

## Taking the NCLEX<sup>®</sup>

Preparing for NCLEX<sup>®</sup> is really no more complicated than preparing for any other important test. There are of course an infinite number of preparation and test taking strategies, but these three guidelines will probably do more to help than anything:

- 1) Study hard, and use your ATI score reports to remediate in your areas of weakness.
- 2) Get plenty of sleep the night before.
- 3) Read each question carefully before answering.

There is no “gaming the system” on NCLEX<sup>®</sup>. The following are some common myths about the test:

- 1) *“If you do well on the first 10 questions you’re sure to pass.”* Although the NCLEX<sup>®</sup> is a computer adaptive test, all questions are worth the same regardless of the order they appear in.
- 2) *“If the test shuts off after 75 questions that means you passed.”* A computer adaptive test shuts off when it can be concluded with a high level of certainty that your performance was above OR below the minimum standard. When the test shuts off after a low number of questions it means there weren’t very many out of the ordinary responses (i.e. getting easy items wrong and hard items right). Shutting down after 75 questions could mean you did very well or very poorly.
- 3) *“If you don’t know, pick the longest answer, pick C, etc.”* Professional psychometricians are involved in the NCLEX<sup>®</sup> test development, and their job is to make sure test taking tricks like those won’t help. If you don’t know the answer, just make your best educated guess.

This NCSBN website will show you how the test works:

[https://www.ncsbn.org/How\\_CAT\\_Works.ppt](https://www.ncsbn.org/How_CAT_Works.ppt)