

CRNA Interview Question Bank (Free PDF)

everythingcrna.com · October 2026

Use these to practice out loud. Interviewers look for safe reasoning, honesty about what you don't know, and self-awareness more than perfect answers.

Clinical scenarios

- Your post-op CABG patient's blood pressure drops to 70/40. Walk us through what you do.
- A patient on norepinephrine and vasopressin is still hypotensive. What's next and why?
- Your ventilated patient's peak pressures suddenly rise. What could be happening?
- A patient develops a new rapid atrial fibrillation with hypotension. What do you do?
- Your septic patient's lactate keeps climbing despite fluids. What are you thinking?
- You notice a medication error a colleague made. How do you handle it?
- A patient with an ICP monitor has a pressure of 28. What are your interventions?
- Describe the sickest patient you've cared for and what you learned.
- Your patient's ABG shows pH 7.21, PaCO₂ 60, HCO₃ 24. Interpret it and tell us what you'd do.
- A patient becomes bradycardic and hypotensive after a spinal anesthetic. Why, and how do you treat it?

Pharmacology

- Compare phenylephrine, norepinephrine and epinephrine: receptors and effects.
- How does propofol work, and what are its side effects?
- What is the mechanism of succinylcholine, and when shouldn't it be used?
- Explain how rocuronium is reversed with sugammadex vs neostigmine.
- What drips do you titrate most, and what do you watch for with each?
- How do opioids cause respiratory depression? How do you reverse it?
- What is malignant hyperthermia, and what drug treats it?
- Explain heparin vs enoxaparin vs a direct oral anticoagulant.
- What is the difference between an agonist, a partial agonist and an antagonist?
- Which drugs prolong the QT interval in your unit?

Physiology

- Explain the oxyhemoglobin dissociation curve and what shifts it.
- What determines cardiac output? How do preload, afterload and contractility affect it?
- Explain the Frank-Starling law.
- What is MAP, and how do you calculate it?
- Walk through the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system.
- What is dead space vs shunt?
- How does PEEP improve oxygenation, and what are its risks?
- Explain the stages of the action potential in cardiac muscle.
- What is cerebral perfusion pressure?
- How does the body compensate for metabolic acidosis?

Behavioral

- Why do you want to be a CRNA? Why now?
- Why this program?
- Tell us about a time you disagreed with a physician.
- Describe a mistake you made and what you changed afterward.
- How do you handle stress? Give a recent example.
- Tell us about a conflict with a coworker and how you resolved it.
- What will be hardest for you in anesthesia school?
- How have you prepared your family and finances for school?
- What do CRNAs do that surprised you when you shadowed?
- Where do you see yourself five years after graduating?
- What is your greatest weakness?
- Tell us about a time you advocated for a patient.
- How do you take feedback?
- What would your manager say about you?
- Why should we choose you over other applicants?

Profession and policy

- What does "opt-out" mean for CRNA practice?
- What is the difference between a CRNA and an anesthesiologist assistant?
- What do you know about the CRNA's role in rural healthcare?
- What are QZ and QK modifiers? (Bonus: know the basics of medical direction.)
- What is the AANA, and why join?
- What is the NCE, and who gives it?
- What changes in healthcare will affect CRNAs in the next five years?

Questions to ask the program

- What is your attrition, and why did students leave?
- How are clinical sites assigned, and how far will I travel?
- How do you support students who struggle?
- What does a typical week look like in each phase?
- How many regional and specialty cases do students get?
- What do your graduates do after finishing?

How to practice

- ☐ Answer scenarios in a structure: assess, prioritize, act, reassess.
- ☐ Say "I don't know, but here's how I'd find out" when you don't know.
- ☐ Record yourself and cut filler.
- ☐ Do at least two mock interviews with a CRNA or SRNA.

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