Information and Instructions
Computer-Based Patient Simulation (CBPS) Practice Tests
American Board of Podiatric Surgery

The American Board of Podiatric Surgery (ABPS) includes Computer-Based Patient Simulation (CBPS) testing in the Part I and Part II Certification in Foot Surgery Examination, the Part I and Part II Certification in Reconstructive Rearfoot/Ankle Surgery Examination, and the Resident In-training Examination. Please see ABPS Document 420 (Study Guide) for a more complete description of the examination formats. Also, there is an interactive, web-based Online Study Guide which supplements the 420 Study Guide and provides links to the practice examinations. Candidates are encouraged to view the Online Study Guide before taking any practice examinations. The Online Study Guide is accessed in the documents section of the ABPS website – www.abps.org (hover mouse over "**Members, BQ, & Candidates**," click "**Documents**," click the "**ABPS 420**" tab and the "**Online Study Guide**" is in the **Quick Links** section in the lower right side of the screen.)

To prepare for CBPS testing, the ABPS has developed a number of practice examinations for candidates. **Please read the following information before attempting to run the practice CBPS examination**.

Overview

The purpose of the CBPS format is to evaluate a candidate's clinical reasoning skills. This type of testing is referred to as performance-based testing. The CBPS examines content knowledge and the candidate's ability to solve problems and make clinically relevant decisions. During the CBPS a candidate will collect patient information, analyze it, and apply what he or she has learned. Candidates will be demonstrating their abilities to examine a patient (physical examination) and formulate a management plan.

Candidates are to complete the CBPS as best one can by taking into account the relevant aspects of patient management, (case history, physical examination, imaging, labs, diagnostic procedures, diagnosis, treatment; and in some cases follow-up diagnoses and treatments). Keep in mind that physical examination and patient work-ups are as essential as diagnotix and treatment. While collecting patient information, the candidate must balance thoroughness with efficiency, as well as balancing quality versus quantity. A candidate will need to pace oneself and be careful to not take too much time on any one point or decision as the CBPS is a timed examination. **Field testing has demonstrated that users who have practiced the CBPS will have ample time to complete each case**. While collecting information regarding the simulated case, keep in mind that relevancy holds the key to successful resolution of a clinical problem. For example if one is hesitant about whether a procedure is warranted, make the decision based on clinical indications. CBPS scoring is based on the relevancy of the processes or actions performed.

The Practice CBPS

It is imperative that candidates practice CBPS examinations sometime during the weeks prior to the actual examination. Studies have shown that candidates who **do not** practice the CBPS examinations often do not have time to complete the actual CBPS examinations. One must become familiar with the computer screens and how they function if one expects to efficiently move through the actual examinations.

