

nha ekg study guide

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An Electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG) is an essential diagnostic tool used by healthcare professionals to assess the electrical activity of the heart. For students and practitioners preparing for the National Healthcareer Association (NHA) certification or simply seeking to master EKG interpretation, a comprehensive study guide is invaluable. This NHA EKG study guide aims to provide a detailed overview of the fundamental concepts, step-by-step interpretation techniques, common abnormalities, and best practices for analyzing EKGs. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced clinician looking to refine your skills, this guide will serve as a structured resource to deepen your understanding and confidence in EKG analysis.

Understanding the Basics of EKGs

What is an EKG?

An EKG is a non-invasive test that records the electrical signals generated by the heart as it contracts and relaxes. These signals are captured through electrodes placed on the skin, which then produce a visual representation—the EKG strip. It provides critical information about heart rhythm, electrical conduction pathways, and myocardial health.

Components of an EKG Waveform

A standard EKG waveform consists of several key components:

- **P wave:** Represents atrial depolarization (contraction).
- **QRS complex:** Represents ventricular depolarization (contraction).
- **T wave:** Represents ventricular repolarization (relaxation).
- **U wave (occasionally visible):** May indicate repolarization of the Purkinje fibers.

Timing and Intervals

Understanding the intervals and segments is crucial for accurate interpretation:

- **PR interval:** Time from the start of P wave to the start of QRS complex (normal: 0.12–0.20 seconds).

- **QRS duration:** Duration of ventricular depolarization (normal: <0.12 seconds).
- **QT interval:** Time from start of QRS to end of T wave (normal varies with heart rate).

Step-by-Step EKG Interpretation Approach

1. Assess the Rate

Determine how many beats occur per minute:

1. Count the number of R waves in a 6-second strip and multiply by 10.
2. Alternatively, use the "300, 150, 100" method by counting large squares between R waves.

2. Determine the Rhythm

Assess whether the rhythm is regular or irregular:

- Measure the distance between R-R intervals.
- Check for consistent spacing.

If irregular, note the pattern and possible causes.

3. Analyze the P Waves

Look for:

- Presence: Is a P wave present before each QRS?
- Shape and consistency: Are P waves uniform and upright in leads I, II, and aVF?
- Relationship to QRS: Is there a consistent P:QRS ratio (usually 1:1)?

4. Evaluate the PR Interval

Measure from the start of P wave to the start of QRS:

- Normal: 0.12-0.20 seconds.
- Prolonged: >0.20 seconds (indicates first-degree AV block).

5. Examine the QRS Complex

Assess:

- Duration: Normal is <0.12 seconds.
- Shape: Look for wide, bizarre, or abnormal QRS complexes indicating conduction delays.

6. Analyze the ST Segment and T Wave

Identify:

- ST segment deviations: Elevation or depression indicating ischemia or infarction.
- T wave morphology: Inversions or peaked T waves suggest electrolyte imbalances or ischemia.

7. Calculate the Heart Rate and Rhythm Regularity

Summarize the findings:

- Normal, bradycardia, tachycardia.
- Regular or irregular rhythm.

8. Summarize Findings and Formulate a Diagnosis

Combine all observations to identify potential arrhythmias or cardiac abnormalities.

Common EKG Abnormalities and Their Significance

Arrhythmias

Understanding various arrhythmias is critical:

- **Atrial fibrillation:** Irregularly irregular rhythm with absent P waves, chaotic baseline.
- **Atrial flutter:** Sawtooth pattern with regular ventricular response.
- **Ventricular tachycardia:** Wide QRS complexes at rapid rate, potentially life-threatening.
- **Ventricular fibrillation:** Chaotic waveform, no discernible QRS complexes, requires immediate intervention.
- **Sinus bradycardia:** Rate <60 bpm with normal PQRST pattern.
- **Supraventricular tachycardia (SVT):** Rapid, narrow QRS complexes with sudden onset.

Ischemic Changes

Signs suggestive of ischemia or infarction:

- ST segment elevation: Indicates acute injury (STEMI).
- ST segment depression: Denotes ischemia.
- T wave inversions: Can be ischemic or indicative of other conditions.

