



The consequences of cheating you probably haven't considered





As a nursing student, you have many demands on your time. It's difficult to balance course work with all the other aspects of your life. As a nurse, however, you will make important decisions that impact your patients' short- and long-term health. Your education is critical to those future lives, and taking short cuts in your studying or test-taking can lead to serious consequences — for you, your career, and the lives of those for whom you are trusted to care.


If you are tempted to cheat on your exams, consider the risks below. Talk to your professors about whatever challenges have convinced you that cheating is your only option to pass a test. Your educators are there to help you succeed and become the best nurse possible.


 **Having the actual knowledge on a test could save a future life.** While an exam may affect your overall grade in a class, the more important consideration is the health of your future patients. You should identify focus areas you need to develop with the support of your professor. When you cheat, you lose the opportunity to develop your nursing knowledge.

 **Memorizing answers to specific questions won't help you in the long run.** To pass your licensure exam — and be a safe, practice-ready nurse — you must develop clinical judgment. That requires an understanding of the overall content on which a question is based. Also, test items frequently change, so memorizing won't help.

 **You won't pass the NCLEX if you don't know the content.** You may be able to cheat on all your assignments and get passing grades. But when it comes to taking the most important exam, the NCLEX, you must fully understand the content. If you don't gain the knowledge that you'll need to put to work as a nurse, you won't accomplish that goal.

 **You could be expelled for using illegal study resources.** Study groups, study guides, and other study tools have tremendous value. However, if your study materials are based on real exam questions that are illegally posted or sold, even from old exams, that is considered cheating and possession of the copied material is unlawful. If you are caught, your college may disqualify you and dismiss you from nursing school, eliminating your chance to earn your degree or nursing license.

 **You can't trust many of the websites selling study and testing materials.** Many online sites offer content falsely advertised as being legitimate study resources. They won't help you, and you'll waste your time and money.

 **Letting others take a test for you presents serious risks.** You may see websites that offer to take a test on your behalf. But the operators of these sites can cause harm in ways you may not have imagined, such as:

- downloading malicious content onto your computer that compromises your banking or other personal information
- taking pictures of the exam process, then threatening to report your cheating and trying to extort large amounts of money from you
- taking control of your computer whenever they want, even before or after your exam
- involving you in court proceedings when they are caught, jeopardizing your future career opportunities

You have a passion for helping others and want to be a nurse to pursue that passion. To do so, you must have the knowledge to safely treat your future patients. Studying and learning the information is the only way to gain that knowledge.