

# MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS With Clinical Case Scenarios

## READING A STEM AND ALTERNATIVES

- Read a question at the end of a stem first. It will give you direction and help you to focus while reading a stem.
- As you read a stem, try to find **key information** that will help you to answer a question. You can underline or highlight key terms in a stem or words that would modify the possibilities of a correct answer.
- Get a good understanding of a stem before you look at alternatives.
- Look for words that would change the meaning of a question if deleted or stated as an opposite (gain/loss, increase/decrease, early/late, etc.)
- Think about the correct answer before you look for it among alternatives.
- Don't "add" to a question as you think it should be asked or read too much into a question. Also, don't "add" to alternatives that are offered.
- Remember** that you need to select not only the correct answer, but **the best answer**.
- Don't give up and guess the answer to a question too early.
- If you don't know an answer, you can use the method of elimination. Eliminate options by starting with **the least likely to be correct**. You can look at **three choices** instead of five and eliminate the least likely among the three options.
- Usually, you will get to the two closest options. Compare **how these two options are different**.
- If you have a clinical case in a stem of your question, think about it as you are examining a patient.
  - Who is the patient? (demographic information, e. g. **gender and age, occupation**)
  - What **complaint** does the patient present?
  - What information you can find in the **history** of the patient (e.g. occupation, family history, travel)
  - What **symptoms** does the patient present?
  - Is a condition, **acute** or **chronic**?
  - What are the results of a **physical exam**?
  - Are the **Lab** results or **X-ray**, etc. mentioned? What is **normal**, and what is **abnormal**?
  - Does the question ask you about **diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, or the next step** in managing the condition?
  - Think about your answer. If you cannot find the best answer among alternatives, use the method of elimination.