and applying a clean cover or sanitizing the surface

Non-porous surfaces that contact intact skin, such as headrests, require sanitation (removal of visible debris and cleaning) between clients per standard barbering infection-control protocols.

8. A — Test the temperature

9. C — Open containers allow organic matter accumulation and dilution, reducing efficacy below the registered concentration

Quaternary ammonium solutions must be changed regularly because hair, debris, and water dilution lower the active ingredient concentration, rendering the solution ineffective per EPA label requirements.

10. A — First

11. D — Stop service, apply pressure with a clean cloth, put on gloves, apply styptic or alum, dispose of the used blade in a sharps container, and clean and disinfect the affected area

A blood exposure incident requires immediate service stoppage, barrier protection (gloves), wound management, safe disposal of the contaminated blade in a sharps container, and surface disinfection per OSHA bloodborne pathogen guidelines.

12. C — Remove creams from a jar

13. C — An EPA-registered disinfectant used according to label instructions

State boards mandate the use of EPA-registered disinfectants applied per label instructions, as this federal registration ensures proven efficacy against specific pathogens at tested concentrations.



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14. D — Neck strips

15. C — Wiping does not allow sufficient contact time and fails to pre-clean organic matter that can neutralize the disinfectant

Effective disinfection requires pre-cleaning to remove organic debris, then full immersion or wet contact for the label-specified dwell time; a single wipe rarely achieves either requirement.

16. C — Using an air-filtration system

17. B — Discard it and use a fresh strip, as single-use items cannot be reprocessed

Single-use items are designed for one application only; they must be discarded after any contamination event and cannot be disinfected or sterilized for reuse per standard barbering regulations.

18. B — Neck

19. C — In a clean, covered container or drawer that protects them from recontamination until use

After disinfection, implements must be stored in a clean, covered, and labeled container to prevent recontamination; leaving them exposed on the counter or soaking them indefinitely in solution are both non-compliant practices.

20. A — Sanitizing

21. B — Use the same universal precautions applied to every client, because all clients are treated as potentially infectious

Universal (standard) precautions require that every client be treated as potentially infectious, so the infection-control procedures do not change based on a client's disclosed status; refusal of service based on HIV status also violates anti-discrimination laws.

22. C — For sectioning long hair

23. A — Sanitation

Sanitation lowers the microbial count on surfaces to levels considered safe per public health standards, but does not claim to kill all organisms the way disinfection or sterilization do.

24. B — Blood

25. D — No, bleach solutions must be mixed fresh daily because they degrade rapidly and lose efficacy

Sodium hypochlorite solutions degrade within 24 hours, particularly when exposed to light and organic matter, so they must be prepared fresh daily to maintain the registered disinfecting concentration.

26. C — Blends hair lengths

27. C — Non-critical, requiring low-level disinfection or sanitation

Under the Spaulding Classification, items contacting only intact skin are non-critical and require low-level disinfection or sanitation, while items contacting mucous membranes or broken skin require higher-level processing.

28. B — Drop a tool on the floor

29. B — The disinfectant has been neutralized by organic load and will not achieve the kill claims stated on the label



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Visible debris and color change indicate that organic matter has contaminated and neutralized the active ingredients, rendering the solution unable to meet its EPA-registered kill claims and requiring immediate replacement.

30. B — Durable and cost effective



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