

United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties
Headache Medicine
Written Examination
Content Outline

REV 7/25/05

The UCNS Headache Medicine examination was established to determine the level of competence for Headache Medicine specialists.

The following content outline is provided to examination candidates interested in the certification examination. The content outline consists of five primary categories followed by subcategories. A complete description of the core content required of Headache Medicine specialists can be found in the Headache Medicine Core Curriculum at: <http://www.ucns.org/certification/requirements/#headache>

The written examination consists of 200 multiple choice questions.

	Content Area	Percentage of Questions
I.	Epidemiology and Comorbidity	10%
II.	Anatomy and Physiology	15%
III.	Headache Classification and Diagnosis	25%
IV.	Evaluation and Diagnostic Testing	20%
V.	Treatment	30%

I. Epidemiology and Comorbidity

- A. Epidemiologic Principles
 1. Headache
 2. Migraine
- B. Comorbidities of Migraine
 1. Neurologic
 2. Psychiatric
 3. Other

II. Anatomy and Physiology

- A. Pain Mechanisms
 1. Peripheral and central trigeminal pain physiology and anatomy
 2. Nociceptive neurotransmission (neuropeptides/neurotransmitters)
 3. Peripheral and central sensitization
 4. Pain modulation pathways (central antinociceptive network – hypothalamus, periaqueductal grey, raphe nuclei, locus coeruleus, limbic system)
- B. Pathophysiology

1. Head and face pain models
 2. Individual disorders
- C. Headache Pharmacology

III. Headache Classification and Diagnosis

- A. International Classification of Headache Disorders - 2
- B. Primary and Secondary Headache Differentiation (e.g., thunderclap, first or worst, new features)
- C. Primary Headache
 1. Migraine
 2. Tension type
 3. Cluster and other TACs
 4. Neuralgias
 5. Chronic Daily Headache
- D. Secondary Headache, including but not limited to:
 1. Stroke
 2. Venous sinus thrombosis
 3. Arthritis
 4. Arterial dissection
 5. Brain tumor
 6. Sinusitis
 7. Meningitis and encephalitis
 8. Intracranial Pressure abnormalities
 9. Toxic and metabolic
 10. Disorders of homeostasis
 11. Medication Overuse
 12. Dental, temporomandibular joint disorders
 13. Cervicogenic
- E. Pediatric Headache

IV. Evaluation and Diagnostic Testing

- A. History and Physical Examination
- B. Imaging
 1. Computed tomography (CT), CT angiography
 2. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), MR angiography, MR venography
 3. CT and MRI myelography
 4. Catheter angiography
- C. Lumbar Puncture
 1. Diagnostic
 2. Therapeutic
- D. Radionuclide Cisternography
- E. Electroencephalography (EEG)
- F. Other
 1. Polysomnography
 2. Tissue biopsy

3. Blood tests
4. Electrocardiogram, echocardiogram

V. Treatment

- A. Principles of Disease Management and Evidence Based Practice
- B. Patient Communication
 1. Education
 2. Counseling
- C. Therapeutic Modalities
 1. Behavioral and non-pharmacologic
 2. Pharmacologic
 3. Physical techniques including but not limited to nerve blocks, cervical facet joint injections, trigger point injections, botulinum toxin, chemodenervation, acupuncture, physical therapy, exercise
- D. Advanced Therapies
 1. Parenteral therapy
 2. Inpatient treatment
 3. Ablative therapy (trigeminal rhizotomy, trigeminal section)
 4. CNS treatments (e.g. shunts, deep brain stimulation)
 5. PNS treatments (e.g. occipital nerve stimulation)
- E. Individual Disorders
 1. Primary headaches
 2. Secondary headaches
 3. Chronic daily headache (primary and secondary)
- F. Special Populations
 1. Pediatric
 2. Pregnancy
 3. Elderly
 4. Concurrent medical illness