



Questions, Myths and Rumors about National Board Part IV

Examiners

Question: *"Who are the examiners?"*

All of the examiners are licensed D.C.'s who have been recruited by the board and trained in test and grading procedures. The examiners are not diplomates in a specialty or instructors from a college (although some may be). Also, they are not ALL graduates from the college where they are testing.

Patients

Question: *"Who are the patients?"*

They are probably provided by a temporary employment agency, and are trained to perform as a patient for the exam. The "patients" are non-D.C.'s, or non-students. In theory, they have no affiliation with the Chiropractic profession.

Scoring

Question: *"How do they grade the test? Is it graded on a curve?"*

The National Board will tell you that the exam is NOT graded on a curve. I presume this means that the test is not designed to pass or fail a specific percentage of examinees.

However, the Board uses a process called "equating", which is designed to insure consistency on the tests. This means that the passing rate should not vary greatly from one exam to another. A difficult exam does not have a higher failure rate than an easier exam. Essentially, your score depends on how everyone else (nation-wide) performs on that exam.

Some people believe that the test is easier in the Spring than in the Fall (NOT TRUE!). Also, some claim that the x-ray test for the morning group is easier than the afternoon's test. This may occur at times, but there is NO DIFFERENCE in the passing rate between the sessions. This suggests that the morning and afternoon groups are graded separately. Your results depend on how you do compared to the rest of *your* group, and not whether you are in the "easy" or "hard" group.

Question: *"If I fail one section, does that mean I fail the whole exam?"*

The three sections of the exam are combined into one score. We do not know what percent each section of the exam contributes to the overall score, but we do know that *you can fail a section but still PASS the exam*. We know several people who have done so. However, if you do poorly on the x-ray exam, you are in a significant hole, and you will have to perform exceptionally well on the second day (case management and technique) to pass.

Dress for the exam

Question: *"How should I dress for the exam? Will the way I dress make or break me?"*

Probably not.

On the first day (x-ray), dress however you want, since there are no examiners present to grade you. Personally, I know a number of people who took the x-ray exam in shorts and a t-shirt, and passed with a 600.

On the second day (case management/technique), you should wear clothing that you can perform in, but gives a professional appearance. Dress as you would if you were applying for a \$100,000 bank loan. Keep in mind that your image will help or hurt how you are perceived. The way you dress can affect your score, but don't believe that a particular suit, or the color of your tie, or your hair style is the key to passing.

Ultimately, if you don't know your stuff, no matter how well you dress, you will not pass. And if you know the material, you can wear whatever you want and you will still pass the exam.

Wedding ring?

Question: *"Someone told me that I should wear a wedding ring for the test. They said that it is a sign of stability, and that I have a better chance of passing. Is that true?"*

No! The Board is not so arbitrary or petty. This is one of those urban myths that has no statistical or anecdotal evidence. This is one of the most ignorant statements ever made about the exam.

Purell

Question: *"Someone told me that there is a bottle of Purell™ (or some other hand sanitizer) in the room and that if I don't wash my hands before I touch the patient, that I will automatically fail. Is that true?"*

This is another stupid myth that has been floating around. The exam (and the Board) is more sophisticated than that. I would challenge anyone to find someone who has allegedly failed for not using Purell™. Even if you could find someone who *makes this claim*, I can produce many people who passed and did not use Purell™.

Our advice: If you want to use Purell™, or you are unsure, use it. But there is absolutely no evidence that this will make or break you on the exam.

Importance of Post Stations

Question: *"Some board reviews say that the post stations do not count for much, so should I not worry about this part of the exam?"*

It is amazing that some Reviews teach this. Remember, even if each answer is only worth 1 point each (10 post stations / 2 questions per station / 3 answers per question), this is *at least* 60 points of your score. Don't disregard the importance of the post stations. The Post stations can make the difference as to whether you pass or fail.

Test locations

Question: *"Some people are teaching that there is a difference from one test site to another, and that I will have a better chance of passing at one school, and no chance of passing at another. Is this true?"*

NO, absolutely false! Anyone who teaches this is guilty of professional malpractice!

Here are the facts. Everyone taking the exam is tested on the exact *same information* and against the *same grading criteria*. The National Board does not grade "harder" or "easier" at one location. The National Board does not *try* to pass or fail more people at one site. If there is a difference in the passing rate from one location to another, it is more likely an indication of the *knowledge and ability of the students* at a particular location, than a bias for or against them.

There are some people who have taken the exam twice, and claim that their experience was much better (or they passed) at the second site. This perception may have more to do with *knowing what to expect*, or being in a more comfortable location than with any intent or objective by the examiners.

Are some examiners more friendly or helpful than others? Maybe, but this is likely due to regional differences rather than by design, and there is no indication or evidence that this has made a difference in the statistics.

I also think sometimes people perform better away from home because of comfort, or because they are more focused on the exam, and because there are less distractions. If you are taking the test “at home”, you may be distracted by school, patients, work and family responsibilities. Your Name