



American Board of Preventive Medicine Incorporates Core Examination Questions into Specialty Certification Examinations, Eliminates Separate Core Examination

Chicago, IL, November 29, 2021: The American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) announced today that, beginning in 2022, the Core Preventive Medicine examination questions will be incorporated into each of the three Specialty certification exams – Aerospace Medicine, Occupational Medicine, and Public Health and General Preventive Medicine. Previously, examinees were required to take and pass two separate exams – the Specialty certification exam and the Core Preventive Medicine exam. This change will eliminate the need to take a separate Core Preventive Medicine exam.

Exams will continue to include the breadth of both Specialty and Core Preventive Medicine content, as each of the Specialty certification exams will increase from 150 to 200 questions and the maximum time allowed to complete the exam will increase from 3.5 hours to 4.5 hours.

“The Board is excited to offer a more streamlined exam experience for our candidates next year,” said Wendy E. Braund, MD, MPH, MEd, ABPM’s Board Chair. “Incorporating Core Preventive Medicine questions into each of the Specialty certification exams means our Specialty exam candidates will only need to schedule and sit for one exam, instead of two, making the scheduling process easier and more flexible. At the same time, ABPM will continue to administer high-quality, reliable exams that emphasize the importance that Preventive Medicine specialists adequately understand both Core and Specialty content.”

For those interested in learning more about the incorporation of Core Preventive Medicine content into the Specialty exams, the ABPM has prepared a list of FAQs that can be found using the following link on the ABPM website <https://www.theabpm.org/become-certified/certification-exam-faqs/core-examination-faqs/>.

Physicians interested in ABPM certification will be able to apply online for eligibility to take the exam when the 2022 application cycle opens. ABPM will post updated application deadlines and exam dates on its website, www.theabpm.org, in early 2022.

The ABPM is a Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Founded in 1948, ABPM works with the ABMS in the development of standards for the ongoing assessment and certification of over 12,000 physicians certified by the ABPM in the specialties of Aerospace Medicine, Occupational Medicine, and Public Health and General Preventive Medicine; and in the subspecialties of Addiction Medicine, Clinical Informatics, Medical Toxicology, and Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine.



ABPM Core Exam FAQs

1. Why is ABPM incorporating Core exam content into the Specialty (Aerospace Medicine, Occupational Medicine and Public Health & General Preventive Medicine) exams?

ABPM is incorporating Core content in each of the Specialty exams to streamline the exam process – candidates will only need to schedule and take a single exam in the Specialty in which ABPM Certification is being sought rather than scheduling and taking one Specialty exam and one Core exam. This will also function to increase the number of available seats at testing centers, providing greater flexibility for candidates.

2. When will this change take affect?

Beginning with the 2022 Exam Cycle, Core content will be incorporated into each of the Specialty exams.

3. How many exam questions will cover Core content and how many will cover Specialty content?

Each Specialty exam will include a total of 200 questions. 50 of these questions will cover Core content and the remaining 150 questions will cover Specialty content.

This change will also result in a 33% reduction in the total number of questions from 300 (150 for the Core exam and 150 for the Specialty exam) to 200 for the single Specialty exam.

4. What is the time limit in which I must complete the Specialty exam?

Examinees will have a total of 4.5 hours within which to finish the Specialty exam. This time includes one 15-minute break and 15 minutes to complete the orientation tutorial.

This represents a significant decrease in testing time compared to previously when ABPM required candidates to take a separate 3.5-hour Core exam in addition to the 3.5-hour Specialty exam.

5. Will the Core content included in the Specialty exam be scored separately from the Specialty content?

No. Each Specialty exam will be scored independent of each other, and candidates will receive a single aggregated score that will include both Specialty and Core content.

6. Will I need to study the content covered by both the Specialty and Core exam blueprints?

Yes. The Specialty exams will cover both Specialty and Core content. You can find both Specialty and Core content outlines at <https://www.theabpm.org/become-certified/exam-content/>.

7. I took a Specialty exam and Core exam in 2021. I passed the Specialty exam but failed the Core exam. Can I retake just the Core exam in 2022?

No. Since Core content will no longer be covered in a separate exam, candidates who failed the Core exam in 2021 will not be able to retake the Core exam. Instead, candidates must retake the Specialty exam which will now include both Specialty and Core content.

8. I took a Specialty exam and Core exam in 2021. I passed the Core exam but failed the Specialty exam. Am I required to take the Specialty exam in 2022?

Yes. Since there will no longer be a separate Core exam, candidates who failed the Specialty exam in 2021 will be required to retake the Specialty exam which now includes both Specialty and Core content.

9. I took a Specialty exam and Core exam in 2021. I failed both the Specialty exam and the Core exam. Am I required to take both a Specialty exam and the Core exam in 2022?

No. Since there will no longer be a separate Core exam, candidates who failed both the Specialty exam and Core exam in 2021 will only be required to retake the Specialty exam which now includes both Specialty and Core content.

10. I am already Certified in another ABPM Specialty and passed the Core Exam within the previous 7 years. I would like to become Certified in another ABPM Specialty. Can I take only the Specialty exam?

Yes. Since there will no longer be a separate Core exam, diplomates certified in one ABPM Specialty and who qualify to sit for an additional ABPM Specialty will be required to take only the 200-question Specialty exam which now includes both Specialty and Core content.

11. Was there an announcement regarding this change?

Yes. The announcement can be found on ABPM's website at:

<https://www.theabpm.org/2021/11/29/american-board-of-preventive-medicine-incorporates-core-examination-questions-into-specialty-certification-examinations-eliminates-separate-core-examination/>.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact ABPM at abpm@theabpm.org.