Electrolyte Imbalances

Certain patterns suggest specific electrolyte disturbances:

- Hyperkalemia: Peaked T waves, widened QRS.
- Hypokalemia: Flattened T waves, prominent U waves.
- Hypocalcemia: Prolonged QT interval.

Conduction Blocks

Identify and understand:

- **First-degree AV block:** Prolonged PR interval.
- **Second-degree AV block:** Dropped beats, type I (Wenckebach) or type II.

- **Third-degree (complete) block:** No relationship between P waves and QRS complexes, escape rhythm present.

Practical Tips for NHA EKG Study and Mastery

Use Visual Aids and Practice Strips

- Regularly review EKG strips with different patterns and abnormalities.
- Use online resources, apps, and practice tests to reinforce learning.

Memorize Normal Values and Patterns

- Know the normal ranges for intervals and segments.
- Be familiar with the appearance of normal P waves, QRS complexes, and T waves.

Understand the Pathophysiology

- Connect EKG findings with underlying cardiac conditions.
- Study how different diseases alter electrical conduction.

Develop a Systematic Approach

- Always follow the step-by-step process outlined above.
- Avoid jumping to conclusions; verify each component systematically.

Practice Time Management

- During exams or clinical practice, manage your time efficiently.
- Focus on accuracy over speed initially, then improve your pace.

Seek Feedback and Clarification

- Review your interpretations with instructors or experienced clinicians.
- Use feedback to identify areas needing improvement.

Stay Updated on Guidelines

- Refer to current American Heart Association (AHA) and other authoritative guidelines for interpretation standards.

Resources for Further Study

- Textbooks on EKG interpretation (e.g., "Rapid Interpretation of EKG's" by Dale Dubin).
- Online courses and tutorials.
- Practice EKG strips and quizzes available through NHA or other certification programs.
- Mobile apps for EKG learning and practice.

Conclusion

Mastering EKG interpretation is a vital skill for healthcare professionals involved in cardiac care. The NHA EKG study guide provides a structured approach to understanding the basics, developing interpretive skills, and recognizing common abnormalities. Consistent practice, systematic analysis, and ongoing education are key to becoming proficient in EKG analysis. By following the steps outlined in this guide and utilizing available resources, students and practitioners can confidently interpret EKGs, improve patient outcomes, and succeed in their certifications and clinical roles.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the key components covered in the NHA EKG Study Guide?

The NHA EKG Study Guide covers core topics such as cardiac anatomy and physiology, EKG lead placement, interpretation of basic EKG rhythms, patient preparation, and safety protocols to ensure accurate readings and patient safety.

How can the NHA EKG Study Guide help improve my EKG interpretation skills?

The guide provides detailed explanations of common EKG rhythms, practice questions, and visual examples that enhance understanding, allowing students to confidently identify arrhythmias and normal heartbeats.

Is the NHA EKG Study Guide suitable for beginners with no

prior experience?

Yes, the guide is designed for beginners, offering foundational knowledge, step-by-step instructions, and simplified diagrams to help those new to EKG interpretation build a solid understanding.

Does the NHA EKG Study Guide include practice exams or quizzes?

Many versions of the guide contain practice exams, quizzes, and review questions to assess comprehension and prepare students for certification exams.

What are common topics covered in the NHA EKG certification exam that the study guide addresses?

The study guide addresses topics such as lead placement, rhythm recognition, artifact identification, patient safety, and basic cardiac physiology, aligning with the certification exam content.

How often should I use the NHA EKG Study Guide to prepare effectively?

Consistent daily or weekly review, combined with hands-on practice and mock exams from the guide, can significantly enhance retention and confidence for the certification test.

Can the NHA EKG Study Guide help with clinical skills beyond exam preparation?

Yes, it provides practical knowledge for performing EKGs accurately, understanding patient procedures, and maintaining safety standards in clinical settings.

Are there online resources or supplemental materials recommended alongside the NHA EKG Study Guide?

Yes, online tutorials, videos, and practice software can complement the guide, offering visual demonstrations and interactive practice to reinforce learning.

Where can I access the official NHA EKG Study Guide?

The official NHA EKG Study Guide can be purchased through the NHA website, authorized bookstores, or educational institutions offering certification preparation materials.

