Nurses Content
Downloaded from nursescontent.com

Cirrhosis with ascites Initial assessment

Adult Health Nursing | Initial assessment

For educational purposes only.

Fictional educational example. Individualize using verified patient findings, authorized treatment and current local protocols. No real patient record or observed outcome is claimed.

Patient profile and history

50-year-old man with chronic liver disease. Care stage: At the first supervised assessment.

Medical history: Chronic liver disease is established. Increasing abdominal swelling has affected comfort and appetite; current alcohol use, medicines and previous complications need a respectful review. No known drug allergy is reported in this fictional interview; this does not replace medicine-by-medicine verification in real care.

Surgical history: No previous major operation is reported in this fictional interview. Confirm procedure details, complications and any relevant devices when applying the exercise.

Personal and family assessment: The patient wants to regain the usual level of independence. Review available support, daily activities, treatment access and preferred language rather than assuming these are the same for every person.

Scenario: The patient or caregiver wants to know which concern needs attention first.

Clinical assessment

Subjective: Abdominal swelling, early fullness and fatigue.

Objective findings and required checks: Ascites and edema; mental state and bleeding signs require monitoring.

Physical examination and investigations: Review liver and renal tests, electrolytes, coagulation and assessment for ascitic infection when indicated.

Supply actual values, units, timing and trends during supervised application. Do not invent missing clinical data.

Clinical focus and pathophysiology

Cirrhosis with ascites: Chronic hepatic scarring and portal hypertension contribute to fluid accumulation and metabolic dysfunction.

Nurses Content For educational purposes only. 1 / 7

Nurses Content
Downloaded from nursescontent.com

Medical / surgical management

Monitor fluid balance, abdomen, skin and consciousness; implement the prescribed liver-care and nutrition plan.

Illustrative drug and treatment study

Medicine / treatment	Purpose	Nursing checks
Prescribed diuretic	Manage ascites in suitable patients	Monitor weight, renal function and electrolytes
lactulose when prescribed for encephalopathy	Support the ordered bowel target	Monitor stool pattern and dehydration.

Treatment examples are not a prescription. Verify the authorized product, dose, route, timing, contraindications and current local product information.

Nursing process - ADPIE

Assessment

Abdominal swelling, early fullness and fatigue. Ascites and edema; mental state and bleeding signs require monitoring. The patient or caregiver wants to know which concern needs attention first.

Nursing diagnosis

Prioritize fluid accumulation affecting comfort or function; nutritional intake below current needs; bleeding or vulnerability to further blood loss; learning needs about the condition and care plan. Validate each concern against assessment. For an actual problem, link the problem, contributing factors and observed cues; for a risk problem, document the risk factors without invented symptoms.

Planning

After the first indicated intervention, at the documented review time: document a patient-specific baseline and measurable target. Agree short- and longer-term outcomes with the patient/caregiver; physiological safety takes priority over teaching and discharge tasks.

Implementation

Monitor fluid balance, abdomen, skin and consciousness; implement the prescribed liver-care and nutrition plan. Establish the immediate clinical priorities and verify the baseline before assuming a diagnosis. Document care, prescribed treatment, consent and escalation.

Evaluation

Compare reassessment with each stated outcome. Mark met, partly met or not met using observed evidence, document the review time and revise the plan. This vignette provides no completed patient outcome.

Nurses Content For educational purposes only. 2 / 7

Nurses Content
Downloaded from nursescontent.com

Nursing care plan

Nursing diagnoses use original clinical problem wording. They are not the licensed NANDA-I classification. Verify any formal label or code against your institution's licensed current edition; select actual or risk diagnoses only when supported by assessment.

Context task: Establish the immediate clinical priorities and verify the baseline before assuming a diagnosis.

Set individualized measurable targets and an exact review time. Select actual or risk statements only when supported by assessment.

Assessment: subjective / objective	Nursing diagnosis: original problem wording	Short- and longer-term goals	Nursing interventions with rationale	Evaluation
Ask: Ask about breathlessness, swelling and recent weight gain. Assess: Monitor edema, respiratory findings, weight, intake/output and electrolytes.	Fluid accumulation affecting comfort or function. Possible factors: impaired fluid handling or excess retention. Validate against the patient's assessment.	Short-term: After the first indicated intervention, at the documented review time: No progression of respiratory distress or edema occurs during the observation period. Longer-term: Before the clinically approved transition or agreed follow-up: Explains prescribed fluid, salt, weight-monitoring and follow-up instructions.	1. Use consistent weighing and intake/output records. Rationale: Comparable measurements help identify fluid trends. 2. Assess respiratory changes and elevate the head of the bed if tolerated. Rationale: Pulmonary fluid accumulation may compromise breathing. 3. Implement only prescribed fluid limits and diuretic treatment; monitor renal function and electrolytes. Rationale: Treatment must balance fluid removal with circulation and electrolyte safety. 4. Monitor fluid balance, abdomen, skin and consciousness; implement the prescribed liver-care and nutrition plan. Rationale: Chronic hepatic scarring and portal hypertension contribute to fluid accumulation and metabolic dysfunction. The condition-specific plan addresses the underlying problem while response is monitored.	Record the baseline and reassessed finding, the time and whether this goal is met, partly met or not met. If not met, reassess causes and revise or escalate. Do not record an unobserved improvement.

