



Gastroenterology

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 gastroenterologist should demonstrate a high level of competence. Expertise in the broad domain of gastroenterology, including hepatology, and the diagnosis and treatment of both common and rare conditions that have important consequences for patients, will be assessed.

Exam content is consistent with a pre-established blueprint, or table of specifications. The blueprint is developed by the Subspecialty Board on Gastroenterology and is reviewed and revised annually to ensure that it is current. In addition, practicing gastroenterologists, gastroenterology trainees, and training program directors are surveyed periodically to provide feedback on the blueprinting process. The blueprint is used as a guide in developing the exam.

The majority of questions (over 75 percent) 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 from several sources, prioritization of alternatives, and/or utilization of clinical judgment in reaching a correct conclusion. Some questions require interpretation of pictorial material, such as imaging studies (including abdominal ultrasonograms, endoscopic ultrasonograms, computed tomograms, magnetic resonance images, pancreatograms, cholangiograms, radionuclide scans, and mesenteric angiograms), endoscopic photographs, photographs of physical findings, photomicrographs of biopsy specimens, and manometric tracings.

Topics covered may include the following:

- Pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, and complications of drugs
- Indications for and interpretation of endoscopic and other gastrointestinal procedures
- General internal medicine as encountered in the practice of gastroenterology (including some general pediatrics with an emphasis on adolescent medicine)

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

Medical Content Category	Relative Percentage
Esophagus	10%
Stomach/Duodenum	15%
Liver	25%
Biliary Tract	8%
Pancreas	10%
Small Intestine	10%
Colon	15%
General	7%
Total	100%

Content Outline of the Certification Examination

This content outline describes a *typical* Gastroenterology Certification Examination; actual content on a specific examination may vary. Each medical content category from the examination blueprint is listed in boldface below, along with target blueprint percentage and total number of questions in the category. Within each category, the approximate distribution of questions in specified areas is also listed.

Medical Content Category (Relative Percentage)	Number of Questions
Esophagus (10%)	18-22 as follows:
Anatomy and developmental/anatomic abnormalities	0-1
Function and physiology	0-1
Dysphagia	1-3
Esophageal motility disorders	3-5
Gastroesophageal reflux disease	5-7
Esophageal cancer	1-3
Esophageal ulcerations	1-3
Other disorders	3-5
Miscellaneous	0-1
Endoscopy/procedures	0-1

Stomach/Duodenum (15%)	28-32 as follows:
Anatomy and developmental/anatomic abnormalities	0-2
Function and physiology	1-3
Upper gastrointestinal bleeding, dyspepsia, nausea, and vomiting	3-5
Gastritis/gastropathy	3-5
Peptic disease	8-10
Polyps and tumors	3-5
Gastric motility disorders	1-2
Other disorders of the stomach and duodenum	1-2
Endoscopy and procedures	1-2

Medical Content Category (Relative Percentage)	Number of Questions
Liver (25%)	46-54 as follows:
Anatomy and developmental/anatomic abnormalities	0-3
Function and physiology	1-3
Abnormal liver chemistries and jaundice	2-4
Inherited metabolic disorders	3-5
Cholestatic liver diseases	3-5
Hepatitis A	0-2
Hepatitis B	2-4
Hepatitis C	4-8
Autoimmune hepatitis	1-3
Vascular liver disease	0-3
Alcoholic liver disease	2-4
Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease	2-4
Drug-induced liver disease	1-3
Pregnancy-related liver disease	0-2
Acute liver failure	1-3
Liver tumors and cysts	2-4
Liver abscess	0-3
Systemic disorders	0-1
Complications of cirrhosis	4-7
Liver transplantation	2-4
Liver biopsy	0-1
Miscellaneous	0-1

Biliary Tract (8%)	14-18 as follows:
Anatomy and developmental/anatomic abnormalities	0-2
Function and physiology	0-2
Obstructive jaundice, right upper quadrant pain, and hemobilia	2-4
Disorders (gallstone disease, other gallbladder problems, bile duct problems, sphincter of Oddi dysfunction)	7-9
Miscellaneous	0-1
Endoscopy/procedures (ERCP, EUS, PTC, PTBD, MRCP, biliary scintigraphy)	2-4

Pancreas (10%)	18-22 as follows
Anatomy and developmental/anatomic abnormalities	0-2
Function and physiology	0-3
Symptoms and clinical presentation	0-1
Acute pancreatitis	4-6
Chronic pancreatitis	4-6
Pancreatic cancer	3-5
Other disorders of the pancreas	1-3
Miscellaneous (adolescent, pregnancy, geriatrics)	0-2
Endoscopy/procedures	0-2

Medical Content Category (Relative Percentage)	Number of Questions
Small intestine (10%)	18-22 as follows:
Anatomy and developmental/anatomic abnormalities	0-2
Function and physiology	1-3
Symptoms and clinical presentation	1-3
Disorders (infections, sprue, Crohn's disease, radiation enteritis, bacterial overgrowth, short bowel syndrome, neoplasms, vascular disease)	12-14
Other disorders	1-3

Colon (15%)	28-32 as follows:
Anatomy and developmental/anatomic abnormalities	0-1
Function and physiology	0-1
Symptoms and clinical presentation	2-4
Irritable bowel syndrome	2-4
Infectious diarrhea	2-4
Radiation enterocolitis	0-1
Inflammatory bowel disease	4-8
Diverticular disease	0-3
Appendicitis	0-1
Pseudo-obstruction and megacolon	0-1
Volvulus and intussusception	0-1
Colorectal polyps and cancer	6-8
Ischemic colitis	0-3
Anorectal disorders	0-2
Miscellaneous diseases	0-3
Endoscopy/procedures	0-1

General (7%)	12-16 as follows:
Adolescent	0-2
Geriatric	0-2
Endoscopy: patient preparation	0-2
Multisystem disorders	0-2
Nutrition	0-2
Ethics	0-2
Statistics	0-2