

How to prepare for a paramedical exam

Below is some helpful information and a short video that will help you be ready for your exam.

Stay well-hydrated. Drinking water before the exam can make it easier to draw the applicant's blood, a necessary step in obtaining cholesterol readings.

Fast prior to the exam. The applicant should not eat for a period of four to eight hours before the exam. Even a muffin eaten an hour before the exam could result in elevated glucose levels.

Avoid physical exercise. The applicant should take it easy and avoid rigorous workouts for 12 hours before the exam. That doesn't mean just passing on that planned marathon, but also avoiding a fast walk or a workout on an elliptical trainer.

Refrain from alcohol. For 12 hours before the exam, avoid consuming alcohol. Alcohol can dehydrate your applicant, and a lot of alcohol within 12 hours of the exam could result in elevated liver function tests, which could move your applicant out of a preferred category, and also lead to additional tests.

Avoid caffeine and nicotine. Applicants should avoid both coffee and smoking an hour before the test, as caffeine and nicotine elevate blood pressure. Black coffee is okay up to an hour before the exam, but adding cream and sugar is not consistent with fasting. If the applicant chooses to have coffee within the fast period, advise them to avoid cream and sugar.

Get a good night's sleep. Being well-rested won't necessarily affect your applicant's exam results, but may ease "white coat anxiety" — the tendency for some to exhibit elevated blood pressure readings during an exam.

Limit salt and high-fat foods. For an hour before the exam, lay off the salt and fatty foods, as they may affect exam results.

Know your medications. Generally your applicant will be asked about medical history during the exam, including whether they are currently taking any prescription or over-the-counter medication.

Test outside menstruation periods. Female life insurance applicants should not take the test when they are menstruating.

It's important to ensure the exam is accurate and that it garners the best possible results. Following these tips will help your applicant through the exam process.