

**UNITED COUNCIL
FOR
NEUROLOGIC
SUBSPECIALTIES**

**UCNS Certification in Autonomic Disorders
Eligibility Criteria and Information for Applicants**

2018 Examination

Application Deadline: May 1, 2018

Late Application Deadline: May 15, 2018

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I. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND PRACTICE TRACK

The following are eligibility criteria for certification in the subspecialty of Autonomic Disorders (AD). There are general requirements that must be fulfilled by all applicants as well as requirements for each specific pathways of application.

A. General

General eligibility criteria:

1. Applicants must be a Diplomate in good standing of a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties or equivalent certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC).

2. Candidates must hold a current, active, valid, unrestricted, and unqualified license to practice medicine in at least one jurisdiction in the United States, its territories, or Canada, and in each jurisdiction in which they practice.

3. Current Licenses Held

A license to practice medicine is not “current, active, valid, unrestricted and unqualified” if, in any manner to any extent whatsoever, one or more of the following applies. The license is:

- a. under probation;
- b. conditioned, e.g., the physician is required to practice under supervision or with modification, or to obtain continuing education;
- c. limited, e.g., to specific practice settings;
- d. institutional, temporary, or educational;
- e. inactive as a result of an action taken by or a request made by a medical licensing board.

Policy on Medical Licensure

If any license currently held by an applicant participating in the application process is restricted or qualified in any way, full details must be provided to the UCNS. The UCNS may, at its sole discretion, determine whether to investigate the license and the information provided. The UCNS reserves the right to determine if the license fulfills the policy. Licenses that have been revoked, suspended, surrendered, or not renewed in order to terminate or settle disciplinary proceedings do not qualify as meeting the requirements for medical licensure, and all such licenses must be reported for review and consideration. The UCNS will determine if the situation is cause to deny an applicant’s certification application, deny a candidate access to an examination, or revoke a diplomate’s certificate.

*Candidates who have qualified for examination by the ABPN or the RCPSC, but have not yet been certified, may sit for the BNNP examination but may not receive notification of the results until the criterion in I.A.1 has been satisfied. Candidates must sit for the ABPN or RCPSC examination in the same year as the UCNS BNNP examination.

B. PATHWAYS

Applicants must have completed **one of two** eligibility pathways. The pathways are:

1. Fellowship
2. Practice Track

1. UCNS-Accredited Fellowship

An applicant must successfully complete a fellowship in AD that is **accredited by the UCNS**. The fellowship must be 12 or more months in length and include supervised direct management of clinical cases. The applicant must satisfactorily complete the fellowship training by the date of the application. The applicant must apply within 48 months of completing the fellowship.

Applicants currently in a fellowship that will not be completed prior to the application deadline may still apply. **The applicant must have successfully completed the fellowship training a minimum of 25 days prior to the examination week. Confirmation from the fellowship program director stating applicant has successfully completed the UCNS accredited fellowship program must be received within 20 days of the fellowship program completion date.**

2. Practice Track

The practice track is a process that allows physicians who initiated the subspecialty prior to the availability of accredited training programs to qualify for the examination by meeting a defined series of criteria.

The applicant must submit the following documentation for **one of the three** following areas in AD:

- a. Satisfactory completion of 12 months of formal training in AD that has taken place after the completion of formal residency training in Neurology, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Urology or OB/GYN. Training or exposure to AD given to residents as part of their standard residency curriculum will not count toward the 12 months of training. The applicant must provide documentation from all appropriate mentors and program directors where training occurred.

OR

- b. At least 50 hours of *AMA PRA Category 1 CME™* approved category 1 CME specifically related to AD over the 60 months prior to application. Specification of programs attended and relevance to the field of AD must be provided

OR

- c. A letter from the applicant's current Department Chair that states he/she has an active, full-time, formal academic appointment in which his/her teaching responsibilities include instructing one or more of the following in AD: medical

students, residents, or fellows.

AND (in addition to a, b, or c above)

- d. Documentation of a 36-month* period of time in which the applicant has spent a minimum of 25% of his/her time in the practice of AD. The practice must:
 - i. Include the direct diagnosis and management of AD cases.
 - ii. Have occurred in the United States, its territories, or in Canada.
 - iii. Have occurred in the 60-month interval immediately preceding application for certification but need not be continuous.

The application must contain letters from two physicians familiar with the applicant's practice pattern during the practice time submitted in the application. If the applicant is in an academic or hospital setting, then a letter from the appropriate department chair or chief of staff will be required as one of the two letters. The letters must together address an entire 36-month period of time.

* If the applicant has completed unaccredited AD training, this may count towards the 36-month period of time. For example, if the applicant completed 12 months of unaccredited training in Autonomic Disorders, the UCNS will count these 12 months towards the 36-month period of time. Documentation of an additional 24-month period of time would then be required.

Certification obtained under the Practice Track pathway will have the same time limitation as certification obtained via an accredited fellowship pathway.

