

NAMS CERTIFIED MENOPAUSE PRACTITIONER (NCMP)
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

2021 CANDIDATE HANDBOOK



"I recognized that the management of menopause was becoming more complex. I studied for and took the NCMP exam to improve my knowledge and take better care of my patients."

— David E. Soper, MD, NCMP
Charleston, SC

"The information I receive from NAMS enhances my knowledge and the NCMP certification elevates my credibility. My membership has also helped to build my practice as patients have found my name on the NAMS website."

— Carol A. Caico, PhD, OGNP, NCMP
Seaford, NY

"Being credentialed as a NAMS Certified Menopause Practitioner gives objective clinical credibility to me and my practice. It means patients know that I am someone to help them navigate and understand the complex, confusing world of menopause."

— Maria E. Sophocles, MD, FACP, NCMP
Princeton, NJ

"Many patients now seek information and guidance from the NAMS website. It is a privilege to have achieved my NCMP certification and be listed as a menopause provider on the website. It brings me many motivated women who are anxious to partner through their transition."

— Cynthia Evans, MD, NCMP, FACOG
Worthington, OH


Why Should You Earn the NAMS Menopause Practitioner Credential?

The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) is North America's leading nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting women's health and quality of life through an understanding of menopause and healthy aging. Two thousand professionals representing a variety of disciplines—including clinical and basic science experts from medicine, nursing, pharmacy, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and complementary/alternative medicine—make NAMS uniquely qualified to serve as the definitive resource for health professionals and the public for accurate, unbiased information about menopause.


As the definitive resource, NAMS created this competency examination for healthcare providers to demonstrate their expertise, which leads to the NAMS Certified Menopause Practitioner (NCMP) certification. What are the benefits of holding this certification?

- Validation of a level of expertise that only the preeminent menopause organization can offer
- Possibility of more patient referrals, job promotion, and higher salaries
- Enhanced credibility and the personal satisfaction of providing your patients with the best possible care
- Certificate suitable for framing
- Downloadable NCMP logo available on request for use on your website, PowerPoint presentations, or printed literature
- Annual lapel pins that help to promote your achievement to patients and colleagues
- Sample announcement provided by NAMS to assist you in alerting your local media outlets that you hold the credential
- Permission to use "NCMP" every time you feature your name and other certifications

Contents



Objectives of Program	4
Examination Policies.....	5
Special Requests.....	7
Post-Exam.....	8
Maintenance Program	9
Revocation of Certification	9
Examination Preparation.....	10
Frequently Asked Questions	13



OBJECTIVES OF PROGRAM

The NAMS Certified Menopause Practitioner (NCMP) should be able to

- Define menopause-related terminology.
- Discuss endocrinologic and physical changes associated with reproductive and physiologic aging.
- Identify significant risk factors for diseases that can result from lowered ovarian hormone levels.
- Comprehend the main components of obtaining a general health history and performing an appropriate physical examination.
- Select appropriate laboratory and diagnostic studies.
- Interpret physical, laboratory, and diagnostic findings as they relate to treatment decisions.
- Describe current research regarding the use of pharmacologic as well as complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) treatments for menopause-related conditions.
- Develop recommended lifestyle, nonprescription, and prescription risk-reduction and treatment strategies for menopause-related symptoms and disease.
- Provide each patient with education to make informed decisions regarding health promotion and illness prevention.
- Address psychosocial issues, including diversity.

- Recognize when referrals to specialized services are appropriate.
- Encourage acceptance and long-term adherence to an individualized healthcare plan.
- Develop appropriate counseling strategies that lead to positive lifestyle changes for women around menopause and beyond.

The content of the NCMP competency examination has been defined by a national role-delineation study. The study involved surveying practitioners in the field to identify tasks that are performed routinely and considered important to competent practice. The examination has been developed through a combined effort of qualified subject-matter experts and testing professionals who have constructed the examination in accordance with the NCMP competency examination content outline.

The NCMP competency examination consists of 100 multiple-choice questions in English. Each question includes three response alternatives (A, B, C), with one of those being the correct response. Candidates will be permitted 2 hours to complete the examination. Those who meet the eligibility requirements and achieve a passing score will be awarded a certificate indicating that they have achieved certification status as an NCMP.