Nurses Content For educational purposes only. 3 / 7

Nurses Content
Downloaded from nursescontent.com

Assessment: subjective / objective	Nursing diagnosis: original problem wording	Short- and longer-term goals	Nursing interventions with rationale	Evaluation
Ask: Ask about usual diet, recent intake, weight change and food access. Assess: Assess growth or weight trends, intake record and relevant nutritional findings.	Nutritional intake below current needs. Possible factors: poor appetite, increased requirements or feeding difficulty. Validate against the patient's assessment.	Short-term: After the first indicated intervention, at the documented review time: Tolerates the agreed nutrition plan without new complications. Longer-term: Before the clinically approved transition or agreed follow-up: Explains the individualized meal or feeding plan and follow-up arrangements.	1. Assess nutritional risk and confirm swallowing safety and any fasting order. Rationale: The appropriate feeding route depends on clinical safety. 2. Offer suitable small meals or prescribed feeds with dietitian input when indicated. Rationale: Individualized support improves intake and nutrient adequacy. 3. Monitor tolerance, weight or growth and metabolic findings where required. Rationale: Progress and complications guide adjustment of support.	Record the baseline and reassessed finding, the time and whether this goal is met, partly met or not met. If not met, reassess causes and revise or escalate. Do not record an unobserved improvement.
Ask: Ask about bleeding, dizziness, bruising and relevant medicines. Assess: Assess blood loss, circulation, consciousness and ordered coagulation or blood counts.	Bleeding or vulnerability to further blood loss. Possible factors: tissue injury, altered coagulation or treatment effects. Validate against the patient's assessment.	Short-term: After the first indicated intervention, at the documented review time: Blood loss is recognized promptly and circulation is supported by the emergency or treatment plan. Longer-term: Before the clinically approved transition or agreed follow-up: Identifies bleeding warning signs and medicine-related precautions.	1. Quantify visible loss where possible and escalate active significant bleeding immediately. Rationale: Underestimating blood loss can delay life-saving care. 2. Prepare ordered access, investigations and treatment while monitoring perfusion. Rationale: Coordinated response supports rapid stabilization. 3. Avoid unnecessary traumatic procedures and apply appropriate bleeding precautions. Rationale: Reducing additional injury limits preventable blood loss.	Record the baseline and reassessed finding, the time and whether this goal is met, partly met or not met. If not met, reassess causes and revise or escalate. Do not record an unobserved improvement.
Ask: Ask what the learner already knows and wants to	Learning needs about the condition and care plan. Possible	Short-term: After the first indicated intervention, at the	1. Assess language, literacy, hearing, vision and preferred learning method. Rationale: Accessible teaching improves	Record the baseline and reassessed

Nurses Content For educational purposes only. 4 / 7

Nurses Content
Downloaded from nursescontent.com

Assessment: subjective / objective	Nursing diagnosis: original problem wording	Short- and longer-term goals	Nursing interventions with rationale	Evaluation
understand. Assess: Use teach-back or demonstration to identify specific gaps.	factors: new information, complex treatment or limited prior teaching. Validate against the patient's assessment.	documented review time: Explains the most important immediate action in their own words. Longer-term: Before the clinically approved transition or agreed follow-up: Demonstrates the agreed care skills and names follow-up and warning signs.	understanding. 2. Teach a few condition-specific points using plain language and demonstration. Rationale: Focused information is easier to retain and apply. 3. Use teach-back, correct misunderstandings and provide an accessible written plan. Rationale: Checking understanding supports safer self-management. 4. Explain individualized salt/fluid advice, medicine safety, alcohol cessation support and follow-up. Rationale: Condition-specific teaching connects the treatment plan to safe continuing care.	finding, the time and whether this goal is met, partly met or not met. If not met, reassess causes and revise or escalate. Do not record an unobserved improvement.

Nurses Content For educational purposes only. 5 / 7

Nurses Content
Downloaded from nursescontent.com

Health education and continuing care

Explain individualized salt/fluid advice, medicine safety, alcohol cessation support and follow-up.

Transition only after clinical readiness is confirmed. Reconcile medicines, check access and caregiver support, and document who will review the patient and when.

Urgent warning signs

Confusion, vomiting blood, black stools, fever with abdominal pain or shock needs urgent review.

Evaluation and conclusion

For each goal, document met, partly met or not met using observed evidence and the review time. Reassess and revise if progress is inadequate. Individual assessment, prioritized care and coordinated review guide this topic.

Quick Revision

- Chronic hepatic scarring and portal hypertension contribute to fluid accumulation and metabolic dysfunction.

- Priority concerns: Fluid accumulation affecting comfort or function; Nutritional intake below current needs; Bleeding or vulnerability to further blood loss; Learning needs about the condition and care plan.

- Confusion, vomiting blood, black stools, fever with abdominal pain or shock needs urgent review.

- Explain individualized salt/fluid advice, medicine safety, alcohol cessation support and follow-up.

Exam / viva: Which finding changes the order of priorities, and what must be escalated immediately?

References

Nursing Fundamentals, 2e - Ernstmeyer & Christman (editors), Open RN / WisTech Open, 2024
https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/nursingfundamentals/

Health Alterations - Open RN / WisTech Open, 2025
https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/healthalts/

Nursing Pharmacology, 2e - Ernstmeyer & Christman (editors), Open RN / WisTech Open, 2023
https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/pharmacology2e/

B.Sc. Nursing curriculum and regulatory notifications - Indian Nursing Council
https://www.indiannursingcouncil.org/gazette-notification

Original cases and care-plan wording by Nurses Content. Linked sources support further study; source terms and local clinical requirements apply. Prepared 23 November 2026. Not independently clinically peer reviewed.

Nurses Content For educational purposes only. 6 / 7

Nurses Content
Downloaded from nursescontent.com

Rights and reuse

Delivered by Nurses Content. Copyright claims apply only to original material owned by its authors. Medical facts, statutory exceptions and third-party/open licence rights remain unaffected. See the website's /policies/reuse/ page for terms.

Nurses Content For educational purposes only. 7 / 7