

### QUESTION

1. A patient with a long history of alcohol abuse presents with a 2-week history of weight loss, anorexia, and weakness. Physical examination reveals a 10% weight loss, tachycardia, and a 30-degree angle of trunk extension. Laboratory studies show a total bilirubin of 2.5 mg/dL, a serum albumin of 2.8 g/dL, and a prothrombin time of 18 seconds. The patient's serum ammonia level is 100 µg/dL. The patient's serum ammonia level is most likely elevated because of:

- A. decreased hepatic synthesis
- B. decreased renal excretion
- C. increased hepatic synthesis
- D. increased renal excretion

ANSWER: C

1. The correct answer is C. The patient has cirrhosis, which is characterized by a 10% weight loss, tachycardia, and a 30-degree angle of trunk extension. Laboratory studies show a total bilirubin of 2.5 mg/dL, a serum albumin of 2.8 g/dL, and a prothrombin time of 18 seconds. The patient's serum ammonia level is 100 µg/dL. The patient's serum ammonia level is most likely elevated because of increased hepatic synthesis.



STEP 1 USMLE



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