EXAMINATION POLICIES

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the NCMP competency examination, candidates must be a licensed healthcare practitioner, including (among others) the following specialists (listed alphabetically): nurse, nurse midwife, nurse practitioner, pharmacist, physician, and physician assistant. Proof of licensure will be required.

Language

The NCMP examination is offered in English only.

About the Testing Agency

Scantron is the professional testing agency contracted by NAMS to assist in the development, administration, scoring, score reporting, and analysis of the NCMP competency examination. Scantron is a research and development firm that conducts professional competency assessment research and provides examination services for a number of organizations similar to NAMS.

Scantron
6001 Hospitality Court, #100 Morrisville, NC 27560
Phone: 919-572-6880 Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM Eastern
Email: candidatesupport@scantron.com

Statement of Nondiscrimination

NAMS and Scantron do not discriminate among candidates on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or marital status.

2021 Examination Dates, Locations, and Deadlines

The NCMP examination is offered via Live Online Proctored (LOP) Test Administration. It is offered during one month testing windows in June and October, following the application's approval. Candidate

applications will be accepted year-round, however applications must be submitted with full payment at least 30 days prior to the first test date in each testing window. Applications submitted less than 30 days prior to the start of a testing window will be processed for the next testing window. Upon application approval and clearance of payment, candidates will receive an email confirmation of their application acceptance. If the application is not completed and submitted within 90 days of opening, the application will be categorized as "abandoned" and closed. Upon application approval and clearance of payment, candidates will receive an email confirmation of their application acceptance. Scantron will issue a notice to schedule testing to the candidate by email. Candidates must schedule their testing appointment at least 24 hours in advance of the requested testing appointment.

Examination Fees

All fees for the examination are in US dollars.

NAMS members\$200

Nonmembers\$400

Upon successful completion of the required application information, the candidate will submit the certification fee via secure e-commerce by e-check or credit card. Scantron will process completed applications within seven (7) business days of receipt. Candidates whose applications will be paid by another party may select a third-party payer option. Candidates will provide appropriate contact information for the third-party payer. Scantron will then email the third-party payer to request payment through a secure link, which provides access only to the payment section of the candidate's application. The third-party payer will submit payment via personal or institutional e-check or credit card. If payment is not received within 90 days, the application will be closed.

Confirmation Notices

- Once the candidate has scheduled an LOP testing appointment using the online scheduling system, the candidate will receive email confirmation notices from both Scantron and the LOP provider.

- The confirmation notices will provide the following information:
 - The date and time of the testing appointment;
 - The URL to access the scheduled, online-proctored test;
 - The URL for the system check;
 - Computer specifications required to take the exam via live, online-proctored testing;
 - A list of items that candidates may and may not have access to during the testing session; and
 - Information regarding an online tutorial for candidates, so that candidates may familiarize themselves with Scantron’s internet-based test delivery system prior to the scheduled test date. Candidates may access the online demonstration free of charge through Scantron’s website.
- Candidates are responsible for ensuring that their computers meet technical requirements, as outlined in NAMS’s candidate communications and in the confirmation email. During the scheduling process or at any time prior to the scheduled appointment, candidates may perform a system check of the computer they intend to use during the testing session. If the candidate is unable to take the examination at the scheduled appointment due to inadequate system capabilities or technical issues that cannot be resolved by the candidate and the proctor, the candidate may reschedule the appointment.
- Candidates are responsible for ensuring their testing environment meets the minimum requirements to take the exam, as outlined in NAMS’s candidate communications and in the confirmation email. If the candidate’s environment does not meet the requirements, as determined by the online proctor, the candidate may reschedule the appointment.

LOP Testing Session Cancellations, Rescheduling, Refunds, and No-shows

- Candidates must cancel a scheduled LOP testing session no less than 24 hours prior to the scheduled appointment. The candidate must cancel their testing session by returning to the Scantron online scheduling system to access the live online proctoring portal.

