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**COMVEX**<sup>®</sup>

COMPREHENSIVE OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL  
VARIABLE-PURPOSE EXAMINATION

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***BULLETIN OF INFORMATION***

Updated May 11, 2021

**COMVEX Bulletin of Information  
2021**

All candidates are required to read and be familiar with the contents of this Bulletin of Information prior to registering for and scheduling a COMVEX examination.

**The policies, rules, procedures and obligations of candidates set forth in this Bulletin of Information are legally binding upon all candidates and will be applied and interpreted by the NBOME at its sole discretion. A decision by the NBOME regarding the application or interpretation of these rules and procedures is final. The NBOME may amend, modify, and/or supplement these policies, rules, procedures and obligations of candidates at any time and from time to time without the consent of any candidate. All candidates will be legally bound to all changes published on the NBOME website.**

Inquiries should be directed to:

National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, Inc.

**Client Services**

Toll-free: (866) 479-6828

Hours: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (Central Time) Monday through Friday

This Bulletin of Information is published at the NBOME website at [www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org) and can be downloaded from the NBOME home page.

Candidates may e-mail requests for additional information to [clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org).

Registration and scheduling can be completed online in accordance with the requirements set out in this Bulletin of Information.

## **COMVEX Bulletin of Information**

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Purpose**

The Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Variable-Purpose Examination for the United States of America (COMVEX) was developed for osteopathic physicians who hold or have held a valid license to practice osteopathic medicine in the United States. The purpose of COMVEX is to assist state licensing boards by providing an evaluation examination for candidates required or sponsored by a state medical board to demonstrate current medical knowledge under standardized conditions. For example, COMVEX may be appropriate under any of the following circumstances:

- An osteopathic physician was originally licensed by an examination devoid of osteopathic content and is now applying for a license in a state that requires that an osteopathic physician take an osteopathic examination.
- An osteopathic physician is applying for licensure in a state that imposes a time limit (such as being examined within ten years) and has not been tested by a licensing board or a certifying board within that time.
- An osteopathic physician is requesting reinstatement of a license following an interruption in his or her career.
- A tenured osteopathic physician must demonstrate basic osteopathic medical competence.

COMVEX may only be taken if a state licensing board or other governmental licensing authority (state board) requests that the candidate be given the examination or sponsors the candidate to take the examination.

#### **History and Overview**

COMVEX was created by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, Inc. (NBOME), and was first administered in 1998. The first computer-based version of this examination was available in September of 2006.

COMVEX is integrated into the COMLEX-USA licensing series by incorporating a similar examination design that focuses on the actual practice patterns of the generalist osteopathic physician. The examination is structured and coordinated along two axes, or dimensions.

Dimension 1 of the blueprint consists of seven competency domains, which comprise foundational abilities representing the required elements and outcomes that define knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes, values, behaviors, and established professional standards.

Dimension 2 consists of ten clinical presentation categories, which represent the manner in which a particular patient, group of patients, or community present for osteopathic medical care.

The blueprint and a sample test item for COMVEX are described below under EXAMINATION CONTENT.

The members of the COMVEX committee are practicing osteopathic clinicians and/or osteopathic medical school faculty members. The COMVEX committee members are chosen for their expertise in their respective fields of medical practice.

All items on the COMVEX exams are carefully selected, reviewed, and pre-tested for their appropriateness and discrimination ability. All test materials associated with COMVEX examinations are copyrighted and are the property of the NBOME. The COMVEX test materials may not be reproduced, distributed, or used in any manner or form without prior express written authorization of the NBOME.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Eligibility**

Eligibility to take COMVEX is determined by the state board requesting or sponsoring the candidate taking the examination. Individual state boards may provide different criteria under which COMVEX may be used. Please refer to the website of the Federation of State Medical Boards, [www.fsmb.org](http://www.fsmb.org) (State Medical Information – Board Directory), for a listing of all osteopathic and composite boards in the United States and Guam.

An application for COMVEX is available at the NBOME website, [www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org), along with fee structures and other information.

COMVEX is administered only at the direction of the state boards. Interested applicants must contact the appropriate state board directly to begin the application process. After the candidate has obtained the approval of a state board requesting or sponsoring the examination and the name and contact information for that state board, the candidate may download a COMVEX application form from the NBOME.

