American Board of Internal Medicine®

Advanced Heart Failure & Transplant Cardiology

Certification Examination Blueprint

What Does the Examination Cover?

The exam is designed to evaluate the extent of the candidate's knowledge and clinical judgment in the areas in which a heart failure specialist should demonstrate a high level of competence. Expertise in the broad domain of advanced heart failure and transplant cardiology will be assessed, including diagnosis and management of both common and rare conditions that have important consequences for patients and understanding and integration of results of significant clinical trials.

Exam content is consistent with a pre-established blueprint, or table of specifications, developed by the Advanced Heart Failure & Transplant Cardiology Test Committee and used as a guide in exam preparation. The blueprint is reviewed and revised annually to ensure that it is current.

The majority of questions are based on patient presentations occurring in settings that reflect current medical practice. Questions requiring simple recall of medical facts are in the minority; the majority of questions require integration of information, prioritization of alternatives, and/or utilization of clinical judgment in reaching a correct conclusion. Some questions require interpretation of pictorial material, such as coronary angiograms, ultrasound images, computed tomograms, magnetic resonance images, electrocardiograms, and echocardiograms. The examination will assess the candidate's knowledge and clinical judgment in aspects of advanced heart failure and transplant cardiology required to demonstrate a high level of competence; including:

- Heart failure prevention (including evaluation and management of hypertension);
- Heart failure evaluation (including all diagnostic tests and modalities applied in the evaluation and management of patients with heart failure);
- Heart failure management (including indications for cardiac transplant, evaluation of candidates for transplant, and care of patients before and after transplant);
- Heart failure procedures (including management of diagnostic and therapeutic devices used for evaluation and management of heart failure in acute and chronic settings, management of patients with these devices, and evaluation of device function);
- Heart failure disease management (including issues related to participation in multidisciplinary teams delivering clinical care in settings dedicated to heart failure);
- Basic mechanisms of heart failure (including cellular mechanisms, ventricular remodeling, hypertrophy, and inflammation);
- Clinical research issues (including ethical standards, design, and application and interpretation of trial results).

The content areas covered and their relative proportions on the exam are as follows:

Medical Content Category	Relative Percentage
Epidemiology and Causes of Heart Failure	10%
Pathophysiology of Heart Failure	10%
Evaluation of Heart Failure	10%
Management of Hospitalized Patients	10%
Management of Heart Failure	20%
Comorbidities or Coexisting Conditions in HF	5%
Cardiac Surgery in Heart Failure	5%
Heart Transplant	17.5%
Mechanical Circulatory Support	7.5%
Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension	5%
Total	100%