

# EXHALE ACADEMY CSE CHEAT SHEET #3

## DECISION MAKING

### THE GOAL

Decision Making tests whether you can convert data into action. You are managing the patient, not proving how much you know.

- Identify the primary problem.
- Choose the safest next step.
- Treat urgent threats first.
- Reassess after each intervention.

### MATCH THE CLUE

- Wheezing from bronchospasm -> bronchodilator.
- Wheezing with CHF signs -> CPAP/BiPAP and diuresis.
- Rhonchi/secretions -> suction or bronchial hygiene.
- Dull percussion/consolidation -> lung expansion therapy.
- Stridor -> upper-airway support, racemic epi/cool mist if appropriate.

### ABG DECISIONS

- Low pH + high PaCO<sub>2</sub> -> ventilatory failure; support ventilation.
- Chronic high CO<sub>2</sub> with compensated pH -> avoid aggressive oxygen/intubation unless failing.
- Severe hypoxemia despite high FIO<sub>2</sub> -> add PEEP/CPAP and treat cause.
- Metabolic problem -> support ventilation and treat underlying cause.

### BEST AVAILABLE ANSWER

The exact answer you want may not be listed. Do not freeze. Select the option that most directly improves patient safety.

- Rule out harmful options first.
- Avoid unfamiliar choices unless all others are clearly worse.
- Only select multiple answers when directed.

### RED FLAGS

- Physician disagrees: stay calm and select the next best option.
- Do not choose treatments unrelated to the cause.
- Do not delay airway/ventilation for comfort measures.
- Do not treat a number while ignoring the patient.

### EXHALE MEMORY LINE

**Problem -> Cause -> Safest action -> Reassess.**