- Candidates may reschedule their LOP testing appointment, provided the candidate is within their eligibility period. The candidate must reschedule the testing appointment no less than 24 hours prior to the scheduled appointment.
- A candidate who schedules an LOP appointment but does not appear for their testing appointment will be considered a no-show. There are no refunds for no-shows.
- Refunds, minus a \$50 processing fee, will be provided upon request for cancellations received no less than 24 hours prior to the scheduled appointment

Secure, Internet-based Test Administration via Live Online Proctoring

- Scantron will administer the NCMP examination via live online proctored, internet-based delivery during scheduled testing windows.
- At the scheduled time of the testing session, the candidate will connect to the testing website, and the online proctor will lead the candidate through the process of system and identity verification and a scan of the candidate’s testing environment.
- The candidate must show a valid government-issued photo identification with signature and a valid confirmation notice in order to access the examination. The candidate’s first and last names as listed on the government-issued photo ID must EXACTLY match their full name on the exam confirmation email.
- During the testing session, the candidate may communicate with the proctor via the chat interface within the testing website. If directed by the proctor, or in case of technical difficulties, the candidate may telephone the proctor.
- The proctor will watch the candidate on a webcam and view the candidate’s desktop throughout the testing session to monitor for unauthorized activities. The proctor will record all audio and video captured during the testing session. The proctor will have access to the candidate’s computer to determine whether the candidate has any unauthorized software applications running or multiple monitors open.

- Should any questions arise, online proctors are instructed to contact Scantron’s proctor support staff for resolution of the problem. In the event of aberrant behavior, the proctor will have the ability to end the testing session. No refunds will be given for testing sessions ended for aberrant behavior.
- Prior to testing, candidates may review Scantron’s tutorial, which walks the candidates through all system features. This tutorial can be found at <https://youtu.be/WATjJZjXw3c>
- Both before and after the exam, candidates will be asked to open their task manager (PC) or activity monitor (MAC) and ensure that all programs are shut down that are not needed for the exam. Candidates will also be asked to open and clear their clipboard.
- The examination will be timed, with an optional timer displayed on each candidate’s computer screen. Candidates will be allowed a total testing period of no more than two (2) hours to complete the examination.
- The candidate must remain in full view of the online proctor at all times during the testing session. There are no breaks permitted.
- Candidates will be notified immediately upon completion of the examination whether they have passed or failed the examination.
- Video of the candidate’s testing session from the webcam, all audio, and system recordings will be securely stored for up to one year following the testing session.

System Requirements for Live Online Proctoring

Candidates are required to have a webcam installed on their exam workstation and reliable access to the Internet. An internet connection disruption will suspend the test session.

The following are the minimum technical requirements:

- A well-working computer with 1 GB of RAM or higher
- A high-speed Internet connection of 2 mbps upload and 2 mbps download. Wireless is acceptable; however a wired connection is preferred
- A webcam with 640x480 video pixel resolution (a laptop camera is acceptable)
- Working speakers connected to the computer
- A microphone connected to the computer (consider a webcam with a built-in microphone)
- Browser compatibility: IE, Firefox, Chrome, Safari
- Candidates must use a computer with admin access
- ZOOM must be downloaded in advance from <https://zoom.us/download>. Select “Zoom Client for Meetings.”

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Accommodation for Disabilities

NAMS and Scantron comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and will ensure that persons with disabilities are not deprived of the opportunity to take the examination solely because of a disability, as required and defined by the relevant provisions of the

law. Special testing arrangements may be made for these persons, provided that an appropriate request for accommodation is submitted to Scantron with their application and that the request is approved. A special accommodations form is included with the online application. Professional documentation of the submitted disability may be required.

POST-EXAM

Report of Results

Candidates will be notified immediately upon completion whether they have passed or failed the examination.

Recognition of Competency

Candidates who pass the NCMP competency exam will receive a certificate and a lapel pin from NAMS indicating that they have received certification status. If the certification is achieved any time during 2021, it is valid through December 31, 2024. Thereafter, all renewals will occur 3 years later on December 31. Duplicate certificates are available from NAMS for \$10 each. A lapel pin will be issued annually for each year the certification is current.