Candidates may access the practice examinations as many times as they wish. Obviously, the more times one practices, the more familiar he or she will become with the user interface and how the program responds to entries. With practice, candidates will be better prepared to take the actual CBPS examinations.
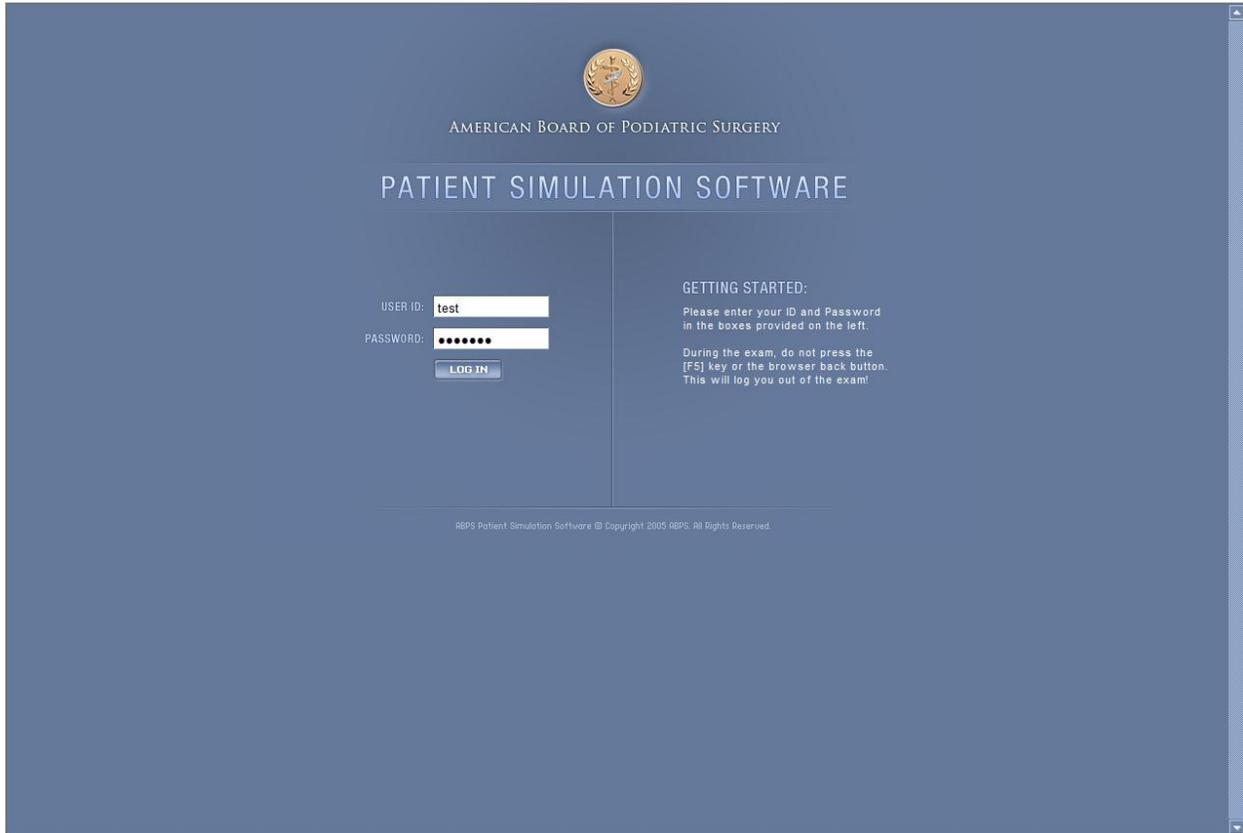
Practice Computer System Requirements:

1. Screen resolution set to 1024 x 768. If the screen resolution is set to a higher resolution, the CBPS program will appear to be reduced in size.
2. Microsoft Windows 2000, XP, Vista, Windows 7.
3. Web Browser: Use only Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 or later. Do **not** use Firefox, Safari or Opera.
4. Fast and reliable broadband Internet connection such as DSL, cable, or T1. Do **not** use dial-up connection. If you do not have access in your home to a reliable high-speed connection, you must find one. Program run-time speeds may vary depending on your location and Internet traffic. You may experience some delays while using the software. Please be patient. The actual CBPS examinations on examination days are contained internally and are less subject to network delays.
5. Pop-up blocker software disabled.

