



AMERICAN BOARD  
OF OPHTHALMOLOGY  
Advancing Excellence in Eye Care

## Quarterly Questions Test Blueprint

### CORE KNOWLEDGE

The test blueprint (content outline) for Quarterly Questions lists the topics you can expect to see on the assessment and the approximate distribution of questions that will come from each topic area. The current blueprint was developed in August 2017 and was used to build the 2018 and 2019 versions of Quarterly Questions; however, a new topic area for Ophthalmic Emergencies was added under Core Knowledge for 2019. Best practices in test development call for the creation of a new content outline every 3-5 years. The outline may be revised sooner if significant changes to the field warrant re-review.

Quarterly Questions is designed to assess everyday clinical knowledge; therefore, it should not require advance study. However, this blueprint may help you get acquainted with the format, structure, and content of the assessment. This document is not intended to serve as a study guide.

#### **Purpose of Quarterly Questions (Knowledge-Based Section)**

The Quarterly Questions program is designed to measure everyday clinical practice knowledge or knowledge that is gained from experience in practice. Candidates who pass the Quarterly Questions program are up-to date in the knowledge base and clinical decision-making skills necessary to provide competent ophthalmic care for their patients.

#### **Test Specification Development**

Development of the content outline for Quarterly Questions adhered to psychometric guidelines for exam development and relied primarily on existing evidence-based literature and expert consensus. Expert consensus was provided by volunteer practicing ophthalmologists representing the following subspecialties: Cataract/Anterior, Cornea/External Disease, Glaucoma, Neuro-Orbital, Oculoplastics, Pediatrics/Strabismus Segment, Refraction and Optics, Retina-Vitreous, and Uveitis. These volunteers included representatives of the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) and other ophthalmology subspecialty societies, and represented a great diversity in gender, age, practice type, and geography.

Following the development of the content outline, the blueprint weights (percentages) were established through a practice analysis survey which was sent to the ABO diplomate community in January 2017. The survey asked diplomates to weigh the importance of each content outline task for safe and effective practice. All diplomates rated the importance of the core content outline, and diplomates also rated the importance of the domain and task areas in their reported primary practice emphasis area.

## Assessment Format

Each year, Quarterly Questions participants answer 40 knowledge-based questions (30 questions in a subspecialty and **10 in core ophthalmic knowledge**) and 10 article-based questions in an online, on-demand testing environment. In quarters 1 and 2 of the year, 15 subspecialty questions and 5 core questions are delivered in each quarter. In quarter 3, 10 article-based questions are delivered. No new questions are launched in quarter 4. For more information about the Quarterly Questions program and scoring procedures, visit <https://abop.org/QQ>.

Core content notes:

- Core knowledge questions may be answered separately from subspecialty questions (new for 2019).
- All core questions count toward your overall knowledge score, calculated based on 40 questions.
- You will have 60 seconds to answer each question. Questions may not be skipped.
- All questions are multiple-choice and have four options.
- Immediately after answering the question, you will be notified if your selected answer was correct or incorrect, and you will receive additional information and references related to the question.

## Content Distribution

Each question will cover one of three aspects of patient care:

1. Presentation (history, clinical exam, differential)
2. Diagnostic Testing
3. Management/ Outcomes/ Complications/ Prognosis

Some questions may also cover components of one or more of the following:

- Landmark study findings that influenced preferred practice patterns
- General medicine aspects as related to ophthalmology
- Patient safety, quality improvement, risk management, and diagnostic error
- Ethics
- Communication and team-based care

**Within the 10 core knowledge questions delivered each year, there will be a roughly equal distribution of questions from the following 10 ophthalmic knowledge areas:**

	Subject	Domains
1	Lens and Cataract	Isolated cataract Cataract associated with other ocular disease or systemic disease
2	Cornea, External Disease, and Anterior Segment	Infections and trauma Ocular surface and immune-mediated disease Neoplasms

3	Glaucoma	Primary open-angle glaucoma and suspects Primary angle-closure glaucoma and suspects Secondary glaucomas
4	Neuro-Ophthalmology	Visual loss Diplopia/eye movement disorders Pupil Headache/pain Systemic and CNS disease
5	Oculofacial, Plastics, and Orbit	Neoplasms Infections and inflammations Eyelid abnormalities Trauma
6	Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus	External, lid, and lacrimal disease Congenital glaucoma or cataract Retinal and intraocular disorders Amblyopia and strabismus Tumors
7	Refractive Management and Optics	Visual assessment and refractive error Low vision
8	Retina, Vitreous, and Intraocular Tumors	Macular diseases Retinal vascular diseases Vitreous and peripheral retinal abnormalities Intraocular tumors
9	Uveitis	Anterior segment uveitis Posterior segment uveitis
10	Medical and Ophthalmic Emergencies (effective in 2019)	

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