



COMAT-OSTEOPATHIC PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE (OPP)

Content Outline and Assessment Objectives

The **COMAT-Osteopathic Principles and Practice** examination is designed for end-of-course assessment or end-of-clinical rotation/clerkship assessment for students enrolled at a college of osteopathic medicine. This examination emphasizes core knowledge and elements of osteopathic principles and practices and osteopathic manipulative medicine that are essential at the advanced beginner level (osteopathic medical student) as outlined in the **COMAT-Osteopathic Principles and Practice** Examination Blueprint (<http://www.nbome.org/docs/COMAT-OPP.pdf>).

General Learner-Centered Objectives

Based on general learner-centered objectives, the examinee will be required to demonstrate the ability to apply:

- 1) Foundational content knowledge to situations and patient presentations encountered in clinical settings and important to osteopathic principles and practice and osteopathic manipulative treatment.
- 2) Knowledge and clinical problem-solving as related to the *Fundamental Osteopathic Medical Competency Domains*, including osteopathic principles and practice and osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT), osteopathic medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, practice-based learning and improvement, systems-based practice, professionalism and patient care. ([http://www.nbome.org/docs/NBOME Fundamental Osteopathic Medical Competencies.pdf](http://www.nbome.org/docs/NBOME_Fundamental_Osteopathic_Medical_Compencies.pdf))
- 3) Knowledge and understanding of osteopathic principles and practice; the basic science, mechanisms of action and physical findings of somatic dysfunction; indications and contraindications; and basic OMT.
- 4) Skills of osteopathic principles and practice integrated into all aspects of patient care, including emphasis on the disruption of homeostasis as an approach to health and disease.

Selected Specific Objectives for COMAT-OPP

For **COMAT-Osteopathic Principles and Practice**, the examinee will be required to demonstrate the ability to diagnose and manage selected patient presentations and clinical situations involving, but not limited to:

- 1) **Osteopathic concept and philosophy:** osteopathic tenets, musculoskeletal structure and function, somatic nerve structure, and lymphatic drainage
- 2) **Osteopathic diagnosis:** observation, palpation, and range-of-motion testing of the lower/upper extremities, cervical/thoracic/lumbar spine, pelvis/sacrum, head, abdomen, and ribs
- 3) **Osteopathic treatment methods:** counterstrain, muscle energy, myofascial release, high velocity low amplitude (HVLA), soft tissue, lymphatic technique, osteopathy in the cranial field, articular techniques, balanced ligamentous tension, ligamentous articular strain, facilitated positional release, Still technique, visceral technique, Chapman reflexes, and trigger points

Throughout these three categories, examinees will be required to demonstrate the ability to:

- a) Discuss the basic principles of the osteopathic philosophy and describe the impact on the health care delivery of osteopathic physicians.
- b) Discuss the scientific knowledge supporting the utilization of osteopathic principles and OMT, including the basic science of the mechanisms of OMT and somatic dysfunction, and the current evidence base for the clinical application of OMT.

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- c) Define the types of physical examination findings consistent with somatic dysfunction.
- d) Define and describe the types of somatic dysfunction found within the ten body regions, including the head, cervical, thoracic, rib, lumbar, pelvic, sacral, abdominal, upper extremity and lower extremity body regions.
- e) Describe the symptoms and physical findings consistent with viscerosomatic, somatovisceral and somatosomatic reflexes.
- f) Define and describe indirect and direct types of OMT, including articulatory, balanced ligamentous tension, counterstrain, osteopathy in the cranial field, muscle energy, high velocity low amplitude (HVLA), visceral, lymphatic, exercise therapy, soft tissue and myofascial release techniques.
- g) Describe the basic principles of treatment of functional technique, facilitated positional release, ligamentous articular strain and Still techniques.
- h) Discuss the indications and contraindications of different types of OMT.
- i) Discuss the relative value, advantages and disadvantages of different types of OMT.
- j) Correctly diagnose somatic dysfunction within the ten body regions, prioritize a differential diagnosis and develop an appropriate care plan.
- k) Effectively communicate with patients and their families regarding risks, benefits and alternatives associated with the use of OMT.
- l) Maintain the safety and dignity of the patient while administering OMT.
- m) Identify viscerosomatic relationships and the role of the musculoskeletal system in health and disease by performing a structural examination and documenting findings reflective of this relationship.
- n) Show sensitivity to ethnic diversity as it may impact on the presentation of somatic and/or visceral dysfunctions.

Selected Student and Faculty Learning Resources for COMAT-OPP

In addition to the aforementioned objectives, examples of supplementary resources used by the NBOME to inform the development of the **COMAT-Osteopathic Principles and Practice** examination are listed below:

- Educational Council on Osteopathic Principles: (<http://www.aacom.org/people/councils/Pages/ECOP.aspx>)
- Course and Clerkship Objectives as Outlined by each College of Osteopathic Medicine: (<http://www.aacom.org/people/colleges/Pages/default.aspx>)
- Basic Standards for Residency Training: (http://www.do-online.org/pdf/sir_postdocfpomtstds.pdf)

Sample **COMAT-Osteopathic Principles and Practice** examination items will soon be available on the NBOME's website. Although not expressly designed for or intended to prepare examinees for COMAT examinations, sample COMLEX-USA test items are available at: (<http://www.nbome.org/intro/index.html>), and the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Self-Assessment Examination (COMSAE) Phase 2 is available at (<http://www.nbome.org/comsae.asp?m=can>).

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A select number of resources related to the discipline of **OPP** are as follows:

An Osteopathic Approach to Diagnosis and Treatment	DiGiovanna	3 rd Edition	2004
Atlas of Osteopathic Techniques	Nicholas	1 st Edition	2008
Foundations for Osteopathic Medicine	AOA	3 rd Edition	2010
Greenman's Principles of Manual Medicine	DeStefano	4 th Edition	2010
Somatic Dysfunction in Osteopathic Family Medicine	Nelson	1 st Edition	2006
UpToDate	Inc	Version 18.3	2011

NBOME COMAT Committees

Membership of the **COMAT-Osteopathic Principles and Practice** committee was formulated by the NBOME with input provided by board-certified specialty experts in **OPP** from across the nation. This team consists of department chairs, clerkship/clinical rotation directors, and faculty members from colleges of osteopathic medicine, as well as representatives from graduate medical education (residency) programs and private clinical practice.