4 RD EXAM MISTAKES NO ONE TALKS ABOUT

ALL ACCESS DIETETICS

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Agenda

- The RD Exam Basics
- The Statistics
- Mistake #1
- Mistake #2
- Mistake #3
- Create Your Study Plan
- Mistake #4

Poll Question

Have you taken the RD exam before?

Poll Question

When are you taking the RD exam?

RD Exam Basics

- Given by CDR
- Computer adaptive test
- Minimum 125 questions
- Maximum 145 questions
- 25 questions are piloted “pretest” (you won’t know which ones)
- 2.5 hour time limit – must complete 125 questions for a score

RD Exam Basics

- Principles of Dietetics (25%) ---> 21%
- Nutrition Care for Individuals and Groups (40%) ---> 45%
- Management (21%) ---> 21%
- Foodservice Systems (14%) ----> 13%

Poll Question

What do you think the pass rate is for first-time test takers?

Poll Question

What do you think the pass rate is repeat test takers?

Statistics

Mo./Yr.		Total Tested	Number Passing		Number Failing	
July 1, 2020 - Dec. 31, 2020	First Testing	3,119	2,099	(67%)	1,020	(33%)
	Repeating	2,206	812	(37%)	1,393	(63%)
	Total	5,325	2,911	(55%)	2,413	(45%)
January 1, 2020 - June 30, 2020	First Testing	1,692	1,192	(70%)	500	(30%)
	Repeating	1,183	357	(30%)	825	(70%)
	Total	2,875	1,549	(54%)	1,325	(46%)
July 1, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2019	First Testing	3,086	2,130	(69%)	956	(31%)
	Repeating	1,870	660	(35%)	1,210	(65%)
	Total	4,956	2,790	(56%)	2,166	(44%)
January 1, 2019 - June 30, 2019	First Testing	1,808	1,265	(70%)	543	(30%)
	Repeating	1,367	411	(30%)	956	(70%)
	Total	3,175	1,676	(53%)	1,499	(47%)

Source: CDR

Statistics

Grand Total					
1st Attempt	3,119	2,099	67.3%	1,020	32.7%
2nd Attempt	1,037	472	45.5%	565	54.5%
3rd Attempt	456	176	38.6%	280	61.4%
4 or More Attempts	713	164	23.0%	548	76.9%
Total	5,325	2,911	54.7%	2,413	45.3%

Source: CDR

Statistics

July 1, 2016-	First Testing	2,997	2,617	(87%)	380	(13%)
Dec. 31, 2016	Repeating	789	363	(46%)	426	(54%)
	Total	3,786	2,980	(79%)	806	(21%)
Jan. 1, 2016-	First Testing	1,417	1,215	(86%)	202	(14%)
June 30, 2016	Repeating	670	294	(44%)	376	(56%)
	Total	2,087	1,509	(72%)	578	(28%)
July 1, 2015-	First Testing	2914	2486	(85%)	428	(15%)
Dec. 31, 2015	Repeating	883	324	(37%)	559	(63%)
	Total	3797	2810	(74%)	987	(26%)

Source: CDR

COVID-19 Impact

- Internship experiences should prepare you because they increased your understanding of what you learned in DPD
- COVID-19 Impact on experiences and training
  - Knowledge and critical thinking skills gap
  - Adapting is key!

4 RD Exam Mistakes

No One Talks About

#1 Mike the Memorizer

- In college, he relied heavily on and was comfortable with this study approach.
- Tried to use same approach and memorize an entire study guide. This made him feel overwhelmed and burnt out.
- Studied practice questions but used the same ones so was starting to memorize the correct answers.

#1 Mike the Memorizer

What went wrong: Mike spent too much time trying to memorize and didn't spend enough time strengthening his critical thinking skills.

Why this doesn't work: The RD exam is meant to test your understanding and critical thinking skills, not just your retention of knowledge.