### **Test Accommodation Requests**

The Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADA) requires the NBOME to provide appropriate and reasonable accommodations for “persons with disabilities” as that term is defined by law. The term “persons with disabilities” for purposes of the ADA includes a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of that individual, as compared to most people in the general population.

Candidates seeking exam accommodations on the basis of a disability should contact the requesting or sponsoring state board to seek approval in connection with the administration of COMVEX.

### **Testing Dates/Sites**

COMVEX examinations are delivered at more than 300 test centers located within all 50 states of the United States. The exact location of test centers and availability of the sites for the test dates can be viewed after registering for the examination.

### **Re-examination**

A COMVEX examination will not be administered to the same candidate more than once within any 90-day period.

### **Score/Status Reporting**

COMVEX scores are released to the state board approximately 15 business days following the examination administration. Although the passing requirements for COMVEX are established

by the requesting or sponsoring state board and are subject to variation, the NBOME will report whether the candidate passed or failed COMVEX based upon a minimum passing score recommended by the NBOME. A candidate profile graphically depicting the candidate's performance will also be supplied to the state board or authorized designee with the COMVEX results. A score report is only released to the state board requesting or sponsoring the candidate taking the examination.

### **Examination Conduct/Confidentiality**

Any conduct of a candidate in connection with the administration of a COMVEX examination deemed to be irregular conduct by the NBOME is taken very seriously, and may result in: (1) the examination being voided and not scored, (2) the candidate being prohibited from taking any other examination administered by the NBOME, and/or (3) civil or other action taken against the candidate to the fullest extent permitted by law.

The candidate must also maintain in strict confidence all test items and other confidential information included in the COMVEX examination, both during and after the administration of the examination. Failure to maintain the confidentiality of the examination may compromise the integrity and security of COMVEX and will be considered irregular conduct, subjecting the candidate to appropriate sanctions and/or damages.

Irregular conduct includes any behavior on the part of any candidate whose conduct violates the integrity or security of the examination or who exhibits behavior that is disruptive to the administration of the examination. Verbal or physical abuse of the proctor, any agent of the NBOME, or other candidates; and refusal to provide proper identification or to permit photo documentation for ID verification during the check-in are examples of irregular conduct. Candidates must abide by all policies of the NBOME and the testing vendor, and failure to do so may be considered irregular conduct.

Candidates may not bring into the testing area any notes, texts, or other items of personal property relating in any manner to the examination or its content. Violation of this prohibition is considered irregular conduct. Candidates must place all such personal property in the secure lockers provided at the test centers. Likewise, removing scrap paper or the white board provided by the test center from the testing area would constitute irregular conduct. Candidates are also advised that copying, reproducing, discussing, reporting, or recording test items or test content, in addition to being a violation of security that may compromise the integrity of the examination and result in the imposition of sanctions or damage, may result in violation of copyright laws.

Candidates are under both proctor and electronic surveillance during the administration of all NBOME-administered examinations.

Any report of irregular conduct will be investigated by the NBOME. Whether irregular conduct occurred in a particular situation is to be determined by the NBOME in its sole discretion, and all decisions of the NBOME are final and binding upon the candidate and the requesting or sponsoring state board.

### **Contact Information**

Inquiries regarding COMVEX should be directed to:

National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, Inc.  
Attn: Client Services

8765 W. Higgins Road, Suite 200  
Chicago, IL 60631-4174  
Phone (866) 479-6828  
Fax (773) 714-0606

Office hours are 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (Central Time) Monday through Friday.

The NBOME home page is located at [www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org).

Candidates may contact the NBOME at [clientservices@nbome.org](mailto:clientservices@nbome.org) for further information regarding COMVEX.

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

### **How to Register**

An eligible candidate must register for the COMVEX examination through the NBOME's Client Services department. After being approved by a state board, a candidate may download an application form from the NBOME website at [www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org). COMVEX applicants are normally contacted within 10 business days upon receipt of the completed application.

### **How to Schedule**

A candidate should schedule the COMVEX examination via the Prometric website, [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com), at least 90 days before the preferred test date in order to increase the likelihood that he or she will obtain the desired date and test site.

A COMVEX examination must be scheduled more than five days before the scheduled test date. **A candidate will not be permitted to schedule or reschedule a COMVEX examination within five days before a desired test date.**

### **Scheduling Confirmation**

After selection of an examination date, the candidate will receive a confirmation page via email. The confirmation page includes a confirmation number for the scheduled examination on the test vendor website and, if needed, rescheduling the examination.