Examination Scores

Examination scores are reported as raw scores and scaled scores. A raw score is the number of correctly answered questions; a scaled score is statistically derived from the raw score. One's total score determines whether they pass or fail; it is reported as a scaled score ranging between 0 and 99.

The passing score was determined through a criterion-reference passing-point study in which subject matter experts determined the level of competence indicative of an appropriate level of expertise deserving of certification as a NCMP.

The minimum scaled score needed to pass the examination has been set at 75 scaled score units. The reason for reporting scaled scores is that different versions ("forms") of the examination may vary in difficulty. As new forms of the examination are introduced each year, a certain number of questions in each content area are replaced. These changes may

cause one form of the examination to be slightly easier or more difficult than another form. To adjust for these differences in difficulty, a procedure called "equating" is used. The goal of equating is to ensure fairness to all candidates.

In the equating process, the minimum raw score (number of correctly answered questions) required to equal the scaled passing score of 75 is statistically adjusted ("equated"). For example, if the examination is determined to be more difficult than the previous form of the examination, then the minimum raw score required to pass will be slightly lower than the original raw passing score. If the examination is easier than the previous form of the examination, then the minimum raw score will be higher. Equating helps to ensure that the scaled passing score of 75 represents the same level of competence no matter which form of the examination a candidate has taken.

In addition to the candidate's total scaled score and scaled score required to pass, raw scores (the actual number of questions answered correctly) are reported for the major categories on the content outline. The number of questions answered correctly in each major category is compared with the total number of questions in that category on the score report (eg, 30/40). Content categoric information is provided to assist candidates in identifying areas of relative strengths and weaknesses; however, passing or failing the examination is based only on the candidate's total scaled score.

Reexamination

The NCMP competency examination may be taken as often as desired on filing of a new application and fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Details on how to maintain certification status, as well as an application form, are included in a separate booklet called the *Certification Maintenance Application*. The 2021 material can be found after July 1, 2021, at www.menopause.org/credentialmaintain.aspx.

To maintain certification status, there are two options—submit the appropriate continuing education hours or reexamination. The fee for either option is the same: \$200 (US dollars) for NAMS members, \$400 (US dollars) for nonmembers.

Continuing Education

To maintain certification status through continuing education, one must meet the eligibility requirements and provide proof that they have earned a total of 45 credit hours of continuing medical education (CME) between the date certification (exam date) is earned and the renewal date. For example, if the certification was earned on June 1, 2021, CME earned from June 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024, would be eligible. After the first renewal, all renewals occur 3 years later on December 31.

CME must be awarded from an accredited organization. Of the 45 hours of CME, 15 must have been awarded by NAMS. This requirement is because the Society wants to be certain that adequate menopause education has occurred. NAMS is continually developing CME

activities, including the Annual Meeting, other live events, NAMS books, and NAMS position statements published in *Menopause* (with CME available in print and on the NAMS website). A current list of all NAMS-sponsored CME activities may be found at www.menopause.org/cme_activities.aspx.

The 30 remaining credit hours may be CME credit hours offered through an accredited organization and pertaining to women's health.

1 CME credit hour = 60 minutes = 1 contact hour

1 contact hour = 60 minutes = 0.1 CEU

1 CEU = 10 contact hours = 10 credit hours

After the certification expiration date, this option will no longer be available. Reexamination is the only way to maintain the certification once it has expired.

Reexamination

The alternative maintenance option is to meet the then-current eligibility requirements, then take and pass the then-current examination before the certification expiration date.

If one chooses to maintain their certification status by reexamination, their NCMP certification will lapse if they do not pass the examination by the certification expiration deadline. If the certification has lapsed, they may no longer use the certification.

REVOCAION OF CERTIFICATION

Admittance to the examination will be denied or the certification will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

- Falsification of an application or documentation provided with the application
- Failure to pay the required fee
- Misrepresentation of certification status

NAMS provides the appeal mechanism for challenging denial of eligibility to the examination or revocation of the certification. Failure of the examination is not a circumstance for review and appeal. It is the responsibility of the candidate to initiate the appeal process by written request to NAMS within 30 days of the circumstance leading to the appeal.

