

## Learning Skills, Room 120

### Practical Nursing – Study Skills

There is a lot more to becoming an LPN than interest and desire for a good job - there is a great deal of information to be learned and applied. Here are some approaches to *learning-to-understand-and-use* that you will find helpful during your studies.

#### Think like a nurse

- *Identify context*: relate details to the big picture
- *Represent information*: diagrams, charts, graphs, lab work, notes
- *Infer*: draw conclusions from information or evidence
- *Discover relationships*: how does structure affect function?
- *Order*: rank, sequence, arrange methodically
- *Assess*: observe, gather and evaluate data about a client
- *Prioritize*: set goals, consider urgency, be realistic
- *Verify*: confirm prediction or accuracy
- *Change perspective*: alter view or significance of information
- *Work overtime*: expect to spend 2-3 hours per day studying

#### Learn the core concepts

- *Medical Terminology*: medical terms, definitions, abbreviations, and symbols
- *Anatomy and Physiology*: systems of the human body in terms of structure, function, homeostasis, health promotion, and pathology
- *Healing*: health promotion and prevention; nursing interventions; patient teaching
- *Health*: the healthcare system, health promotion, healthy lifestyles, lifespan, and nutrition
- *Human Relationships*: self-awareness, caring, helping relationships, empathy, feeling expression, self-disclosure, assertiveness, communicating with disabled persons
- *Nursing Arts*: the nursing process; client interaction; personal care skills, assessment, and provision; responsibility and behaviour in practice
- *Pharmacology*: the study of medicines, dosage calculations

#### Use your text effectively

- *Learn to navigate your text*: Spend some time getting to know how the text is structured for learning and use labeled sticky notes to mark sections.
- *First reading*: Skim the chapter or section before class to get the big picture.
- *Second reading*: In-depth learning
  - slow down and *concentrate*
  - pay special attention to the aspects covered in *class*
  - use *highlighter* sparingly - no more than 3 words in a row

- make *margin notes* that summarize main points and concepts (if you own the book; if not, make page notes and reference page #)
- talk to yourself: *explain* in your own words what you have read
- pay attention to new *terms and concepts*
- know which *diagrams* to study; pay attention to the *explanations*
- *Third reading*: Scan for important diagrams, terms, definitions, and concepts to make study aids, such as a list of terms, a chart, or flash cards.

### Use all your senses

- *Eyes* to look at visuals and read
- *Ears* to listen to your instructor and to yourself read and explain aloud
- *Hands* to write, draw, highlight, and trace

### Practice remembering instead of re-looking

- Think about the difference between *looking* at something in front of you and *not looking at it* but being able to understand it, explain it, summarize it, or draw it. Which is expected on a test? Practice that way!
- Without *looking* at your text, or notes, say or write a summary of important points—do this at regular intervals.
- Photocopy *diagrams* and white out labels; make several copies and *practice* labeling. Note your mistakes and work on those.
- When using *flashcards*, if you don't know the response, *don't* look right away—work on trying to remember. Put the cards that you don't know in a separate pile and spend time working on those until you know them. Put a tick mark on those you get right and an x on those you don't know.

### Consolidate your learning

- Rewrite your notes to review, fill in gaps, and consolidate learning
- Restructure or elaborate your notes rather than simply copying them. Learn the two-column note system (sign up for a learning skills session or go online).
- Make charts: For example, when studying a body system, make a chart with these headings: part, location, structure, function, other (pathology, target drug).
- Make study notes that are simpler than your revised class notes. Staple them together and keep on you for quick review sessions.

### Do drills and regular review

- Flash cards: terms & definitions, diagrams & explanations, questions & answers
- Study notes: cover up one side of two-column notes
- Label diagrams until you can do it without error
- Verbalize by reciting definitions, concepts, etc.

### Practice answering questions

- Learn about different types of exam questions (Learning Centre handout)
- Develop your own questions, based on your class notes
- Answer the questions at the end of each chapter
- Write practice tests based on class notes (link below)

### Identify and use resources

- Cowichan Campus Learning Centre: Attend a workshop, make an appointment, select useful handouts, request a Volunteer Tutor. Link to online information: <https://cowichan.viu.ca/support-services/academic-support>
- Medical Terminology practice test (go to above link)
- Student Nurse Resources: [http://www.studentnursesource.com/Home\\_Page.html](http://www.studentnursesource.com/Home_Page.html)
- Cornell Notes: <http://lsc.cornell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Cornell-NoteTaking-System.pdf>