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## Trivial Pursuits

### *Using Games to Enhance Nursing Continuing Education*

**H**ere's the problem: nurses must continue their education to fulfill their professional responsibilities and to ensure safe practice. In fact, in some states, mandatory continuing education credits are required to renew a license.

However, educators often struggle with the challenge of providing educational opportunities that are engaging, unique, and beneficial. But with a little creativity and a willingness to learn, continuing education can be fun.

Enter one solution: The Obstetric Review game developed from the frustration and boredom of two educators who were repeatedly teaching the same content. Gaming as an instructional approach has been used for hundreds of years. Until recent years, however, nursing has been slow to embrace this educational tool (Gruending et al., 1991). Games are now available to help nurses conduct staff orientations, learn and teach sensitivity training (Ebersole, 1998), and teach neonatal resuscitation (Gordon, 1995).

As obstetric nursing educators, we began by developing a game that would provide an overview of information for nurses who provide care to pregnant women, their infants, and families. Adopting the format from popular trivia games,

like Trivial Pursuit, we started to work on a game that would contain important information for any nurse who cares for perinatal women. Additionally, important information for nurses who care for newborns or for women who breastfeed their infants was also included.

As we began to compile information and develop the questions, we

The game includes questions related to specific nursing interventions that are required to care for patients in each of these areas. To keep things interesting, questions were posed in several different formats, including multiple choice, true or false, and short answer.

Because of its structure, the game can be used on an individual basis for self-review, or it can be played in a group format. To keep the game manageable, the game cards are approximately the size of baseball cards, and each category is color-coded. Additionally, the cards are numbered so players can easily recognize the different content areas and keep track of the cards that have been reviewed.

#### **Developing a Reliable Game**

Once the questions were developed, they were sent out for review by a panel of experts, that included nurses,

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found we were working from an enormous volume of information. So, the Obstetrics Review Game was formed into three other games. Primarily, the game consists of approximately 450 questions in these six categories:

- Anatomy and Physiology
- High Risk
- Antepartum
- Intrapartum
- Postpartum
- Newborn

midwives, physicians, and lactation consultants, to establish content validity. Test-retest reliability was assured by having nurses and nursing students take a written test composed of all the game questions. The process was then repeated two weeks later and more than 95 percent of the participants returned the tests. Statistical analysis of the questions determined the game to be a stable test with temporal stability. No significant difference was found with paired t-tests.

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# Let's Play

Here's a look at some of the questions included in the Obstetrics Review Game (answers are italicized):

1. By what percentage does a pregnant woman's basal metabolic rate increase?

- A. 20%      B. 40%      C. 60%

2. What is the leading cause of morbidity in a woman with eclampsia after a convulsive episode?

- A. Aspiration      B. Renal failure      C. CVA

3. Describe changes in the platelet count and clotting time seen in DIC.

*The platelet count is decreased and clotting time is increased.*

4. What organ is primarily damaged as a result of HELLP syndrome?

*The liver*

5. When is fetal fibronectin normally absent from amniotic fluid?

*Between 24 and 34 weeks gestation.*

6. True or False: The normal fundal height at 20 weeks gestation is at the umbilicus.

7. True or False: Uncontrolled labor pain can lead to fetal acidosis.

8. An infant is born at 38 weeks gestation. The baby has a heart rate of 130, a pink body with blue extremities, spontaneous respirations, a vigorous kick, and a lusty cry. What APGAR score would the nurse assign to this baby?

*A score of 9*

9. What are three signs and symptoms of postpartum psychosis?

*Sleep disturbances, confusion, agitation, irritability, hallucinations, delusions, and potential for suicide or infanticide.*

10. List two possible consequences of group B streptococci disease in the newborn.

*Sepsis, pneumonia, meningitis, and death*

## Rules of Play

Game directions were purposefully kept simple. Before play begins, players or teams decide on either the time frame or the number of questions to limit play. The cards are then placed face down, and the team with the greatest amount of nursing experience begins by drawing a card from the deck and reading a question aloud to another team. That team then has 30 seconds to respond with the correct answer before it's read aloud. A correct answer is worth one point. Play continues by rotating the questions/answers between teams until the time limit or card limit is reached.

An extensive reference list is included at the end of the game. This provides the learner with additional resources that may be used if content needs to be reviewed further, or if specific questions arise during game play.

The facilitator can increase the spirit of competition by providing game prizes to the winning team members. After a staff meeting, for example, the winning team might be allowed to go to lunch ten minutes before the other group.

Continuing education credit for the game is being provided by the

North Carolina Nurses Association/American Nurses Association (NCNA/ANA).

Learners who complete the game and successfully complete the posttest with a grade of 80 percent can earn 10 NCNA/ANA contact hours. Five copies of the posttest are included with each game and may be reproduced if other copies are needed.

## Learner Reactions

To date, the game has been introduced in hospitals, WIC clinics, nursing schools, and health departments. In addition to the Obstetric Review Game, other games have been developed to assist with nurses' learning needs, including Basic Fetal Monitoring, Advanced Fetal Monitoring, and Breastfeeding Basics, all of which are currently available and also have NCNA/ANA contact hour credit available. Breastfeeding Basics has also been approved for LCERPS by the International Board of Certified Lactation Examiners (IBCLE).

Pediatrics Review and MedSurg Review will be available by summer of 1999. A patient education game, Birthing Babies, is also available. This game is appropriate for childbirth educators, or for nurses

who provide education to expectant couples that includes childbirth education, breastfeeding, and parenting classes. GAMES NURSES PLAY has registered the copyright for each game. ♦

## References

- Ebersole, P. (1998). Toward Healthy Aging. *Mosby Year Book*. St. Louis: Mosby.
- Gordon, D. (1995). Fun and Games in Reviewing Neonatal Emergency Care. *Neonatal Network*, 14, 45-49.
- Gruending, D. L., Fenty, D., & Hogan, T. (1991). Fun and Games in Nursing Staff Development. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 22, 259-262.

## GETTING YOUR OWN GAME

For information on obtaining a copy of the games contact:

GAMES NURSES PLAY  
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