



# MEDICAL ONCOLOGY Blueprint

For Certification Examination (CERT)

## Content development: How ABIM Board Certified physicians inform the process

The American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) regularly invites board certified physicians in each specialty to provide ratings of the relative frequency and importance of blueprint topics in practice. This review process helps to ensure that the topics included on ABIM’s assessment are informed by practicing clinicians.

## Assessment format

The blueprint is used to develop certification exam taken in the testing center. Most questions describe patient scenarios and ask about the work done (that is, tasks performed) by physicians in the course of practice within major medical content categories.

TASK	TARGET %
Diagnosis/Testing	25%
Treatment/Care Decisions	60%
Risk Assessment/Prognosis/Epidemiology	10%
Pathophysiology/Basic Science	5%

To determine the content distribution, physician governance analyzes practicing physician ratings of topic frequency and importance. Informed by these data, the Approval Committees and Specialty Board have determined the content category targets, which are shown in the next column.

CONTENT CATEGORY	TARGET %
<a href="#">Clinical Research Methodology and Ethics</a>	6.5%
<a href="#">Palliative Care, Survivorship, and Communication</a>	11%
<a href="#">Hematologic Neoplasms</a>	13%
<a href="#">Thoracic Cancer</a>	11.5%
<a href="#">Breast Cancer</a>	13.5%
<a href="#">Genitourinary Cancer</a>	12%
<a href="#">Gynecologic Cancer</a>	5.5%
<a href="#">Gastrointestinal Cancer</a>	13.5%
<a href="#">Skin Cancer, Sarcomas, and Unknown Primary Site</a>	7%
<a href="#">Head, Neck, Thyroid, and Central Nervous System Malignancies</a>	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Clinical information presented may include patient photographs, radiographs, computed tomograms, photomicrographs, magnetic resonance images, equianalgesic tables, bone scans, family pedigree charts, nomograms and other media to illustrate relevant patient findings. Exam tutorials, including examples of question format, can be found at [abim.org/about/abim-exams/exam-tutorials/](http://abim.org/about/abim-exams/exam-tutorials/).

ABIM is committed to working toward health equity and believes that board certified physicians should have an understanding of health care disparities. Therefore, health equity content that is clinically important to each discipline will be included in assessments.

Health equity functions as a cross-content category spanning multiple content areas of the blueprint. Clinically relevant factors such as, but not limited to, the following may appear on the assessment: low health literacy and language barriers affecting care comprehension; food insecurity influencing nutrition and disease management; and cost or insurance constraints limiting continuity of care.

## Get Involved

ABIM Board Certified physicians contribute to every aspect of the blueprint, from content and distribution to layout and visual aids. Most importantly, practicing physicians in each specialty are invited to participate in blueprint review surveys when those specialties are due for an update. A complete schedule of blueprint reviews is available on [ABIM.org](http://ABIM.org). If you are invited to participate, please do so to ensure your perspective is heard in your specialty.

If you are interested in additional volunteer opportunities, visit [ABIM’s website](#) for a complete list of openings.

## Content outline for the Medical Oncology Certification Examination

<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #0056b3; margin-right: 5px;"></span> – High Relevance: Topics are very likely to appear on the assessment	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #a6c9ec; margin-right: 5px;"></span> – Medium Relevance: Topics are moderately likely to appear on the assessment	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid #0056b3; margin-right: 5px;"></span> – Low Relevance: Topics will not appear on the assessment
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Blueprint Code and Topic	Diagnosis/Testing (25%)	Treatment/Care Decisions (60%)	Risk Assessment/ Prognosis/ Epidemiology (10%)	Pathophysiology/ Basic Science (5%)
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### 1 CLINICAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ETHICS (6.5% of exam)

1.1	Clinical research methodology	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
1.2	Ethics	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	LOW