EXAMINATION PREPARATION

Examination Content

To begin preparation in an informed and organized manner, one should know what to expect from the actual examination in terms of content. Information regarding the content of the examination is presented in this handbook. The content outline will give you a general impression of the examination and, with closer inspection, can give you specific study direction by revealing the relative importance given to each category on the examination.

The content of the examination is directly linked to a job analysis that identified the activities performed by menopause practitioners. Only those activities that were judged by menopause practitioners to be important to practice are included on the examination-content outline. Each question on the examination is linked to the examination-content outline and is also categorized according to the level of complexity or the cognitive level that a candidate would likely use to respond.

The following types of questions are included:

- *Recall*: The ability to recall or recognize specific information.
- *Application*: The ability to comprehend, relate, or apply knowledge to new or changing situations.
- *Analysis*: The ability to analyze and synthesize information, determine solutions, and/or evaluate the usefulness of a solution.

Study Advice

There is no study guide for the exam. However, NAMS publishes many professional education resources that may be helpful in preparing for the exam. *Menopause Practice: A Clinician's Guide* is the Society's most comprehensive professional resource. Healthcare providers should seek out additional information from other reputable sources as well.

Sample Questions

The following sample questions are provided to give candidates some idea of the format of the multiple-choice examination:

1. A woman experiences induced menopause after?
 - A. Bilateral oophorectomy
 - B. Endometriosis
 - C. Hysterectomy
2. A recently postmenopausal woman (age 50, with an intact uterus) has hot flashes and vaginal atrophy. She has accepted a prescription for oral estrogen therapy. Which of the following is the appropriate course of action?
 - A. Prescribe a progestogen.
 - B. Prescribe vaginal estrogen cream.
 - C. Recommend consuming one serving of soy foods weekly.
3. Which of the following is a risk factor for postmenopausal osteoporosis?
 - A. Genetics
 - B. Moderate alcohol consumption
 - C. Regular exercise

Answer Key:

- 1 – A
- 2 – A
- 3 – A

Examination-Content Outline

The following is the outline of the examination, with an indication of the percentage of questions that come from each section.

1. Physiology – Normal (15%)

- A. Terminology/Demographics
- B. Hypothalamic-pituitary-ovarian axis
- C. Receptor activity
- D. Endocrine changes
 - 1. Perimenopause
 - 2. Postmenopause
- E. Perimenopause
 - 1. Reproductive potential
 - 2. Physical changes/Normal symptomatology
- F. Postmenopause physical changes/Normal symptomatology

2. Physiology – Abnormal (15%)

- A. Premature menopause
- B. Induced menopause
- C. Pelvic pathology
 - 1. Abnormal uterine bleeding
 - 2. Uterine/Ovarian/Vaginal pathology
 - 3. Vulvar disease/Vulvodynia
 - 4. Sexually transmitted infections
- D. Other

3. Health disorders of peri-/postmenopausal women (25%)

- A. Sexual function
- B. Skeletal
 - 1. Osteoporosis
 - 2. Other
- C. Cardiovascular
 - 1. Coronary heart disease
 - 2. Myocardial infarction
 - 3. Stroke
 - 4. Other
- D. Urinary tract
 - 1. Incontinence
 - 2. Cystitis/Urethritis
 - 3. Other
- E. Central nervous system
 - 1. Headache
 - 2. Cognitive function/Memory
 - 3. Depression
 - 4. Anxiety
 - 5. Dementia
 - 6. Other
- F. Sleep
- G. Endocrine
 - 1. Diabetes
 - 2. Thyroid
 - 3. Other
- H. Arthritis
- I. Cancer