#1 Mike the Memorizer

HOW TO UNDERSTAND..NOT MEMORIZE

1. Use blank worksheets and test your understanding of topics without looking at notes.
2. When answering practice questions, don’t look at the answer right away.
3. Use a larger bank of questions, so you are not repeating and memorizing answers.

#2 Passive Patricia

- Read and re-wrote an entire study guide.
- Did practice questions, gave best guess, and then graded herself and looked at the answer rationale right away.
- Studying 8 hours a day never felt like enough. She didn't feel like things were sticking!

#2 Passive Patricia

What went wrong: Patricia went into the exam feeling like the questions were confusing and couldn't recall the information even though she remembered studying it.

Why this doesn't work: Patricia used passive learning techniques, which are not as efficient as active learning techniques.

#2 Passive Patricia

HOW TO ACTIVELY LEARN:

1. Understand your learning style - audio, visual, kinesthetic.
2. Challenge yourself with active learning techniques.
3. Use blank worksheets and tables.
4. Exposure yourself to practice test questions

#3 No Plan Nicole

- Nicole sat and read material a few times a week.
- She used multiple study guides and felt very overwhelmed with how she could get through all of them.
- She would listen to the comments in Facebook group about all the different ways people studied and all the tools they used.

#3 No Plan Nicole

What went wrong: Nicole didn't have a set plan. She didn't know when to schedule the exam or if she felt ready or spent enough time studying. She took the exam too early when she should have moved back her exam date.

Why this doesn't work: Not having a study plan will decrease the likelihood of a successful Exam Day. A study plan keeps you accountable.

Create Your Study Plan

- Create your calendar with block scheduling - plan WHEN + WHAT
- Plan for specific types of sessions that incorporate active learning techniques that line up with your learning style
- Specify the WHEN and the WHAT
- Plan for extra time on a weaker topic “If I don’t understand the material then…”

Create Your Study Plan

- Reflect on your progress frequently and be honest with yourself
- Find an accountability partner or coach
- Move the date back if needed
- With the right study plan and commitment, you can do this!
- More does not equal better if your study method is not efficient.

#4 Self-Doubt Samantha

- Samantha was a repeat test taker.
- She always thought she was a really bad test taker, and she had test anxiety.
- Didn’t think she could pass the exam and wanted to give up multiple times throughout.
- Found excuses to skip study sessions

#4 Self-Doubt Samantha

What went wrong: Samantha needed more support than she was giving herself.

Why this doesn't work: It's OK to get help if this is something you really want. It can be easy to give up, but there are so many resources available that can make it worth it.

#4 Self-Doubt Samantha

HOW TO INCREASE SELF-CONFIDENCE

- Get excited about your career as a dietitian.
- Reflect on all the hard work you've already done to prepare.
- Do a simulated exam day and try to replicate everything as much as possible, including the look of the cubicle, the calculator you use, the outfit you will wear.
- Have an exam day game plan
- Tutor for accountability and support

Poll Question

Put your WHY in the chat box – why do you want to become a dietitian?

Final Words: Don’t Study Like Your Friends!

Everyone is different - there is no one size fits all approach

- Education/experience backgrounds
- Obligations and available study time– work, family
- Test taking skills and IQ levels
- Learning styles
- Knowledge or understanding gaps (e.g. great at math, not great at management)
- Timing between rotations and taking exam
- Mindset/mental health

The 4 Strategies

- **Instead of memorizing,** focus on understanding topics
- **Instead of passive learning,** use a study guide that promotes active learning
- **Instead of no plan,** have a personalized plan and adjust as you go
- **Instead of doubting yourself,** get help to increase your confidence

Study for the RD Exam with Confidence

Learn more about RD Exam Prep from All Access Dietetics:

allaccessdietetics.com/rd-exam-prep

Schedule a free 15-minute study plan assessment with me:

allaccessdietetics.com/rd-exam-advice-call

Free Review Session Discount Code

Get a free 90-minute review session recording

At checkout, use code SWERVE

allaccessdietetics.com/rd-exam-review-sessions

(Link in the chat!)

Q&A Time

Email jenny@allaccessdietetics.com with questions too!