Using the CBPS Software

A CBPS examination is "Candidate-Process Driven." Candidates drive the examination by performing actions to collect and analyze information. They will select the necessary information for problem solving. For example, to palpate a foot mass, select "palpate mass" in the "Physical Exam" section. To aspirate the mass, one might select "aspirate needle" in the "Diagnostic Procedures" section. To order a magnetic resonance image (MRI) on the foot, select the appropriate MRI in the "Imaging" section. Performing a surgical technique (procedure) on the mass is done in the "Treatment**"** section. Follow-up care is also selected, when appropriate, in the **"**Treatment" section. By practicing with the software and the simulated case examination, one will be become familiar with how to navigate through the simulation.
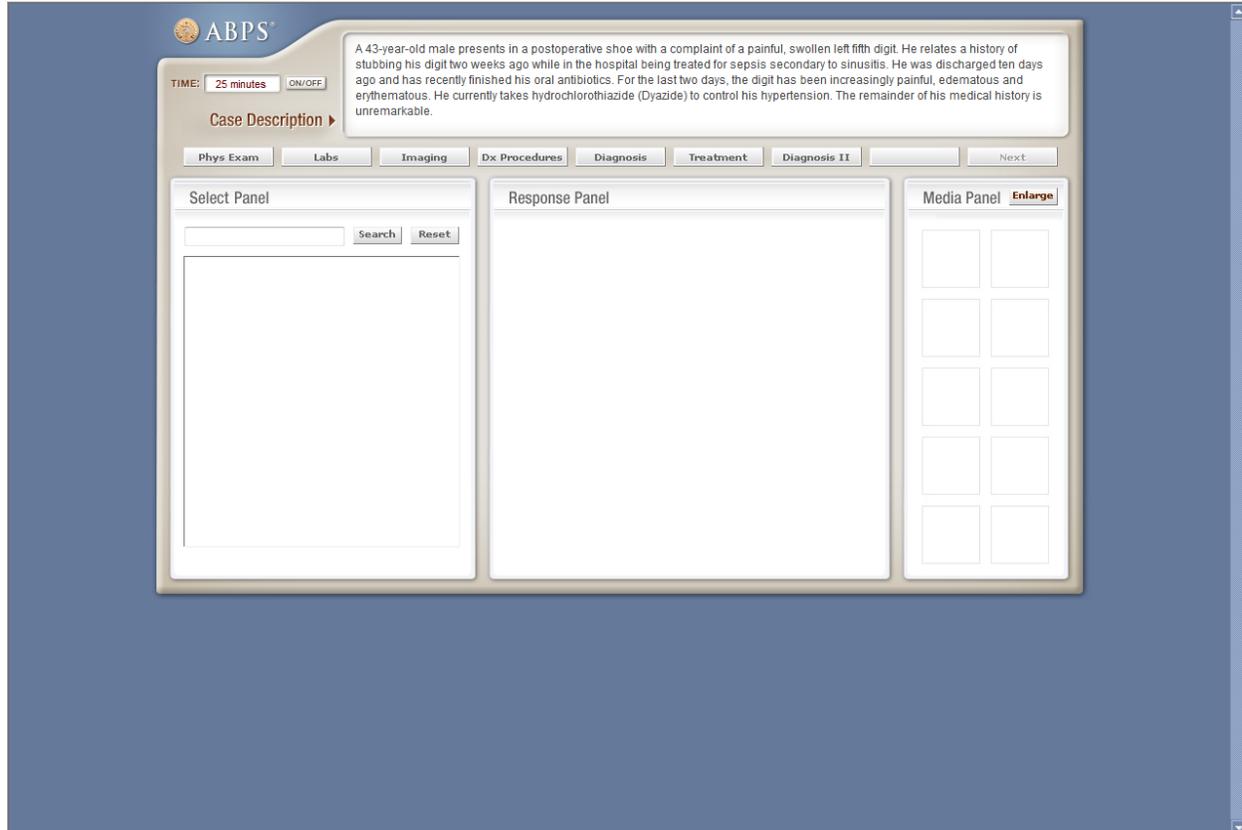
To practice the examination, log in to your ABPS personal page and look for the link to "CBPS Practice Exam." The following screen will appear:

