

Medical Assisting Lab IV

Critical Thinking 1

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1. When performing an ECG on a patient, how might you prep the patient's skin so the electrodes will adhere?

When performing an ECG on a patient the skin should be cleaned. Washed and dried if necessary. If it is being done on a male that has chest hair then the chest hair should be shaved so the electrodes can have a clean smooth surface to adhere to the skin to obtain the best reading possible.

2. When performing an ECG on a patient, you notice that lead I has upward and downward movement on the waveform. What is occurring and how should you correct the problem?

If I noticed that lead 1 has an upward and downward movement on the wave form it is an artifact. The up and downward movement is an interrupted baseline. Interrupted baseline can be fixed by checking the electrodes and making sure they are properly attached to the skin. Other causes include a broken cable wire and cable tips.

3. Describe the preparations for an exercise stress test.

Things the MA must do to help her patient prepare for the stress test would be to first explain the procedure. Next would be to make sure the area of the skin where the electrodes will be placed is clean and free of hair and to put a blood pressure cuff on the patient. An ECG is given before the test begins. Next would be to demonstrate walking on the treadmill for the patient. The patient prepares for the test by avoiding eating a heavy meal 2 hours before the appointment, wear a shirt or blouse that buttons down the front with comfortable pants and comfortable shoes. Medications can be taken as normal unless the doctor instructs otherwise.

4. What are two common CLIA waived tests used to diagnose and monitor heart disease.

Two of the most common CLIA waived tests used to diagnose and monitor heart disease are an ECG and a Holter monitor. The ECG is a simple test that can be performed in the office. The ECG records the electrical activity of the heart. Can pick up on past MI's and arrhythmias. The Holter monitor is a test that you instruct your patient how to do and is done while they are at home for a period of time and continuously records the patient's cardiac activity.

5. Describe a myocardial infarction.

A myocardial infarction is a sudden heart attack. An MI happens when a portion of the heart muscle become ischemic because the blood supply to that area has been interrupted. The formation of atherosclerotic plaque narrows the arteries supplying the myocardium which results in a lack of blood supply to the heart which can also cause an MI. The most common symptom is chest pain or discomfort which may travel into the shoulder, arm, back, neck or jaw.

6. Describe Arrhythmias.

An arrhythmia is a cardiac rhythm abnormality. These can result from disturbances anywhere along the electrical conduction pathway in the heart from the SA node through the right and left bundle branches. An arrhythmia is a problem with the rate or rhythm of the heartbeat. During an arrhythmia the heart can beat too fast or too slow or with an irregular rhythm.