Additional Resources

NHA EKG Study Guide: Your Comprehensive Path to Mastering Electrocardiography

Embarking on a journey to understand electrocardiography can seem daunting at first, but with the right resources and structured approach, mastering the NHA EKG study guide becomes an achievable

goal. Whether you're preparing for certification, enhancing your clinical skills, or simply seeking a deeper understanding of cardiac rhythms, this guide aims to equip you with the knowledge, strategies, and tools necessary to excel. In this comprehensive overview, we'll break down key concepts, offer practical tips, and highlight essential topics to focus on as you navigate your learning process.

Why a Solid NHA EKG Study Guide Matters

Electrocardiography is a vital component of cardiovascular assessment, providing non-invasive insights into heart rhythm, electrical activity, and potential abnormalities. For healthcare professionals, competency in EKG interpretation is crucial for timely diagnosis and intervention. The NHA EKG study guide serves as a structured roadmap, ensuring you grasp foundational principles, recognize common patterns, and prepare effectively for exams or clinical practice.

Understanding the Basics of EKG and Cardiac Electrophysiology

Before diving into complex rhythms, it's essential to understand the core concepts of cardiac electrical activity.

What is an EKG?

An electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG) records the electrical signals generated by the heart as it beats. The readings are displayed as waveforms, each representing specific electrical events within the cardiac cycle.

The Cardiac Conduction System

The heart's electrical activity originates from specialized cells, following this pathway:

- Sinoatrial (SA) node: The natural pacemaker initiating impulses.
- Atrioventricular (AV) node: Delays the signal, allowing the atria to contract.
- Bundle of His and Bundle Branches: Conduct impulses to the ventricles.
- Purkinje fibers: Distribute electrical signals, causing ventricular contraction.

The Standard 12-Lead EKG

A typical EKG uses 12 leads to capture the heart's electrical activity from different angles:

- Limb leads (I, II, III, aVR, aVL, aVF)
- Precordial leads (V1-V6)

Each provides a unique view of the heart's electrical function.

Core Components of an EKG Waveform

Understanding the waveform components is fundamental:

- P wave: Atrial depolarization.
- QRS complex: Ventricular depolarization.
- T wave: Ventricular repolarization.
- U wave: Occasionally seen; its significance varies.

Intervals and segments:

- PR interval: Time from atrial depolarization to ventricles.
- QT interval: Total time for ventricular depolarization and repolarization.
- ST segment: Between QRS and T wave; indicates early ventricular repolarization.

Step-by-Step Approach to EKG Interpretation

A systematic method ensures accuracy and consistency.

1. Verify the EKG Quality

- Ensure the tracing is clear, with proper baseline and minimal artifacts.
- Confirm calibration settings (e.g., 25 mm/sec speed, 10 mm/mV amplitude).

2. Assess the Heart Rate

- Method: Count the number of QRS complexes in a 6-second strip and multiply by 10.
- Alternative: Use the "300, 150, 100, 75, 60, 50" method for regular rhythms.

3. Determine the Rhythm

- Check if the rhythm is regular or irregular.
- Identify the presence of P waves before each QRS.
- Measure the P-P and R-R intervals.

4. Analyze the P Wave

- Look for shape, size, and consistency.
- Confirm it precedes each QRS.

5. Measure the PR Interval

- Normal range: 0.12-0.20 seconds.
- Prolonged or shortened intervals may indicate conduction issues.

6. Examine the QRS Complex

- Normal duration: less than 0.12 seconds.
- Wide or abnormal QRS may suggest bundle branch blocks or ventricular rhythms.

7. Evaluate the ST Segment and T Wave

- Look for elevation, depression, or inversion.
- Changes may indicate ischemia or infarction.

8. Calculate the QT Interval

- Corrected QT (QTc) accounts for heart rate.
- Normal QTc: less than 440 ms in men, 460 ms in women.

9. Identify Any Abnormalities

- Arrhythmias, blocks, hypertrophy, electrolyte disturbances, or ischemic changes.

Common Rhythms and Their Features

Mastering rhythm identification is central to the NHA EKG study guide.

