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Practice Questions

Try all 30 first, then check the answer key at the back.

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1. In the Transtheoretical Model, a client who says 'I have no intention of changing my eating habits in the next six months' is in which stage?

- A. Precontemplation
- B. Contemplation
- C. Preparation
- D. Action

2. Which enzyme in saliva begins the chemical digestion of starch in the mouth?

- A. Pepsin
- B. Lipase
- C. Salivary amylase
- D. Trypsin

3. In nutrition, what does one kilocalorie (kcal) represent?

- A. The energy to raise 1 kg of water by 1 degC
- B. The energy to raise 1 g of water by 1 degC
- C. The energy stored in 1 g of fat
- D. The energy used by the brain per minute

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4. How often are the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) updated and published?

- A. Every 10 years
- B. Every year
- C. Every 5 years
- D. Every 2 years



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5. Which three nutrients are classified as macronutrients?

- A. Vitamins, minerals, and water
- B. Fiber, cholesterol, and sodium
- C. Carbohydrates, proteins, and fats
- D. Calcium, iron, and zinc

6. Which vitamin is essential for normal vision, particularly for the synthesis of rhodopsin in the retina?

- A. Vitamin A
- B. Vitamin C
- C. Vitamin K
- D. Vitamin B12

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7. Roughly how many additional calories per day are generally recommended during the second trimester of pregnancy for a healthy-weight woman?

- A. No additional calories
- B. About 340 extra calories
- C. About 1,000 extra calories
- D. About 100 extra calories

8. Which form of vitamin D is generally considered more effective at raising and maintaining blood 25(OH)D levels?

- A. Vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol)
- B. Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol)
- C. They are exactly equivalent
- D. Calcitriol taken orally daily

9. A client states, 'I'm planning to start meal-prepping next week and have already bought containers.' Which stage of change does this best reflect?

- A. Precontemplation
- B. Preparation
- C. Contemplation
- D. Maintenance



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10. What is the term for the ball of chewed food mixed with saliva that is swallowed?

- A. Bolus
- B. Chyme
- C. Chyle
- D. Bile

11. Approximately how many kilojoules equal 1 kilocalorie?

- A. 1.0 kJ
- B. 4.18 kJ
- C. 2.2 kJ
- D. 9.0 kJ

12. Which two federal agencies jointly publish the Dietary Guidelines for Americans?

- A. FDA and CDC
- B. NIH and EPA
- C. USDA and HHS
- D. USDA and FDA

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13. How many kilocalories are provided per gram of carbohydrate?

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

14. A classic early clinical sign of vitamin A deficiency is:

- A. Bleeding gums
- B. Night blindness
- C. Goiter
- D. Megaloblastic anemia



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15. Adequate intake of which nutrient before and during early pregnancy reduces the risk of neural tube defects?

- A. Folate (folic acid)
- B. Vitamin C
- C. Vitamin K
- D. Biotin

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16. A client takes high-dose vitamin E supplements with warfarin. What is the primary concern?

- A. Reduced iron absorption
- B. Vitamin E lowers blood pressure dangerously
- C. Vitamin E blocks vitamin D activation
- D. Increased bleeding risk from additive anticoagulant effect

17. A client has been eating five vegetable servings daily for eight months and feels confident she won't relapse. Which stage best describes her?

- A. Action
- B. Preparation
- C. Maintenance
- D. Contemplation

18. The wave-like muscular contractions that move food down the esophagus are called:

- A. Segmentation
- B. Emulsification
- C. Mastication
- D. Peristalsis

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19. Using Atwater factors, how many kcal does 1 gram of carbohydrate provide?

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



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20. Who is the primary intended audience of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans?

- A. Food manufacturers only
- B. Only registered dietitians
- C. Policymakers and health professionals
- D. Children under 12

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

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

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22. Which plant-derived compound serves as a provitamin A carotenoid that the body can convert to retinol?

- A. Lycopene
- B. Lutein
- C. Beta-carotene
- D. Zeaxanthin

23. Why does iron requirement increase substantially during pregnancy?

- A. The fetus stores no iron of its own
- B. Iron is destroyed by pregnancy hormones
- C. Maternal blood volume expands and the fetus builds iron stores
- D. Iron absorption stops in pregnancy

24. Vitamin K is most important as a cofactor for which physiological process?

- A. Synthesis of clotting factors
- B. Collagen cross-linking
- C. Calcium absorption in the gut
- D. Conversion of carotene to retinol

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25. Which TTM stage is characterized by ambivalence, weighing the pros and cons of change but no commitment to act within 30 days?

- A. Precontemplation
- B. Action
- C. Termination
- D. Contemplation

26. Which enzyme, activated by stomach acid, begins protein digestion in the stomach?

- A. Amylase
- B. Pepsin
- C. Lactase
- D. Maltase

27. Using Atwater factors, how many kcal does 1 gram of fat provide?

- A. 4 kcal
- B. 7 kcal
- C. 11 kcal
- D. 9 kcal

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28. Which of the following is one of the four overarching Guidelines in the 2020-2025 DGA?