Reexamination after Failing an Examination

Candidates who fail the initial examination under the Accredited Fellowship, Practice Track, or Faculty Diplomate pathways may repeat the examination up to two additional times; provided, however, that no candidate may take an examination more than three times. Application for reexamination must occur within six years of when the initial examination was first administered to the candidate. Candidates applying for reexamination must complete a new application form, provide copies of all current medical licenses, and submit supporting letters along with payment of the then current reexamination fee.

II. APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION IN AUTONOMIC DISORDERS

A. Application

UCNS uses an online application system. All applications must be completed online, and all supporting documentation must be uploaded through the online application system where requested. Application sections must be completed sequentially, and some application sections require you to upload documentation before proceeding to the next section. Paper applications are no longer available. A personal logon is required to access the application.

You must request your person logon information no later than 4:00 pm Central Time on the application deadline date in order to apply for the examination because technical support will not be available and logon requests will not be granted after 4:00 pm Central.

Any application that is not submitted by 11:59 pm Central Time on the application deadline date will not be accepted. Examination fees paid by check or money order must be postmarked on or before the application deadline date. Check or money order payments are the only application items that may be mailed to the UCNS office.

Applicants who have taken the exam in a previous year but were not successful and wish to reapply must submit a new application, provide current supporting documentation, and pay the current reexamination fee. Documentation submitted with a previous application will not be accepted.

B. Deadlines and Fees

For the 2018 subspecialty examination, a completed application, supporting documentation and all appropriate fees must be received in the UCNS Executive Office by May 1, 2018. Applications for certification will still be accepted until **May 15, 2018**; however, **a late fee of \$500 will be applied**. Applications received after May 15 will not be accepted.

Fee Schedule

Initial Examination	May 1 Deadline	May 15 Deadline
Application fee (non-refundable)	\$680	\$680
Examination fee	\$1020	\$1020
Late fee	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$500</u>
	\$1700	\$2200
 Re-examination		
Examination fee	\$1020	\$1020
Late fee	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$500</u>
	\$1020	\$1520
 Recertification		
Application fee (non-refundable)	\$600	\$600
Examination fee	\$900	\$900
Late fee	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$500</u>
	\$1500	\$2000

The UCNS reserves the right to revise fee schedules at any time.

UCNS accepts personal checks, cashier’s checks, money orders, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express as payment. All fees must be submitted in US currency. The fee for NSF checks and declined credit cards is \$50. Applications submitted without the appropriate fees will not be processed. Fees received without applications will be returned.

C. Withdrawals

The policy regarding withdrawal from the examination in the [Certification Application and Examination Refund Policy](#).

D. Template Letters

Template letters that must be used for the necessary application attachments are located on the UCNS website at <http://www.ucns.org/go/subspecialty/autonomic/certification> and are available during the application cycle or upon request.

III. EXAMINATION PROCESS FOR AUTONOMIC DISORDERS

A. General Information and Timeline

1. Submit completed application, supporting documents, and payment by May 1, 2018.
2. UCNS will review the application for completeness.
3. UCNS will send notice of approval or non-approval to sit for examination only after the Certification Council has reviewed all applications.
4. If approved for the examination, the UCNS will provide information on:
 - a. scheduling at test locations via Pearson VUE;
 - b. admission to test locations; and
 - c. preparing for a computer-based examination.
5. Candidates must contact Pearson VUE directly for scheduling.
6. **Sit for examination on November 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9, 2018.**
7. Results are mailed approximately eight to ten weeks following examination. In the interest of maintaining confidentiality, examination results are not given by telephone, facsimile transmission, or e-mail.

B. Examination Format

The UCNS Initial examination format is:

- Computer-based
- 200 multiple-choice questions
- 4 hours

IV. APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

A. General Information

The UCNS recognizes that physicians with disabilities may wish to take the certifying examinations and will attempt to make accommodations for applicants with verified disabilities. The Board supports the intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide reasonable accommodations during testing to provide equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. Applicants are reminded, however, that “auxiliary aids (and services) can only be offered if they do not fundamentally alter the measurement of skills or knowledge the examination is intended to test” (Americans with Disabilities Act, Public Law

101-336 & 309 [b][3]). To this extent, the UCNS will provide reasonable accommodations during testing to provide equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. Documentation requesting reasonable accommodations must identify the disability and provide a rationale for specified modifications to standard testing procedures.

Applicants who request accommodations because of a disability must do so at the time of application. The application and documentation substantiating the disability must be included with the examination application, and be submitted no later than May 1, 2018.