Normal Sinus Rhythm

- Rate: 60-100 bpm
- Regular rhythm
- P waves present before each QRS
- PR interval: 0.12-0.20 seconds
- QRS: less than 0.12 seconds

Sinus Bradycardia

- Rate: less than 60 bpm
- Otherwise normal morphology
- Often seen in athletes or sleep

Sinus Tachycardia

- Rate: over 100 bpm
- Usually caused by stress, fever, or exercise

Atrial Fibrillation

- Irregularly irregular rhythm
- No discernible P waves; fibrillatory waves instead
- Variable ventricular response

Atrial Flutter

- Sawtooth pattern of P waves
- Usually a 2:1 or 4:1 conduction ratio

Ventricular Tachycardia

- Wide QRS complexes

- Rate: 100-250 bpm
- May be life-threatening

Ventricular Fibrillation

- Chaotic, irregular waveform
- No discernible P, QRS, or T waves
- Immediate emergency

Heart Blocks

- First-degree: Prolonged PR interval (>0.20 sec)
- Second-degree: Intermittent conduction failure
- Mobitz Type I (Wenckebach): Progressive PR prolongation
- Mobitz Type II: Sudden dropped QRS
- Third-degree (Complete): No relationship between P waves and QRS complexes

Key Tips for Success in EKG Interpretation

- Practice regularly: Use sample strips to build confidence.
- Learn normal values: Recognize what is normal to spot abnormalities.
- Understand clinical correlations: Know what each abnormality indicates.
- Use mnemonics: Memory aids can help recall complex information.
- Stay organized: Follow a systematic approach for each strip.
- Utilize resources: Flashcards, apps, and practice exams can reinforce learning.

Resources and Tools to Enhance Your Study

- Textbooks: "Electrocardiography for Healthcare Professionals" by G. J. Wood
- Online platforms: ECG Academy, SkillStat
- Practice strips: Use free databases or apps for simulation
- Study groups: Collaborate with peers for discussion and clarification
- Mock exams: Take practice tests to assess readiness

Final Thoughts: Preparing with the NHA EKG Study Guide

Success in mastering electrocardiography relies on consistent study, practical application, and a solid understanding of cardiac physiology. The NHA EKG study guide is designed to streamline your learning, emphasizing core concepts, common rhythms, and interpretation strategies. Remember, proficiency comes with patience and practice—so dedicate time to review, challenge yourself with varied strips, and seek feedback from experienced professionals.

By following this structured approach, you'll be well on your way to confidently interpreting EKGs, passing your certification exam, and providing excellent patient care. Keep focused, stay curious, and let your knowledge of electrocardiography become a valuable asset in your healthcare career.

Nha Ekg Study Guide

nha ekg study guide: Conquer the NHA-CET Exam Philip Martin McCaulay, 2024-08-16 This guide provides comprehensive coverage of the NHA-CET exam, focusing on the essentials of electrocardiography. It includes detailed chapters on cardiovascular anatomy, the function and structure of the heart, EKG equipment, and lead placement. Practical insights into patient preparation, safety protocols, and EKG procedure interpretation are also covered. Special sections on advanced EKG concepts, legal and ethical considerations, and emergency procedures ensure a thorough understanding of the field. This guide is an invaluable resource for those aiming to become certified EKG technicians.

