

Neurosurgery Primary Board Review

Ross C. Puffer



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Neurosurgery Primary Board Review

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This book is dedicated to my wife, Emily, for her unwavering support through all the years of my training. To my fellow neurosurgery residents; remember they can always make it a little harder, but they cannot stop the clock.

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Foreword

It is an honor for me to christen this book by Dr. Ross Puffer for the ABNS written (primary) examination. For nearly two decades, I have been an enthusiastic teacher for multiple written and oral neurosurgical board preparation courses in neurosurgery. This book is the end product of a casual comment to Ross approximately 1 year ago—that there was a void for a contemporary neurosurgical review book addressing the seven sections of the exam (neuroanatomy, neurosciences, neuropathology, neuroimaging, clinical neurology, neurosurgery, critical care/fundamental clinical skills), and core competencies. Both the comprehensive nature and the quick turnaround time of this book are testaments to Dr. Puffer's innate talents.

I have known and admired Ross for 10 years: first as a medical school student and more recently as a neurosurgical resident at the Mayo Clinic, an institution where his parents have been on staff—his father, a family physician, and his mother, a radiologist. Ross has been an

exemplary student and resident, demonstrating his ability to absorb, process, and apply a large amount of information with ease. He has consistently scored in the 99th percentile on standardized examinations (including the targeted ABNS primary examination). His clinical performance demonstrates his evidence-based approach to patients and compassionate care. His knowledge of the literature combined with his organizational skills have helped him become a prolific researcher, answering clinically relevant questions during his abundant “free time.” Equally as impressive has been his ability to educate and mentor, and serve as a role model. He knows how to simplify complex concepts into smaller morsels that can be digested.

In short, this Q & A review book and question bank will be a great resource not only for residents preparing for this important primary examination, but also for learners at all levels throughout their careers as practicing neurosurgeons.

Robert J. Spinner, MD

Preface

Those who train in medicine these days understand that to complete training (medical school, residency, and fellowship), one must become a professional test taker. At every level, there are one or more standardized tests that act as gateways to residency programs, training, and board certification. On occasion, trainees joke that if only patients could present as a multiple choice question, the practice of medicine would be much easier. My personal experience navigating these tests has involved completing practice questions before each test, sometimes thousands of practice questions. Practice questions allow the student to closely simulate the examination experience, and often serve as a powerful identifier of areas in need of further study.

This book was created from a set of questions I wrote while studying for the American Board of Neurological Surgery (ABNS) primary written examination in 2017. Some questions are available currently to students, but residents can benefit from a larger bank of practice questions to study from. The field is rapidly advancing, and the material and format of the ABNS primary examination is changing constantly. Exam preparation materials should evolve along with the test and the field of neurosurgery in general. Many references and texts are now accessible online, and on the go. While this question book is in print, the entirety of the question bank will also be available online

with simulated test software, to allow the learner to closely mimic the test experience, as well as take advantage of direct reference links and high-quality images. The question bank consists of 1,575 questions, 1,200 of which are designed for general study, as well as a stand-alone, 375-question practice examination with 120 images taken from the Thieme image library. The practice examination contains the exact number of questions as the current examination, and they are categorized into the same subjects as listed on the ABNS primary examination website. The main question bank contains 1,200 questions, 264 images from the Thieme image library, and is divided into the same subjects as the primary examination itself.

My hope is that making these questions available to residents studying for the ABNS primary examination will help improve the number of available practice questions, as well as provide a set of questions relevant to the current examination. The online version of these questions should be welcomed by residents who are used to standardized examination preparation via online question banks, as is standard for these tests in medical school. I would like to thank Thieme for their help in the production of this text as well as the production of an online test taking software system that will allow residents to simulate the examination environment better than I was able to with currently available resources.

Ross C. Puffer, MD

I Questions