### **Canceled or Missed Scheduled Examination**

A candidate may cancel and reschedule a scheduled COMVEX examination online at the NBOME website ([www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org)) only in accordance with the following:

Canceling at Least 30 Days Before Scheduled Date A candidate may cancel and/or reschedule a scheduled examination at least 30 days before the scheduled examination without incurring any rescheduling fee to reschedule the examination.

Canceling Between 5 and 29 Days Before Scheduled Date A candidate may cancel and/or reschedule a scheduled examination within 30 days but more than five days before a scheduled examination and must pay a rescheduling fee of \$125.00 to reschedule the examination.

Canceling Less Than 5 Days Before Scheduled Date A candidate may cancel a scheduled examination within five days before a scheduled examination (but no later

than noon of the day before the start of the scheduled examination) and must pay a rescheduling fee of \$250.00 to reschedule the examination.

Failure to Cancel Within the Allowed Time or Show for Examination If a candidate fails to show at the scheduled time for an examination (or fails to cancel his or her scheduled examination at least by noon of the day before the scheduled test date), the candidate may reschedule the examination and must pay a rescheduling fee of \$350.00.\*

The rescheduling fee must be paid when the canceled or missed examination is rescheduled.

**A candidate must contact the NBOME Client Services department to reschedule a canceled or missed examination no later than 30 days following the administration of the canceled or missed examination. If a candidate chooses not to reschedule the canceled or missed examination or does not act to reschedule that examination prior to 30 days following the canceled or missed examination, all fees paid by or for the candidate for the canceled or missed examination will be **forfeited and the full registration fee** must be paid to reschedule the canceled or missed examination.**

A cancellation or rescheduling is not effective until received in writing (email is acceptable). Rescheduling of an examination is subject to the availability of the testing center.

If a candidate cancels and reschedules a scheduled examination, and submits to the NBOME a written request for waiver of the rescheduling fee no later than 30 days following the administration of the canceled examination, the NBOME in its sole discretion, for good cause shown, may waive up to 50% of the rescheduling fee. The candidate shall include with any such request for waiver a written statement of the reasons for the request and shall provide to the NBOME all documentation requested by the NBOME before any such request will be considered. When rescheduling the new examination date, the candidate must pay the entire rescheduling fee. Any portion of the rescheduling fee waived by the NBOME shall be credited to the candidate's NBOME account for future examinations, if any.

## TEST DAY

### **Arrival Time**

On the scheduled examination date, candidates should arrive at the test center at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the examination. Candidates should check their confirmation page for accurate start times. Start times at the test centers may vary.

### **What to Bring to the Test Center**

Candidates must bring with them a government-issued picture ID that bears a signature, such as a driver's license or passport. Candidates should dress comfortably, as the testing may take the full day. Candidates should bring corrective lenses or hearing aids if they are required for test taking.

Due to security regulations, candidates are not permitted to bring any personal property into the testing area relating to the examination. During the check-in process, proctors will ask candidates to place all such personal property in secure lockers, for which they will be given keys. Items such as calculators, cell phones, pagers, notebooks, reference materials, and DVD and CD players are not permitted in the testing area and should be placed in the secure lockers provided at the center. Candidates will be provided a pen or pencil and scrap paper or a white board. Scrap paper used during the test will be collected and shredded. Under no circumstance may any scrap paper or white board be removed from the testing area.

### **Computer-Based Test/Allotted Time**

COMVEX is a computer-based test (CBT) and consists of 300 items divided into four 75-item sections. There is a morning and an afternoon test session, each consisting of two sections. Candidates are allotted three and a half hours for each two-section session.

### **Breaks**

After each exam section, an (optional) authorized break is provided that does not reduce candidates' available testing time. A 10-minute break is available after sections 1 and 3, and a 40-minute lunch break is available after section 2. The test time will stop and candidates will be required to leave the testing area for the break period, if they choose to take the break. The next test section will begin promptly at the end of the scheduled break time. Candidates are not allowed to access their lockers or any personal items, including cell phones, except during authorized breaks.

Food will not be provided during the optional 40-minute lunch break. Candidates are advised to bring their own non-perishable food.

Snacks and drinks are not permitted in the testing area of the test center due to the risk of equipment damage and the possibility of disturbing other candidates.