4. Clinical evaluation (15%)

- A. History/Identification of risk factors
- B. Sexual history
- C. Physical examination
 - 1. Height/Weight/BMI
 - 2. Blood pressure
 - 3. Manual breast exam
 - 4. Pelvic exam
 - 5. Rectal exam
 - 6. Skin exam
 - 7. Other
- D. Diagnostic and screening tests
 - 1. Blood chemistries
 - 2. Urinalysis
 - 3. Vaginal/Cervical/Vulvar/Ovarian testing
 - 4. Mammogram/Breast ultrasound
 - 5. Colorectal tests
 - 6. Lipid profile
 - 7. Other cardiovascular tests
 - 8. Bone mineral density tests
 - 9. Hormonal studies
 - a. Thyroid
 - b. Pituitary
 - c. Estrogen
 - d. Progesterone
 - e. Testosterone
 - f. Other
 - 10. Pelvic ultrasound
 - 11. Endometrial biopsy
 - 12. Hysteroscopy
 - 13. Other

5. Therapeutic options (30%)

- A. Lifestyle modification
 - 1. Exercise
 - 2. Nutrition
 - 3. Stress reduction
 - 4. Weight management
 - 5. Substance use (smoking, alcohol, caffeine, drugs)
 - 6. Other
- B. Nonprescription therapies
 - 1. Vitamin/Mineral supplements
 - 2. Vaginal moisturizers/Lubricants
 - 3. Hormone creams/Supplements
 - 4. Aspirin
 - 5. Contraceptives
 - 6. Other
- C. Prescription drugs
 - 1. Estrogens
 - 2. Progestogens
 - 3. Androgens
 - 4. Osteoporosis agents
 - 5. Cardiovascular agents
 - 6. Diabetes agents
 - 7. Arthritis agents
 - 8. Contraceptives
 - 9. Antidepressants
 - 10. Sedatives/Hypnotics
 - 11. Other
- D. Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies
 - 1. Isoflavones
 - 2. Herbs
 - 3. Paced respiration
 - 4. Biofeedback
 - 5. Acupuncture
 - 6. Other
- E. Counseling

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Am I eligible to sit the exam?

A: All licensed healthcare professionals are invited to sit the exam, including (among others) the following specialists (listed alphabetically): nurse, nurse midwife, nurse practitioner, pharmacist, physician, and physician assistant. A photocopy of your current medical license is required with your application.

Q: How much does it cost to take the exam?

A: The fee to sit the NAMS Certified Menopause Practitioner (NCMP) competency exam is \$200 for NAMS members and \$400 for nonmembers. To join the Society, please visit www.menopause.org/membership.aspx.

Q: What is the expiration date of the NAMS Certified Menopause Practitioner credential?

A: The credential is valid for 3 full years after the first year in which you pass the exam. After the first December 31 renewal date, all credentials are due for renewal 3 years later on December 31. The expiration date will be indicated on your certificate.

Q: Where do I apply to take the NCMP exam?

A: Applications can be submitted online at www.menopause.org/for-professionals/ncmp-certification.

Q: Where do I find the requirements for Live Online Proctored Exams?

A: The requirements can be found at www.menopause.org/for-professionals/ncmp-certification.

Q: How do I maintain the certification beyond the initial 3-year period?

A: To maintain certification status, there are two options—1) submit 15 NAMS-sponsored CME hours plus 30 “other” Category 1 hours (for a total of 45 hours) earned between the date of your exam and the expiration of your certificate or 2) reexamination. Additional information may be found on page 8 of this handbook.

Q: How can I prepare for the exam?

A: NAMS has published many resources and clinical practice materials that may be helpful in your preparation. However, the Society does not produce a “study guide.” To view the current list of available materials, see the NAMS Product Catalog at www.menopause.org/orderform.pdf. Also, reviewing the Content Outline in the *Candidate Handbook* will provide you with an idea of what areas may need additional study.

Q: What is the deadline to apply to take the NCMP exam?

A: Thirty days before the desired testing window begins. Therefore, if you wish to take the exam anytime in June, you must apply by May 1. For an October test date, you must apply by August 31.



NAMS

THE NORTH AMERICAN
MENOPAUSE SOCIETY

30050 Chagrin Boulevard, Suite 120W
Pepper Pike, OH 44124, USA

Telephone: 440/442-7697

Fax: 440/442-2660

Email: elizabeth@menopause.org

Website: www.menopause.org

Copyright © 2021 by The North American Menopause Society. All rights reserved.