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Practical Gastroenterology Education

25 High-Yield GI Questions for Medical Students & Residents

Q1 — Dysphagia

A 68-year-old man presents with progressive dysphagia to solids, now liquids, and 15 lb. weight loss.

Next best step?

- A. Barium swallow
- B. Manometry
- C. Endoscopy
- D. PPI trial

Answer: C — Endoscopy

Why:

Progressive dysphagia + weight loss = rule out malignancy first

Q2 — Motility vs Mechanical

A patient has dysphagia to both solids and liquids from onset.

Most likely diagnosis?

- A. Esophageal cancer
- B. Achalasia
- C. Schatzki ring
- D. Peptic stricture

Answer: B — Achalasia

Q3 — GERD Red Flags

Which symptom mandates immediate endoscopy?

- A. Heartburn
- B. Regurgitation
- C. Dysphagia
- D. Bloating

Answer: C — Dysphagia

Q4 — Barrett's Esophagus

What histologic change defines Barrett's?

- A. Squamous metaplasia
- B. Columnar epithelium with goblet cells
- C. Dysplasia only
- D. Hyperplasia

Answer: B

Q5 — PUD Etiology

Most common cause of peptic ulcer disease worldwide?

- A. Alcohol
- B. NSAIDs
- C. H. pylori
- D. Smoking

Answer: C — H. pylori

Q6 — UGIB Management

Patient presents with hematemesis and hypotension.

First step?

- A. Endoscopy
- B. IV fluids
- C. CT scan
- D. PPI

Answer: B — IV fluids

Clinical Thinking: Resuscitate BEFORE scope

Q7 — Variceal Bleed

Which medication reduces portal pressure?

- A. PPI
- B. Octreotide
- C. Heparin
- D. Propranolol

Answer: B — Octreotide

Q8 — LFT Pattern Recognition

Labs:

- AST 220
- ALT 90

Most likely?

- A. Viral hepatitis
- B. Alcoholic liver disease
- C. NAFLD
- D. Obstruction

Answer: B — Alcoholic liver disease

Q9 — Pancreatitis

Most sensitive lab test?

- A. Amylase
- B. Lipase
- C. AST
- D. ALT

Answer: B — Lipase

Q10 — Cholangitis

Patient with fever, jaundice, RUQ pain.

Next step?

- A. CT scan
- B. MRCP
- C. ERCP
- D. Surgery

Answer: C — ERCP

Q11 — Celiac Disease

A patient presents with chronic diarrhea, bloating, iron deficiency anemia, and weight loss.

Best initial test?

- A. Colonoscopy
- B. Stool culture
- C. Tissue transglutaminase IgA
- D. CT abdomen

Answer: C — Tissue transglutaminase IgA

Q12 — IBS vs Organic Disease

Which symptom is considered an alarm feature suggesting organic disease rather than IBS?

- A. Bloating
- B. Relief after bowel movement
- C. Weight loss
- D. Alternating constipation/diarrhea

Answer: C — Weight loss

Q13 — Colon Cancer Screening

Average-risk colorectal cancer screening should begin at what age?

- A. 40
- B. 45
- C. 50
- D. 55

Answer: B — 45

Q14 — Diverticulitis

A patient has LLQ pain, fever, and leukocytosis.

Most likely diagnosis?

- A. IBS
- B. Ulcerative colitis
- C. Diverticulitis
- D. Appendicitis

Answer: C — Diverticulitis

Q15 — Crohn's Disease

Which feature is most characteristic of Crohn's disease?

- A. Continuous inflammation
- B. Rectal involvement only
- C. Transmural inflammation
- D. Superficial mucosal disease

Answer: C — Transmural inflammation

Q16 — Ulcerative Colitis

Which complication is classically associated with ulcerative colitis?

- A. Fistulas
- B. Toxic megacolon
- C. Skip lesions
- D. Kidney stones

Answer: B — Toxic megacolon

Q17 — Ascites Management

A cirrhotic patient presents with increasing abdominal distension.

First-line diuretic?

- A. Furosemide alone
- B. Hydrochlorothiazide
- C. Spironolactone
- D. Acetazolamide

Answer: C — Spironolactone (typically combined with Furosemide)

Q18 — Hepatic Encephalopathy

Most commonly used first-line treatment?

- A. Prednisone
- B. Lactulose
- C. Ursodiol
- D. Metronidazole

Answer: B — Lactulose

Q19 — SBP

A cirrhotic patient with ascites develops fever and abdominal pain.

Diagnostic next step?

- A. Ultrasound
- B. Endoscopy
- C. Diagnostic paracentesis
- D. Colonoscopy

Answer: C — Diagnostic paracentesis

Q20 — Acute Pancreatitis Etiology

Most common cause of acute pancreatitis in the United States?

- A. Hypertriglyceridemia
- B. Gallstones
- C. Medications
- D. Trauma

Answer: B — Gallstones

Q21 — Pancreatic Cancer

A patient presents with painless jaundice and weight loss.

Most likely diagnosis?

- A. Chronic pancreatitis
- B. Choledocholithiasis
- C. Pancreatic adenocarcinoma
- D. Peptic ulcer disease

Answer: C — Pancreatic adenocarcinoma

Q22 — Choledocholithiasis

Best noninvasive imaging study for suspected CBD stones?

- A. KUB
- B. Colonoscopy
- C. MRCP
- D. PET scan

Answer: C — MRCP- Noninvasive best, overall most sensitive is EUS

Q23 — Lower GI Bleeding

Most common cause of painless lower GI bleeding in older adults?

- A. Hemorrhoids
- B. Diverticulosis
- C. Ulcerative colitis
- D. Colon cancer

Answer: B — Diverticulosis

Q24 — HCC Screening

Best screening strategy in cirrhosis?

- A. Annual CT
- B. AFP alone
- C. Ultrasound every 6 months
- D. MRI yearly

Answer: C — Ultrasound every 6 months

Q25 — GI Rotation Success

During rounds, which approach most impresses GI attendings?

- A. Memorizing rare diseases
- B. Quoting guidelines
- C. Having a clear differential and next step
- D. Knowing procedural details only

Answer: C — Having a clear differential and next step

Clinical Pearl:

Good GI clinicians think systematically and prioritize next steps clearly.



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