nha ekg study guide: NHA CCMA Study Guide 2025-2026 Brielle Morgan, 2025-09-09 Master the CCMA Exam with Confidence: The Most Comprehensive NHA CCMA Study Guide for 2025-2026 Your All-in-One Solution for Passing the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant Exam Complete CCMA Review System + Over 750 Practice Questions (Includes 5 Full-Length Practice Exams) Thorough, up-to-date CCMA content review aligned with the 2025-2026 NHA outline 5 Full-Length Exams (150 questions each) to simulate the real testing experience More than 750 rigorous practice questions with clear and detailed explanations A Smarter Way to Prepare Stop jumping from source to source. This guide compiles everything you need to succeed—organized, efficient, and trusted by future CMAs. Whether you're just starting out or need a retake-ready tool, this study guide will walk you through each phase of preparation with confidence. What's Inside: SECTION I – Core CCMA Content Review Foundational Knowledge & Basic Science Anatomy & Physiology by Body Systems Clinical Patient Care (Procedures, EKG, Injections, Emergencies, etc.) Patient Care Coordination & Education Administrative Assisting & Office Procedures Communication, Professionalism, and Ethics Medical Law, Confidentiality, and Scope of Practice SECTION II – Study Aids & Quick Reference Tools Lab Values Cheat Sheets Injection Site & Angle Charts ECG Waveform Interpretation Guides Dosage Calculation Tips Emergency Protocols Printable Study Worksheets & More SECTION III – Topic-Based Practice Sets with Answers Practice makes perfect—and these 100% original question sets help reinforce your weakest areas with detailed explanations for every answer. SECTION IV – Five Full-Length Mock Exams Each 150-question test replicates the structure, difficulty, and timing of the actual CCMA exam to build stamina and exam-day confidence. SECTION V – Final Exam Toolkit From last-minute hacks to test-day checklists and printable planners, we provide tools to keep you focused, organized, and mentally ready. □ Mapped to the Official 2025-2026 CCMA Exam Blueprint □ Tailored for Moderate to Advanced Learners □ Created by Experienced Healthcare Educators □ Hundreds of Realistic, High-Quality Questions with Explanations □ Optimized for Self-Paced and Classroom Use Whether you're planning months ahead or brushing up last minute, this CCMA Study Guide for 2025-2026 is the trusted resource to help you pass with flying colors—and take the next big step in your healthcare career.

nha ekg study guide: NHA Certified EKG Technician (CET) Practice Exam 150 Questions & Answers Explanation Sai Parvathi, 2024 The NHA Certified EKG Technician (CET) Practice Exam 150 Questions & Answers Explanation Book is designed to help candidates prepare for the NHA Certified EKG Technician (CET) exam. This book includes a comprehensive set of practice questions and detailed explanations for each answer, helping you understand the material and assess your readiness for the exam. The primary aim of this book is to provide candidates with a thorough review and practice tool that closely simulates the actual NHA CET exam. By practicing with these questions, candidates can identify areas where they need further study, improve their test-taking skills, and build confidence. The book is organized into several sections, each corresponding to the major topics covered in the NHA CET exam: Safety, Compliance, and Coordinated Patient Care. EKG Acquisition, Analysis and Interpretation. Each section includes: Multiple-choice questions. Detailed

explanations for each answer. Pre-Test Assessment: Begin with a self-assessment to identify your strengths and weaknesses. Focused Study: Use the questions in each section to focus your study on areas where you need improvement. Carefully review the explanations for each answer to understand why the correct answers are right and why the wrong answers are incorrect. Take the practice exams under timed conditions to simulate the actual test environment and improve your time management skills. Regular Practice: Consistent, regular practice is key to retention and mastery of the material. Active Learning: Engage actively with the material by taking notes, summarizing information in your own words, and teaching concepts to someone else. Use Additional Resources: Supplement your study with textbooks, online resources, and study groups.

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find over 500+ expertly crafted practice questions, full-length mock exams, and detailed explanations that mirror the style, structure, and difficulty of the actual test. With up-to-date exam strategies and focused content review, this guide zeroes in on the most tested topics—from specimen handling and safety protocols to venipuncture techniques and legal responsibilities. You'll walk into your exam understanding not just what to expect, but how to think like a certified phlebotomist under pressure. Are you truly ready to pass the NHA CPT exam—or just hoping you've studied enough? If the thought of test day leaves you feeling overwhelmed, unprepared, or unsure of what to expect, you're not alone. Aspiring Certified Phlebotomy Technicians across the country face the same anxiety, especially when juggling work, school, or clinical training. But here's the truth: success on the NHA Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT) exam doesn't come from last-minute cramming or vague online resources—it comes from focused, proven preparation. "NHA CPT Exam Prep 2025-2026" by Elliot Spencer is your trusted path to certification success. This isn't just another review book—it's a complete exam readiness system built with the real challenges of CPT candidates in mind. Whether you're just beginning your journey in phlebotomy or returning to healthcare after a break, this guide delivers exactly what you need: structure, clarity, and confidence. Inside, you'll find over 500+ expertly crafted practice questions, full-length mock exams, and detailed explanations that mirror the style, structure, and difficulty of the actual test. With up-to-date exam strategies and focused content review, this guide zeroes in on the most tested topics—from specimen handling and safety protocols to venipuncture techniques and legal responsibilities. You'll walk into your exam understanding not just what to expect, but how to think like a certified phlebotomist under pressure. Written in a tone that's both knowledgeable and encouraging, this book doesn't just help you memorize—it helps you master. It's designed for real people with real lives, and it acknowledges the stress, urgency, and high stakes of passing on your first try. Elliot Spencer's approach combines the rigor of professional test preparation with the empathy of someone who's been guiding students like you for over a decade. If you're ready to stop guessing and start preparing with confidence, the time is now. Secure your future in healthcare—grab your copy today and take the first definitive step toward becoming a Certified Phlebotomy Technician. Translator: Nicolle Raven PUBLISHER: TEKTIME

