

RN's

Study Guide

NURSING ESSENTIALS

Vicky Li, RN, BA



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Preface

RN's Study Guide: Nursing Essentials aims to present nursing fundamentals in the simplest way possible to facilitate in-depth study. It is designed to help time-pressed students get the gist of an otherwise overwhelming amount of abstruse information, and to aid them in passing academic tests and realizing their career goals.

From a nurse's perspective, this text stresses nursing priorities. It offers test hints and highlighted tips, along with succinct rationales. The user-friendly format makes it easy to retain the important knowledge needed to provide optimal care for patients and families.

Any readers interested in healthcare basics should also find this book informative. Note, however, that reproductive, pediatric, and mental health issues are beyond the scope of this book. Moreover, it does not include reference values or complicated aspects of experts' care decisions, such as classifications, diagnostic processes, and medical interventions.

The content is organized by body system. Each chapter starts with "Anatomic Pointers," proceeds to alphabetically listed "Disorders and Conditions," and, where needed, provides an additional section, "Other Pointers and Concerns." Each section on a disorder or condition comprises up to five subsections: a brief introduction to the disorder/condition, "Main Symptoms," "Selected Nursing Tips," "Points to Consider," and "Precautions."

This book is not intended to be a clinical guide. In a broad sense, however, any nursing material is clinically based, and nursing principles may be applicable in different scenarios

PREFACE

under similar circumstances. Thus, the nurse needs to know why, not just how.

Medical conditions can be extremely complicated. Many disorders affect and are affected by multiple systems, with causes and features overlapping or intermingling. In addition, the unique particulars of each patient's circumstance must be taken into consideration before a prudent decision can be made—whether on a test or in a clinical setting. Referring to the most recent data is imperative, as the science continues to advance with each passing day.

Readers will be better prepared to meet the challenges they are likely to face, academically at school or professionally at work, when they are equipped with these nursing essentials to deepen their understanding of nursing dynamics.

RN's Study Guide: Nursing Essentials aims to present general nursing fundamentals in the simplest way possible to facilitate in-depth study.

Acknowledgments

RN's Study Guide: Nursing Essentials was inspired by the more than a dozen source books listed in the Selected Bibliography. First, I want to give credit to all these authors; any omissions are unintentional.

Embarking on a project that involved condensing an enormous amount of adult care-related material into a brief volume was definitely an audacious decision. I would be lying if I said the scope or the topics of the book did not intimidate or frustrate me from time to time. In fact, I put this work aside for a whole year and instead wrote a collection of six books of verse (mostly for children). Without the encouragement and support of many professionals, I would have quit many times over. I am deeply grateful to my kind supporters, expert reviewers, and insightful/dedicated editors for making this work possible.

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Having taught for 16 years (in both China and Texas) before becoming a registered nurse, I particularly admire my former nursing instructors. The lessons they taught me, including “warnings” in both my licensed vocational nurse (LVN) and registered nurse (RN) programs, have stayed with me during my 20 years’ nursing practice. My sincere thanks to Dr. Sharan L. Van Sell, EdD, RN, PAHM, for her attention, reviewing, and insight.

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Foreword

RN's Study Guide: Nursing Essentials is, by its very nature, a condensed and fact-filled narrative.

As a medical student, I transcribed shorthand notes into a pocket-sized desk diary, then memorized them on the underground train traveling to London every day. I found this method of revision extremely effective. Fifty years later, I still own the notebook. In this book, Vicky Li has done all the hard work for you.

Remember that this is a study guide, however—not a medical textbook. It is not suggested that you pick it up and try to read straight through it the day before your exams.

I wish you well with your careers. I have worked with nurses for 50 years in the operating room and know full well how valuable they are to the successful outcomes of medical treatment.

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