Figure A: The CBPS Login screen

Your ID and password will be entered for you. Click "LOG IN."
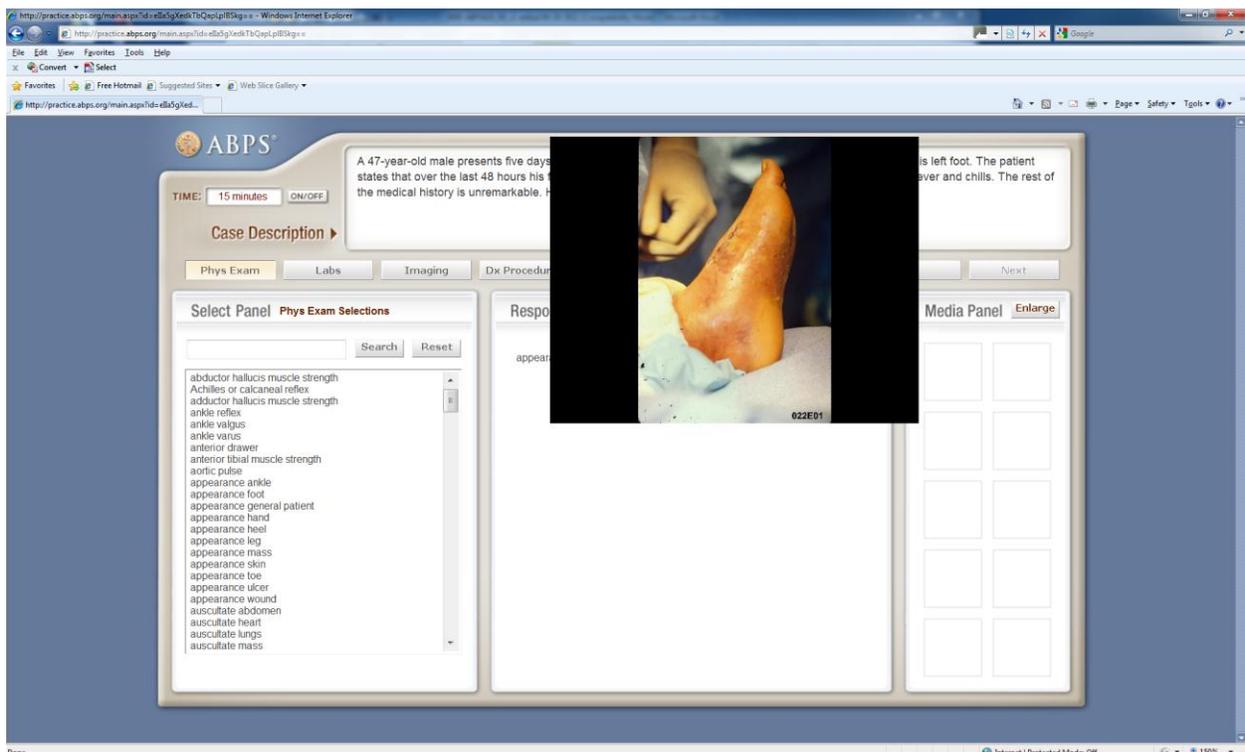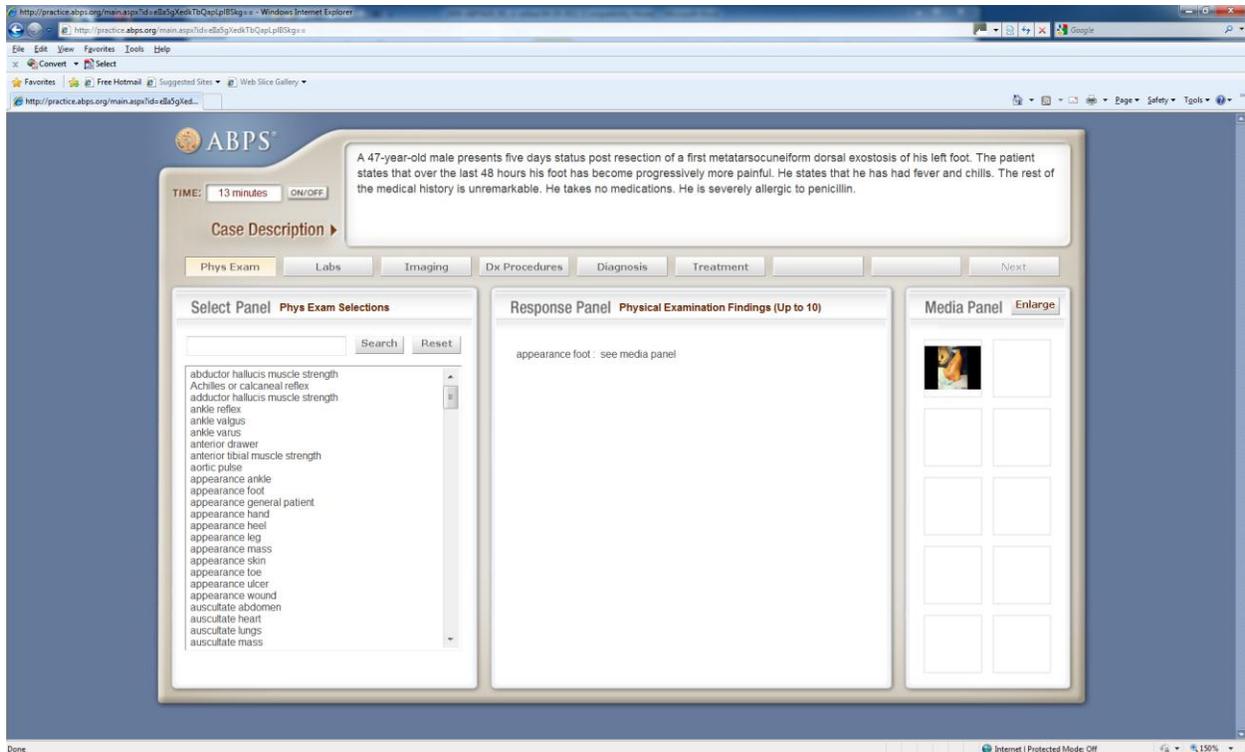
Figure B. The CBPS Screen