nha ekg study guide: *Elsevier's Medical Assisting Exam Review - E-Book* Deborah E. Holmes, 2021-03-13 There's no better way to get ready for Medical Assisting certification exams! With content review plus 3,000 test items and a customized online exam engine to generate practice sessions and mock exams, Elsevier's Medical Assisting Exam Review, 6th Edition provides complete preparation for seven certification exams — the CMA, RMA, CMAS, CCMA, CMAA, CMAC, and NCMA. An illustrated, outline format makes it easy to review key medical assisting concepts and competencies, including anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, diseases and disorders, and administrative and clinical tasks. Answers and rationales for each question help you strengthen any weak areas and prepare effectively for test-day success! - UNIQUE! Online custom test generator allows students to focus on any topic and to create unique timed simulated exams at each visit. - UNIQUE! Seven certification exams are covered: the CMA (AAMA), RMA (AMT), CMAS (AMT), CCMA (NHA), CMAA (NHT), CMAC (AMCA), and NCMA (NCCT). - Convenient, easy-to-follow outline format provides at-a-glance review of the subject areas covered in Medical Assisting certification exams. - Complete test preparation includes three pretests — administrative, clinical, and general — as well as a comprehensive posttest, with answers and rationales for all questions. - Study tips and test-taking strategies provide students with advice and insight into preparing effectively for certification exams. - Hundreds of additional practice questions are included on the Evolve website, along with flash cards and A&P animations, to boost students' exam readiness and test-taking confidence. - NEW! 3,000 questions — including 500 all-new items — include answers, rationales, and mapping to seven exam blueprints (CMA, RMA, CMAS, CCMA, CMAA, CMAC, and NCMA). - NEW content is aligned with the latest exam blueprints, including the new CMA exam format effective in 2021. - NEW! Full-color illustrations reinforce student understanding of medical assisting content and include photos of clinical equipment and supplies.

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nha ekg study guide: EKG Technician Study Guide Ph D Jane John-Nwankwo, RN, 2020-09-21 This is a concise but straightforward study guide used by hundreds of students for the EKG national certification exam. Included in the book are: -Duties of an Electrocardiograph technician -General anatomy of the heart -Internal heart structure -Coronary Circulation -Heart physiology -Basic electrophysiology -Conduction system of the heart -Fundamentals of electrocardiogram -The electrocardiographic grid waves -Definition of waves, segments, intervals and junctions -The normal electrocardiograph waves and complexes -The normal EKG segments, intervals and Junctions -Analyzing the EKG strip -EKG interpretation and Pathology Recordings with diagrams -Artifacts of EKG Recording with diagrams - 400+ Practice Questions for the national certification Exam for EKG Technicians

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technician students.

nha ekg study guide: EKG Test Prep Jane John-Nwankwo, Jane John-Nwankwo Rn Msn, 2013-02-11 This book is a bank of 350+ questions to prepare for the EKG Technician national certification exams. Questions were chosen from the different areas of Electrocardiograph Technician study program ranging from the anatomy and physiology of the heart to the physical properties of an EKG strips to ensure comprehensive review for any of the national certification exams.

nha ekg study guide: EKG Test Prep Msn Jane John-Nwankwo Rn, 2014-07-09 EKG Test Prep, 2nd edition is an updated bank of 400+ questions to prepare for the EKG Technician national certification exams. Questions were chosen from the different areas of Electrocardiograph Technician study program ranging from the anatomy and physiology of the heart to the physical properties of an EKG strips to ensure comprehensive review for any of the national certification exams.

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