

First Aid for the USMLE Step 1: The Really Short Version

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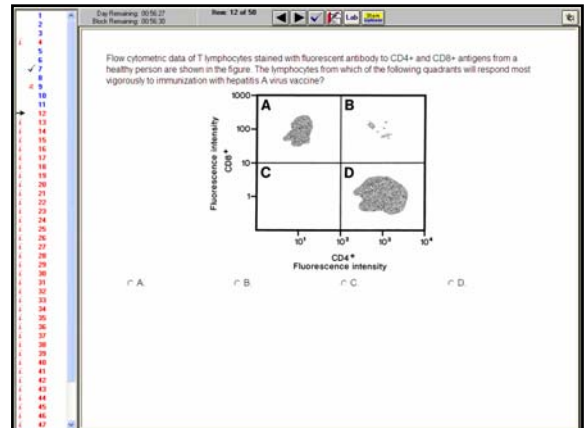
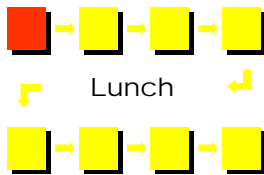
Senior Editor
First Aid Board Series
USMLERx Test Bank Series
UCV Series

Overview

- USMLE Step 1 – The Basics
- Defining Your Goals
- Timelines for Study
- Approaching Each Subject
- Choosing Prep Resources
- More Tips
- Overview of USMLERx
- Q&A

USMLE Step 1 - The Basics

- 8 hours total
- 350 questions in 7 one hour blocks
- 50 questions per block
- 45 minutes of break time



Question Types

- One-best answer items
- Clinical vignettes
 - ◆ 65-70% of exam
 - ◆ Multi-step reasoning

A 32 year old woman presents with a 5 day history of occasional double vision and ptosis. The diagnosis is made by...

Scores and Passing Rates

- Passing is 185/75
- 2005 mean was 217
- 20 points is roughly 1 SD
- Allopathic med students
 - ◆ 90-91% pass on first try
 - ◆ 99% eventually pass

Defining Your Goals

- Just pass the exam → 200 – 220
- Beat the mean → 220 – 240
- Ace the exam → >250
- “ROAD to Riches”
 - ◆ Radiology
 - ◆ Ortho/Ophtho/Otolaryngo/Urology
 - ◆ Anesthesiology
 - ◆ Dermatology

Timeline for Study

- The “Just Pass” Schedule – 1 to 2 months
 - ◆ First Aid High Yield Facts
 - ◆ Crammable subjects
 - ◆ Review questions
- The “Gunner” Schedule – 3 to 6 months
 - ◆ In addition to above
 - ◆ Less crammable subjects
 - ◆ More review questions

Choosing Study Strategies

- Structure and characteristics of the subject
- Structure and characteristics of your curriculum
- Time assigned to a particular subject or system
- Your style of learning

Anatomy

- Traditional anatomy is low yield
- Know anatomy for specific diseases, traumatic injuries, procedures, and common surgeries
- Neuroanatomy, embryology, basic cross sectional anatomy is high-yield
- Be able to identify structures on X-rays, CTs, MRIs, electron micrographs, and photomicrographs

Behavioral Science

- Mix of biostats, psychiatry, psychology, sociology, psychopharmacology
- Biostats and epidemiology is very high-yield
- Personality disorders
- Doctor-patient interactions

Biochemistry

- Crammable!!
- High yield topics include vitamin deficiencies, diseases of genetic errors, key regulatory enzymes
- Understand the “pathobiochemistry”
- Be familiar with medically relevant laboratory techniques

Microbiology & Immunology

- Crammable!!
- 40% bacteriology, 25% immunology, 25% virology, 5% parasitology. So don't fixate on bacteriology!
- Focus on distinguishing characteristics, target organs, method of spread, and diagnosis
- Know the immune response, vaccines, immunodeficiency diseases
- Know viral structures and genome

Pathology

- Huge but important topic
- Know hallmark characteristics of each disease including signs and symptoms
- Look for clues in age, sex, ethnicity, activity
- Know descriptions of "trigger" words
- Most questions with gross specimens and photomicrographs can be answered from the history alone

Pharmacology

- Crammable!!
- Focus on prototypic drugs; forget obscure derivatives, trade names, dosages
- Major categories are ANS, CNS, antimicrobial, and cardiovascular
- Mechanisms, clinical uses, and toxicities are high-yield
- Review associated biochemistry, physiology and microbiology

Physiology

- Concept oriented
- Diagrams work well in physiology
- Know basic physiologic relationships, hormones
- Many clinical vignettes incorporate pathophysiology

Review Resources

- Text reviews
- Test banks
- Self-test reviews
- Case-based reviews
- Review courses
- Other media
 - Flash cards
 - CDs/MP3/Videos
 - PDA

Picking and Choosing Resources

- Buy books/resources early
- Buy only what you can use
- Don't blindly buy a whole series

Study Tips

- Establish a study schedule and stick with it
- Alternate study methods for variety
- Save “crammable” subjects for the end
- Focus on high yield material and previous learned material
- Allow time in schedule for breaks, exercise and personal issues
- Stay relaxed and grounded
- Use our checklist to keep you on track

CBT Tips

- Be very familiar with the CBT tutorial
- Know the keyboard shortcuts
- Use computerized practice tests in addition to paper exams
- Mix Q&A throughout and at end

CBT Practice Options

Types	Suggested Use
USMLE Sample Test	Format familiarity
NBME/CBSSA	Benchmarking
Commercial Test Banks	Practice/study Simulation

Test Day Tips

- No coffee on test day
- Layered clothing
- Pacing is everything
- Light lunch
- The “C” reflex
- P = MD

USMLERx Step 1 Qmax Test Bank

- **2200+** high-yield USMLE Step 1-style questions
- **1000+** questions revised and updated with student feedback from the 2006 boards
- Integrated high-yield facts from FIRST AID for the USMLE Step 1
- USMLE-style interface for a real exam simulation
- Pass Guarantee – pass or up to 2 months free

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