First, read the case history and comments at the top of the screen. In general, following the "buttons" (physical examination, imaging, labs, etc.) from left to right will simulate the way a typical patient encounter occurs. After completing these areas, press the "Diagnosis" button and provide the requested diagnosis. Then, press the "Treatments" button to provide the requested recommendations. Some cases also ask for follow-up diagnoses and follow-up treatments. After pressing the "Next" button, candidates will be forwarded to the next case, or taken to a brief survey after finishing all of the cases scheduled for that session.

Utilize the search function for any tab by typing in the box located beneath the words "Select Panel" and then clicking on the "Search" button. Hitting "enter" will **not** initiate the search. Use the mouse to initiate the search. This is a safeguard to prevent accidentally choosing an item from the list. Use shortened versions of a word, *i.e.,* "mus" for "muscle" but if one misspells a word, the search function may not be able to locate the correct selection. The search will show all selections containing the word or letters typed into the box.

Images (applies to all CBPS questions)

Double-clicking on an image in the Media Panel enlarges the visual. Click on "Enlarge" to increase the size again. **Double-click the image to close it**.

Figure C. Opening a visual.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much time do I have to complete the CBPS? Candidates will have a maximum of 15 minutes to complete each CBPS case. The CBPS system displays the remaining time for the current case scenario in the upper left hand corner of the screen. In the actual test, candidates will complete more than one case in a single sitting.

What happens if I run out of time? The program will exit, and will automatically open the next case, or to the follow-up survey if all of the questions for the given test session are complete. There is no extended time granted.

How do I know what to do and where to go next in the CBPS? Manage the virtual patient very similarly to a live patient by performing the functions of patient management that you think are necessary. The CPBS program is non-cueing and non-probing. There is no one available to ask you "what would you like to do next?"

Can I go back to a section once I have completed it or move back and forth between sections? Yes and no. Once you make a diagnosis you will not be permitted to make changes to the physical examination, imaging, labs or diagnostic procedures areas. However, you are permitted to press those buttons to view information previously requested. Similarly, once you recommend a treatment, you may no longer modify the diagnosis. The software will warn you when you have elected to begin a section that will result in your being unable to request additional findings from earlier sections. If you have not yet finished requesting findings, you may hit cancel to return to those sections prior to starting the new section.

How do I choose what to do? Navigation through the CBPS is done by clicking on a button at the top of the screen below the case description. Please refer to figure B.

How do I know when I'm done? The key to knowing when you have completed the CBPS is no different than in a real clinic. You must know what to do when, know when to do what, and know when you've done enough. Before time has expired, make certain you have completed the diagnosis and treatment areas (and follow-up diagnoses and treatments if those sections appear for any particular case).

What if any of the visuals are too small?

The media panel at the right of the screen automatically displays thumbnails of each image provided by the CBPS, as well as those images you select during the course of completing the case. Double-click on a thumbnail to enlarge the image. You may view up to two (2) images at the same time. To increase the size of the image further click on the "enlarge" tab at the top of the media panel.

What if I experience delays in program speed while running the practice exam? Program run-time speeds may vary depending on your connection, location, time of day, and Internet traffic. If you experience delays while using the software, please be patient and work with the system.

Will I get a score when I'm done? Neither the actual or practice CBPS examinations will provide you with performance results. General feedback regarding the practice questions is available on the ABPS web site. Your CBPS scores will be included with your examination score report sent to you several weeks following the examinations.

Technical Support: If you experience problems, please e-mail info@abps.org.