- A. Avoid all carbohydrates
- B. Eat as little as possible
- C. Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage
- D. Take a daily multivitamin

29. How many kilocalories are supplied per gram of alcohol?

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



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30. Vitamin D is best known for its role in the absorption of which mineral?

- A. Iron
- B. Sodium
- C. Zinc
- D. Calcium



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Answer Key & Explanations

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1. A — Precontemplation

Precontemplation is defined by no intention to change within the next six months, often because the person is unaware of the problem or feels unable to change.

2. C — Salivary amylase

Salivary amylase (ptyalin) starts breaking starch into maltose in the mouth. Pepsin works on protein in the stomach, lipase on fat, and trypsin on protein in the small intestine.

3. A — The energy to raise 1 kg of water by 1 degC

A kilocalorie is the energy needed to raise the temperature of 1 kilogram (1 liter) of water by 1 degree Celsius. The food 'Calorie' (capital C) equals one kilocalorie.

4. C — Every 5 years

By law (the 1990 National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act), the DGA are reviewed, updated as needed, and republished jointly by USDA and HHS every 5 years.

5. C — Carbohydrates, proteins, and fats

Macronutrients are nutrients the body needs in large amounts for energy and structure: carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Vitamins and minerals are micronutrients.

6. A — Vitamin A

Vitamin A (retinal) combines with opsin to form rhodopsin, the light-sensitive pigment needed for low-light vision; deficiency causes night blindness.

7. B — About 340 extra calories

Energy needs rise modestly in pregnancy. The second trimester typically adds about 340 kcal/day, and the third trimester about 450 kcal/day, not the doubling that 'eating for two' implies.

8. B — Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol)

Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) is generally more effective than D2 (ergocalciferol) at raising and sustaining serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D concentrations.

9. B — Preparation

Preparation is marked by intent to act in the immediate future (typically within 30 days) plus some initial steps, such as buying supplies.

10. A — Bolus

A bolus is the moistened, chewed food mass formed in the mouth. Chyme is the acidic semi-liquid mass formed in the stomach; chyle is fat-laden lymph; bile aids fat digestion.

11. B — 4.18 kJ

One kilocalorie equals about 4.18 kilojoules, so to convert kcal to kJ you multiply by roughly 4.2.



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12. C — USDA and HHS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) jointly develop and release the DGA.

13. A — 4 kcal

Carbohydrates and proteins each provide about 4 kcal per gram, while fat provides 9 kcal per gram.

14. B — Night blindness

Night blindness (nyctalopia) is one of the earliest signs of vitamin A deficiency because retinal stores of rhodopsin are depleted first.

15. A — Folate (folic acid)

Folate is essential for neural tube closure, which occurs in the first month. Women capable of pregnancy are advised to get 400 mcg/day of folic acid to lower the risk of defects like spina bifida.

16. D — Increased bleeding risk from additive anticoagulant effect

High-dose vitamin E can impair platelet function and potentiate anticoagulants like warfarin, raising bleeding risk; doses should be reviewed with the prescriber.

17. C — Maintenance

Maintenance applies once a behavior change has been sustained for roughly six months or more and the focus shifts to preventing relapse.

18. D — Peristalsis

Peristalsis is the coordinated wave of smooth-muscle contraction that propels food along the GI tract. Segmentation mixes contents in the intestine but does not propel them forward.

19. C — 4 kcal

Carbohydrate yields about 4 kcal per gram under the Atwater general factor system.

20. C — Policymakers and health professionals

The DGA are written for policymakers, nutrition and health professionals, and program operators, not directly for the general public, who receive translated tools like MyPlate.

21. D — 9 kcal

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

22. C — Beta-carotene

Beta-carotene is cleaved to form retinal and then retinol; lycopene, lutein, and zeaxanthin are carotenoids without provitamin A activity.

23. C — Maternal blood volume expands and the fetus builds iron stores

Pregnancy roughly increases the RDA for iron to 27 mg/day because maternal red blood cell mass expands and the fetus and placenta accumulate iron stores for early infancy.

24. A — Synthesis of clotting factors

Vitamin K is required for gamma-carboxylation of clotting factors II, VII, IX and X; deficiency prolongs clotting time.



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25. D — Contemplation

Contemplation involves recognizing the problem and seriously considering change within six months, but ambivalence keeps the person from committing to imminent action.

26. B — Pepsin

Pepsin, activated from pepsinogen by hydrochloric acid, breaks proteins into smaller peptides in the stomach. Amylase digests starch; lactase and maltase digest sugars.

27. D — 9 kcal

Fat is the most energy-dense macronutrient at about 9 kcal per gram.

28. C — Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage

Guideline 1 is to follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage, reflecting the cumulative impact of food choices over time.

29. B — 7 kcal

Alcohol provides 7 kcal per gram. Although not a true nutrient, it contributes substantial energy to the diet.

30. D — Calcium

Vitamin D promotes intestinal absorption of calcium (and phosphorus), which is essential for bone mineralization.



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