Relax.
Overview

- USMLE Step 1 – The Basics
- Defining Your Goals
- Timelines for Study
- Approaching Each Subject
- Choosing Prep Resources
- More Tips
- Overview of First Aid/USMLE-Rx
- Special Offer
- Q&A
Poll Question
USMLE Step 1 – The Basics

- 8 hours total
- 280 questions in 7 one-hour blocks
- 40 questions per block
- 45 minutes of break time
A 32-year-old Caucasian woman presents with a 5 day history of occasional double vision and bilateral ptosis. What is the most appropriate diagnostic test?
A 73-year-old woman has episodes of abdominal pain and increasingly severe constipation. Test of the stool for occult blood is positive. The photomicrograph shows features of the resected colon. Which of the following is the most likely diagnosis?

- A. Adenocarcinoma
- B. Diverticular disease
- C. Polypoid adenoma
- D. Villous adenoma
- E. Volvulus
Scores and Passing Rates

- Passing is 194
- Mean is 229
- 20 points is 1 SD
- Allopathic med students
  - 96% pass on first try
  - 99% eventually pass
- Osteopathic med students
  - 95% pass on first try
- IMGs
  - 78% pass on first try
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Defining Your Goals

- Just pass the exam → 210 – 229
- Beat the mean → 230 – 249
- Ace the exam → 250+
- “ROAD to Riches”
  - Radiology/Radiation Oncology
  - Ortho/Ophtho/Otolaryngo/Urology
  - “Aesthetic” Surgery (plastics)
  - Dermatology
NRMP: Charting Outcomes in the Match

**Figure 3.** Median USMLE Step 1 Score by Specialty for Matched US Seniors.¹,²

![Graph showing median USMLE Step 1 scores by specialty for matched US seniors.](image)

¹Vertical lines show interquartile range.
NRMP: Charting Outcomes in the Match

Chart 15

USMLE STEP 1 SCORES

Median Probability of Matching to Preferred Specialty by USMLE Step 1 Scores

Note: Not significant for independent applicants who preferred the highly competitive specialties
Poll Question
Timeline for Study

The “Just Pass” Schedule – 1 to 2 months
- First Aid High Yield Facts
- Crammable subjects
- Review questions – 2 question banks

The “Gunner” Schedule – 2 to 6 months
- All of the above, plus:
  - Less crammable subjects
  - More review questions – 2-3 question banks
Choosing Study Strategies

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

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

- Crammable!!
- 40% bacteriology, 25% immunology, 25% virology, and 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, and 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, cardiovascular, and oncology
- 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
Psychiatry

- Includes psychology, sociology, psychopharmacology
- High-yield - personality, psychosomatic/ somatoform, substance abuse, eating disorders
Public Health

- Mix of biostats, epidemiology, ethics, law, healthcare delivery, patient safety, and quality improvement
- Biostats and epidemiology is very high-yield
- Doctor-patient interactions
Review Resources

- Text reviews
- Test banks
- Self-test reviews
- Case-based reviews
- Review courses
- Other media
  - Flash cards
  - Videos
  - Mobile apps
Picking and Choosing Resources

Check out the book reviews in *First Aid for the USMLE Step 1* (Section 4)

Buy books/apps/resources early

Buy only what you can use

Don’t blindly buy a whole series
Poll Question
Study Tips

- Establish a study schedule and stick with it
- Integrate and apply everything
- Save “crammable” subjects for the end
- Focus on high yield material and previously 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 the end
Learning Through Testing

 Researchers asked college students to study a short science text using one of four study methods, then tested them a week later. The most effective study method combined two study sessions with retrieval practice, tests that asked the students to recall what they had read.

<table>
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<th>STUDY METHOD</th>
<th>Direct questions answered correctly</th>
<th>Inference questions answered correctly</th>
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<td>Concept mapping</td>
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<td>Retrieval practice</td>
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<td>Repeated study</td>
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Source: Science

The New York Times
# CBT Practice Options

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<th>Types</th>
<th>Suggested Use</th>
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<td>USMLE sample test</td>
<td>Format familiarity</td>
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<tr>
<td>NBME/CBSSA</td>
<td>Benchmarking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial test banks</td>
<td>Practice/study Simulation</td>
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More Research

- Deng et al, 2015
  - Qbanks > Flashcards
  - 445 MCQs $\rightarrow$ ↑ 1 pt on Step 1
- Burk-Rafel et al, 2017
  - >3200 MCQs – best performance
  - Unique MCQs > repeat MCQs
  - 3+ passes in FA $\rightarrow$ ↑ USMLE score
Test Day Tips

- Less coffee on test day
- Layered clothing
- Read lead-in first for long questions
- Manage the clock
- Light lunch
- The “C” reflex
- P = MD/DO
Let’s Get Social!

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Instagram: @firstaidteam
Questions and Answers