### 2 PALLIATIVE CARE, SURVIVORSHIP, AND ONCOLOGIC COMPLICATIONS (11% of exam)

2.1	Clinical manifestations of advanced cancer and its treatment	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
2.2	Cancer pain	LOW	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
2.3	Survivorship issues	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
2.4	End-of-life issues	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
2.5	Communication, including prognosis, goals of care, and survivorship	LOW	HIGH	HIGH	LOW

### 3 HEMATOLOGIC NEOPLASMS (13% of exam)

3.1	Acute leukemia and myelodysplasia	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
3.2	Chronic myeloid leukemia and myeloproliferative neoplasms	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
3.3	Chronic lymphoproliferative leukemias	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
3.4	Hodgkin lymphoma	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
3.5	Multiple myeloma and plasma cell dyscrasias	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
3.6	Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
3.7	Genetics and genomics of hematologic neoplasms	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
3.8	Complications of hematologic neoplasm treatment	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

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**4 THORACIC CANCER** (11.5% of exam)

4.1	Non–small cell lung cancer	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
4.2	Small cell lung cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
4.3	Mesothelioma and thymus cancer	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
4.4	Genetics and genomics of thoracic cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
4.5	Complications of thoracic cancer treatment	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

**5 BREAST CANCER** (13.5% of exam)

5.1	Premalignant conditions and high-risk factors	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
5.2	Carcinoma in situ	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
5.3	Early stage and locally advanced invasive carcinoma	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
5.4	Inflammatory disease	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
5.5	Locally recurrent disease	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
5.6	Metastatic disease	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
5.7	Less common clinical scenarios, including tubular carcinoma, male breast cancer, and pregnancy-associated breast cancer	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
5.8	Genetics and genomics of breast cancer	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
5.9	Complications of breast cancer treatment	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

**6 GENITOURINARY CANCER** (12% of exam)

6.1	Germ cell tumors	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
6.2	Prostate cancer	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
6.3	Renal cell cancer	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
6.4	Urothelial and other genitourinary cancers	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
6.5	Adrenal tumors	LOW	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
6.6	Genetics and genomics of genitourinary cancer	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
6.7	Complications of genitourinary cancer treatment	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

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**7 GYNECOLOGIC CANCER** (5.5% of exam)

7.1	Cervical cancer	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
7.2	Ovarian, fallopian tube, and primary peritoneal cancers	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
7.3	Uterine sarcoma	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
7.4	Endometrial cancer	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
7.5	Genetics and genomics of gynecologic cancer	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
7.6	Complications of gynecologic cancer treatment	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW

**8 GASTROINTESTINAL CANCER** (13.5% of exam)

8.1	Anal cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.2	Biliary tree and gallbladder cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.3	Colorectal cancer	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
8.4	Esophageal cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.5	Gastric cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.6	Hepatocellular cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.7	Gastrointestinal neuroendocrine tumors	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.8	Pancreatic cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.9	Small bowel and appendiceal cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.10	Genetics and genomics of gastrointestinal cancer	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
8.11	Complications of gastrointestinal cancer treatment	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

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**9 SKIN CANCER, SARCOMAS, AND UNKNOWN PRIMARY SITE** (7% of exam)

9.1	Melanoma	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
9.2	Squamous cell and basal cell cancer of the skin	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
9.3	Merkel cell carcinoma	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
9.4	Bone and soft-tissue sarcomas	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
9.5	Unknown primary site	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
9.6	Genetics and genomics of skin cancers, sarcomas, and unknown primary site	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
9.7	Complications of treatment for skin cancers, sarcomas, and unknown primary site	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW

**10 HEAD, NECK, THYROID, AND CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM MALIGNANCIES** (6.5% of exam)

10.1	Squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
10.2	Salivary gland tumors	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
10.3	Thyroid cancer	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
10.4	Nasopharyngeal carcinoma	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
10.5	Central nervous system malignancies	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
10.6	Genetics and genomics of head, neck, thyroid, and central nervous system malignancies	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
10.7	Complications of treatment for head, neck, thyroid, and central nervous system malignancies	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

**Expanded Blueprints:** For the most detailed content outline, including third-level subtopics, visit [ABIM's website](#).