### **TEST-TAKING EXPERIENCE**

#### **Arrival**

The COMVEX testing experience begins when the candidate enters the waiting area of a Prometric Testing Center. Candidates should be at the center to sign in at least 30 minutes in advance of the scheduled test time.

#### **Check-in**

Candidates are required to bring one piece of identification, which must be a valid government-issued photo ID with signature, such as a current driver's license, military ID, or passport. This identification will be scanned and retained by Prometric. If the identification does not include a signature, the candidate must provide a secondary form of identification with a signature.

A candidate whose name is changed by marriage or for some other reason must notify the NBOME at least five business days in advance of testing if he or she is to be tested under the new name. Any candidate presenting an ID that does not match the name on the COMVEX application will not be permitted to take the examination and will be considered a "No Show."

All candidates will be digitally photographed and may be biometrically scanned (by fingerprint) as part of the registration process. This identification will be required to enter and exit the testing room.



### **The Testing Experience**

Candidates will be escorted to their designated workstation. Due to the length of the COMVEX examination, candidates are provided with three (optional) authorized breaks, as described in the "Breaks" section above. If a candidate must take a break during the test other than one of the authorized, scheduled breaks, the test time will continue.

Breaks are normally authorized to allow candidates to visit the restrooms or to provide an opportunity to eat. Should a candidate have a question during the examination or require an unauthorized break, he or she should simply raise a hand to attract the attention of a proctor. Candidates are not allowed to access their lockers or any personal items, including cell phones, except during authorized breaks.

Candidates are reminded that the test has a 3.5-hour morning session and a 3.5-hour afternoon session.

### EXAMINATION CONTENT

#### **Blueprint of COMVEX Examination**

The blueprint for COMVEX is the following:

#### **Dimension 1**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Minimum Percentage</b>
Osteopathic Principles, Practice, and Manipulative Treatment	10%
Osteopathic Patient Care and Procedural Skills	40%
Application of Knowledge for Osteopathic Medical Practice	10%
Practice-Based Learning and Improvement in Osteopathic Medical Practice	8%
Interpersonal and Communication Skills in the Practice of Osteopathic Medicine	5%
Professionalism in the Practice of Osteopathic Medicine	7%
Systems-Based Practice in Osteopathic Medicine	7%

#### **Dimension 2**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Minimum Percentage</b>
Community Health and Patient Presentations Related to Wellness	12%
Human Development, Reproduction, and Sexuality	5%
Endocrine System and Metabolism	5%
Nervous System and Mental Health	10%
Musculoskeletal System	13%
Genitourinary/Renal System and Breasts	5%
Gastrointestinal System and Nutritional Health	10%

Circulatory and Hematologic Systems	10%
Respiratory System	10%
Integumentary System	5%

According to this two-dimensional structure, each test item measures a physician's capability to apply one of the seven competency domains to the context of a specific clinical presentation.

The structural/osteopathic component is integrated within the fabric of the entire examination. Osteopathic principles and practices (OPP) in the examination are considered not only applicable to musculoskeletal problems, but also to human problems in all body systems with various symptoms. Approximately 10-20% of the exam is specifically OPP-related, with additional OPP content included within distractors throughout the exam.

### **Sample Item**

The following is a sample test item. All test items are in a "one-best-answer multiple-choice" format. This item format expresses an incomplete statement or asks a question. The item stem is followed by four or five answer options, only one of which is most appropriate. Some items will be accompanied by pictorial material (e.g., charts, graphs, slides, monitor strips, radiographs). Instructions on what type of information to interpret from each visual will be included with each item accompanied by such material.

One-Best-Answer

A 35-year-old female who underwent a cholecystectomy developed nausea and vomiting postoperatively due to a protracted ileus. Prior to surgery, her weight was normal for her age and height. She was basically in good health except for cholecystitis. Six days postoperatively, the patient remains unable to eat. Which of the following forms of nutritional support is most appropriate?

- (A) central hyperalimentation
- (B) fat-free enteral diet
- (C) nasogastric feeding
- (D) peripheral hyperalimentation
- (E) trace element total parenteral nutrition

**KEY: D**

COMVEX CBT PRACTICE EXAM

A COMVEX Practice examination can be found at:  
<http://www.nbome.org/comvexcbt/index.htm>.