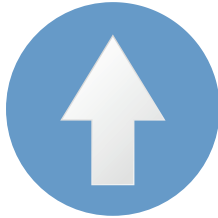


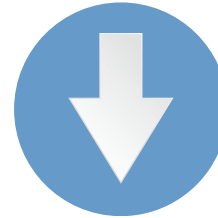
ABMS Certification Matters

Research Shows Physicians Who Participate in Continuing Certification Are Less Likely to Face Disciplinary Actions

State medical board disciplinary action is an important outcome that is directly related to quality patient care and patient safety. Studies show that physicians who successfully meet continuing certification standards are significantly less likely to receive disciplinary action.



**Continuing Certification
Exam Scores Increase**



**Risks of Disciplinary Action
Decline**

Journal of General Internal Medicine

This study explored the risk of disciplinary actions among general internists who did and did not pass the continuing certification examination.¹

- Higher performance on the ABIM Internal Medicine certification examination was strongly correlated with decreased incidence of state medical board disciplinary actions.
- Higher scores on the internal medicine continuing certification exam were associated with significantly lower disciplinary rates.
- Not passing the internal medicine continuing certification exam within 10 years of initial certification was associated with more than twice the rate of disciplinary actions over time.
- Among disciplined physicians, those who passed the internal medicine continuing certification exam had generally less severe disciplinary actions than those who did not pass.

These findings build on previous research demonstrating that:

- Physicians who pass the ABIM board certification exam are five times less likely to face disciplinary actions than physicians who are not board certified.²
- The higher internists score on their board certification exam, the less risk they have for subsequent disciplinary actions.³
- Anesthesiologists who pass both their written and oral board certification exams have a lower risk of subsequent license.⁴
- Board certified orthopaedic surgeons have a lower rate of disciplinary actions than those who are not board certified.⁵
- Board certification is associated with a lower risk for disciplinary action for physicians practicing in California.⁶
- Board certified physicians in Oklahoma are at less risk of being disciplined than those who are not board certified.⁷
- Surgeons who allow their board certification to lapse or do not recertify have a higher likelihood of a subsequent loss of license action.⁸
- Board certified anesthesiologists who met Maintenance of Certification in Anesthesiology™ (MOCA®) program requirements were less likely to be disciplined by a state medical licensing board.⁹
- Family physicians who had prior, but not current, ABFM certification were most likely to receive the most severe type of disciplinary action.¹⁰

Study Citations:

- 1 McDonald FS, Duhigg LM, Arnold GK, et al. The ABIM Maintenance of Certification Examination and State Medical Board Disciplinary Actions: A Population Cohort Study. [Published online March 7, 2018.] *J Gen Intern Med.* 2018. doi: 10.1007/s11606-018-4376-z.
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- 4 Zhou Y, Sun H, Culley DJ, et al. Effectiveness of written and oral specialty certification examinations to predict actions against the medical licenses of anesthesiologists. *Anesthesiology.* 2017;126:1171-9.
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- 6 Morrison J and Wickersham P. Physicians disciplined by a state medical board. *JAMA.* 1998;279(23):1889-93. See also Kohatsu ND, Gould D, Ross LK, et al. Characteristics associated with physician discipline. *Arch Intern Med.* 2004;164:653-8.
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- 9 Zhou Y, Sun H, Macario A, et al. Association between Performance in a Maintenance of Certification Program and Disciplinary Actions against the Medical Licenses of Anesthesiologists. *Anesthesiology.* 2018;129(10):812-20.
- 10 Peabody MR, Young A, Peterson LE, et al. The relationship between board certification and disciplinary actions against board-eligible family physicians [published online ahead of print February 12, 2019]. *Acad Med.* 2019. doi:10.1097/ACM.0000000000002650.



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