If the UCNS deems it necessary, an independent assessment may be requested at the expense of the UCNS. Documentation and other evidence substantiating the disability includes, but is not limited to, each of the following:

- A report diagnosing the applicant's disability written by a professional appropriately qualified to evaluate the disability. The report must be printed on the certified examiner's letterhead, with the examiner's credentials, address, and telephone number given in the letterhead or title. The report must include the candidate's name, date of birth, date of testing, and it must be signed by the examiner.
- A history of the disability, including previous settings in which accommodations have been granted. Having had prior accommodations granted does not necessarily influence the decision of the UCNS to grant or deny a current request for accommodation. If there is no history of prior accommodations, the examiner must explain why current circumstances necessitate accommodations.
- Diagnostic information about the specified disability using standard nomenclature from sources such as the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) and the APA Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV (DSM-IV).
- Specific recommended accommodations with a rationale for why each accommodation is needed. A description of any functional limitations associated with the disability is important to the UCNS's evaluation of the request.

The UCNS does not discriminate among applicants on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status.

B. Review of Documentation

Each report is reviewed carefully before accommodations are provided. If the UCNS does not find appropriate and sufficient evidence to grant accommodations, the applicant will be informed that the request has been denied. If a request has been denied, a written appeal may be submitted in accordance with the UCNS [Certification Appeals Policies and Procedures](#).

C. Testing Accommodations

Testing accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assistance in indicating answers
- Extended testing time
- Large screen font

- Large print examination
- Separate examination room
- Reader
- Use of assistive devices

V. POLICIES

A. Refunds

Application fees are non-refundable. Qualifying refunds will be issued in the same method in which the original payment was received. The [Certification Application and Examination Refund Policy](#) outlines refund details.

B. Certification and Recertification

Subspecialty certification in Autonomic Disorders (AD) is awarded to all candidates who meet the necessary requirements and who successfully pass a proctored examination in the subspecialty.

Subspecialty certification is a voluntary process by which the UCNS grants recognition to a physician subspecialist who has met predetermined qualifications specified by the UCNS. Subspecialty certification and the certificate recognize those physician subspecialists who have successfully completed the UCNS's requirements and demonstrated their skills and abilities at the time of evaluation. Certification is not a guarantee of the competence of the physician subspecialist.

Certificates issued in the subspecialty of AD are ten-year, time-limited certificates. All UCNS time-limited certificates, regardless of their exact dates of issuance, are considered to expire on December 31 following the tenth anniversary of the date of issuance. **Diplomates with certificates in the subspecialty of AD must also maintain certification in their primary specialty. If certification in the primary specialty lapses, certification in the subspecialty is no longer valid.**

Diplomates who are not recertified before their certificates expire are no longer UCNS-certified in that area of certification. Once a former diplomate completes the maintenance of certification process, however, he or she will regain certification status. Diplomates with certificates in the subspecialty of AD must also maintain certification in their primary specialty in order to apply for recertification in their subspecialty area.

C. Revocation of Certificates

The UCNS has the authority to revoke any certificate issued by it for cause or to place a certificate holder on probation for a fixed or indefinite period of time. If a certificate is revoked, a written appeal may be submitted in accordance with the UCNS [Certification Appeals Policies and Procedures](#).

D. Irregular Behavior Including Unethical Behavior of Candidates

The UCNS believes that the ethics of candidates for certification are of concern. The following rules apply:

- Falsification of credentials will be cause for the UCNS refusal to admit a candidate to examination for up to five years.
- The UCNS will consider legal action against anyone who forges a UCNS certificate, copies a UCNS examination, or otherwise uses them in conflict with copyright laws or in any other way violates the legal prerogatives of the UCNS. Such activities will cause for the UCNS's refusal to admit a candidate to examination for up to five years.
- Scores on examinations may be invalidated for reasons of irregular behavior. Statistical analyses may be used to confirm suspected cheating. If an examination score is invalidated, the candidate may submit a written appeal within 30 days of the notice of invalidation in accordance with the [appeals policy](#).
- If an examination score is invalidated because of irregular behavior, the UCNS will not consider the candidate for examination for a period of up to five years, depending on the irregular behavior. A new application, current application, and examination fees will be required.
- Irregular behavior shall include, but not be limited to, the following conduct:
 - Copying answers from another candidate's examination.
 - Notification of the UCNS knowingly permitting another candidate to copy one's answers on an examination.
 - Unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of examination materials or content at any time.
 - Offering any financial benefit or other benefit to any director, officer, employee, proctor, diplomate, or other agent or representative of the UCNS in return for any right, privilege, or benefit that is not granted by the UCNS to other similarly situated candidates or persons.
 - Not complying with proctors' instructions.
 - Disregarding time limits.
 - Bringing food, drink, cellular phones, pagers, books, study materials, personal belongings, or other prohibited material into an examination.
 - Making telephone calls during an examination.
 - Any other form of disruptive behavior, including repeated or excessive verbal complaints.
 - Notification of the UCNS action may be sent to legitimately interested third parties, including the American Medical Association, state medical societies, medical licensing boards, and appropriate specialty societies.

E. Appeals of Decisions

An [appeals process](#) is available to individuals who disagree with the UCNS's decisions regarding their admissibility to the examination, request for special accommodations, negative determination on the examination, or revocation of certification.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about certification, contact:

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