

**VALID ONLY FOR CT(ASCP), CT(ASCPⁱ), SCT(ASCP), AND SCT(ASCPⁱ) TESTING
 DATES BEGINNING NOVEMBER 1, 2026**

Examination Model

The American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification (ASCP BOC) CT and SCT certification examinations are composed of 100 questions given in a 2-hour 30-minute time frame. All examination questions are multiple-choice with one best answer. The examinations are administered using the format of computer adaptive testing (CAT). More information is available on the ASCP BOC website.

The examination questions may be both theoretical and/or procedural. Theoretical questions measure skills necessary to apply knowledge of cytologic criteria, identify/evaluate microscopic findings, and correlate microscopic findings to disease states. Procedural questions measure skills necessary to select appropriate laboratory techniques and follow quality assurance protocols.

Examination Content Areas

The examination questions encompass the following content areas within cytology. Each of these content areas comprises a specific percentage of the overall 100-question examination.

Content Area	Examination Percentage	
	CT	SCT
Gynecological Cytology	40 – 45%	20 – 25%
Non-Gynecological Cytology:	25 – 35%	15 – 25%
• Respiratory system	8 – 12%	5 – 10%
• Genitourinary system	8 – 12%	5 – 10%
• Body cavity fluids	8 – 12%	5 – 10%
Fine Needle Aspiration and Other	10 – 15%	15 – 25%
Laboratory Operations	15 – 20%	35 – 40%

For a more detailed overview of the examinations, refer to the content outline starting on page 2.



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Examination Content Outline

- Regulatory questions on the examination are based on U.S. sources (e.g., AABB, FDA, CLIA, etc.).
- The examples provided in this content outline (as indicated by e.g.,) are not limited to those listed.

I. Gynecological Cytology

CT: 40 – 45% of total examination

SCT: 20 – 25% of total examination

Body sites to include:

- Cervix
- Endocervix
- Endometrium/uterus
- Fallopian tube
- Ovary
- Vagina
- Vulva

A. Anatomy, Physiology, and Embryologic Origins

B. Histology and Normal Cellular Morphology

C. Pathology, Cytopathology, and Biologic Behavior

- Congenital anomalies
- Benign lesions/reactions
 - Inflammation
 - Organisms and contaminants
 - Benign tumors, hyperplasias, and cysts
 - Effects of therapeutic regimens
- Functional disorders/endocrinology
- ASCUS/atypical glandular cells/premalignant epithelial/indeterminate lesions
- Malignant tumors, epithelial and nonepithelial

Non-Gynecological Cytology:

CT: 25 – 35% of total examination

SCT: 15 – 25% of total examination

II. Respiratory System

CT: 8 – 12% of total examination

SCT: 5 – 10% of total examination

Body sites to include:

- Upper respiratory system
- Lower respiratory system

A. Anatomy, Physiology, and Embryologic Origins

B. Histology and Normal Cellular Morphology

C. Pathology, Cytopathology, and Biologic Behavior

- Congenital anomalies
- Benign lesions/reactions
 - Inflammation
 - Organisms and contaminants
 - Benign tumors, hyperplasias, and cysts
 - Effects of therapeutic regimens
- Functional disorders/endocrinology
- Premalignant epithelial/indeterminate lesions
- Malignant tumors, epithelial and nonepithelial

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III. Genitourinary System

CT: 8 – 12% of total examination

SCT: 5 – 10% of total examination

Body sites to include:

- Bladder
- Kidney
- Ureters
- Urethra

A. (SEE II.A)

B. (SEE II.B)

C. (SEE II.C.1 – 5)

- Salivary glands
- Soft tissues
- Thyroid gland
- Rare FNA types
- Other exfoliative types (e.g., eye, ovary, skin)

A. (SEE II.A)

B. (SEE II.B)

C. (SEE II.C.1 – 5)

D. Rapid Onsite Evaluation and Triage of FNA

E. FNA, EBUS/EUS

IV. Body Cavity Fluids

CT: 8 – 12% of total examination

SCT: 5 – 10% of total examination

Body sites to include:

- Central nervous system
- Pericardial, peritoneal, and pleural cavities
- Other (e.g., synovial)

A. (SEE II.A)

B. (SEE II.B)

C. (SEE II.C.1 – 5)

VI. Laboratory Operations

CT: 15 – 20% of total examination

SCT: 35 – 40% of total examination

A. Quality Management

1. Quality control
2. Quality assessment methodology and tools
3. Risk management

B. Cytopreparation Techniques/Instrumentation (to include collection, processing, and special techniques)

1. Principles
2. Procedures
3. Troubleshooting
4. Fixatives and routine stains
5. Validation

C. Safety and Infection Control (e.g., OSHA, SDS, NFPA, NIOSH)

D. Compliance

1. Federal requirements (e.g., CLIA, HIPAA)
2. Laboratory accreditation (e.g., CAP, The Joint Commission)

E. Companion Diagnostics

1. Molecular (including HPV)
2. FISH/CISH
3. Immunohistochemistry
4. Special stains (e.g., AFB, PAS, GMS)

V. Fine Needle Aspirations And Other

CT: 10 – 15% of total examination

SCT: 15 – 25% of total examination

Body Sites

- Adrenal glands
- Bone
- Breast
- Gastrointestinal exfoliative/FNA (e.g., anal Pap, biliary tract)
- Kidney
- Liver
- Lung
- Lymph nodes
- Pancreas

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F. Management (SCT ONLY)

1. Workflow, scheduling, and productivity
2. Laboratory information systems/information technology
3. Policies and procedures
 - a. Accreditation
 - b. Operations manuals
 - c. Quality assurance plan
 - d. Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute Guidelines
4. Financial management
 - a. Operating budget
 - b. Capital budget
 - c. Accounting principles (e.g., balance sheets, income statements, cash flow, depreciation)
5. Personnel management
 - a. Principles of supervision
 - b. Hiring/interviewing/selection
 - c. Motivation/discipline/counseling
 - d. Job descriptions
 - e. Performance standards, evaluation, and competency assessment
6. Communication

G. Education and Training (SCT ONLY)

1. New employee orientation
2. In-service training
3. Principles of education
4. Standards and guidelines for accreditation of cytology programs

END OF CONTENT GUIDELINE