

# NCLE Basic Exam Review

Domain I - Ocular Anatomy,  
Physiology and Pathology;  
Domain II – Refractive Errors



Developed by the National Federation of  
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Professor Robert J. Russo has no financial  
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## NCLE Basic Exam Review

### Domain I - Ocular Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology (12 questions)

### Domain II – Refractive Errors (5 questions)

#### I. Knowledge of Ocular Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology

##### A. Adnexa Oculi:

- Accessory structures that are considered part of the eye, but not the eyeball itself: eyelids, eyelashes, tears, lacrimal apparatus, accessory glands and extrinsic muscles and orbit

##### B. Glands of the eyelids:

- **Meibomian Glands** – sebaceous gland in the eyelid behind the gray line
- **Glands of Zeiss** – sebaceous oily gland and is located around the eyelid cilia and follicles of the eyelashes
- **Glands of Moll** – are sweat glands
- **Glands of Wolfring and Krause** – located inside the lids near the fornix and are accessory glands of the lacrimal gland
- **Lacrimal gland** – secretes tears
- **Goblet Cells** – secrete mucin and are found in the lid conjunctiva

##### C. Conjunctiva:

- Lines the inside of the eyelids and covers the sclera
- 3 parts: **Palpebral, Bulbar & Fornix**
- Helps lubricate the eye by producing tears and mucus

##### D. Tear Film:

- Functions
- 3 Layers (Sebaceous/Lipid, Aqueous/Lacrimal, Mucoid/Mucin)
- **Break-up time (BUT)** – Interval between a complete blink and the first randomly distributed dry spot (10-40 seconds in normal).
- **Schirmer Test** – Determines if eye produces enough tears via placing a strip in the lower eyelid.
- **Rose Bengal** – Reddish-purple dye used to detect damaged superficial corneal and conjunctival cells
- **Lissamine Green** – is an acidic, synthetically organic dye that stains dead cells but not healthy cells

- **Jones Test-** Evaluates tear drainage system function. This test measures the length of time for fluorescein dye to appear inside the nose after being instilled in the cornea.

#### E. Eyelids:

- Palpebral fissure is 30 mm H / 10 mm V
- Upper lashes are longer and curl up and there about 100 – 150 lashes
- Bottom lashes turn downward and number about 50 - 75

#### F. Corneal Topography:

- Transparent and avascular
- Main Refracting Surface of the eye
- Convex, aspheric and smooth and tends to flatten toward the periphery.
- The average refractive power of the cornea is about **+43.00 D**
- The Average corneal thickness is about .52mm
- Horizontal Visible Iris Diameter = 11.5 mm x 10.5 mm

#### G. Zones of the Cornea:

- Apical Zone**
  - Regular in shape
  - Referred to as Corneal Cap
  - Displaced up and in nasally
  - Points: Visual Center, Apex & Geometric Center of the Cornea
- Transition Zone**
  - Area between the Apical zone and the limbus
  - Area of the cornea with the greatest aspheric curvature
  - In this zone the cornea flattens out more temporally than nasally
- Limbal Zone**
  - Area near the periphery of the cornea about 1 mm adjacent to the sclera
  - Area is not well defined and blends into the Transition Zone of the cornea

#### H. Sulcus:

- Depression or “ditch” around the cornea and is divides the cornea from the sclera. Usually referred to as the external boundary of the cornea

## I. Layers of the Cornea (5):

- **Epithelium**- Outermost layer of the cornea and is 5-6 layers thick (has 3 cell layers)
- **Bowman's Membrane**- Thin elastic acellular membrane of stromal collagen; if damaged will scar. Cannot be separated from the stroma
- **Stroma**- middle layer of the cornea and makes up about 90% of total corneal thickness. If damaged, the stroma will leave a scar.
- **Descemet's Membrane**-Elastic membrane secreted by the endothelium. Will reform if damaged.
- **Endothelium**- innermost layer of the cornea. Cells are “hexagonal” in shape.
  - Disorders: Polymegathism – variation in cell size  
Polymorphism – variation in cell shape  
Endothelial Guttata- deposits on the endothelium  
Indicating endothelial dysfunction

## J. Corneal Transparency and Metabolism:

- Osmosis
- Endothelial or Metabolic Pump
- *Corneal Deturgescence* – State of dehydration, 25% - 30% dehydration

## K. Metabolic Pump:

- a) **Glucose** – form of energy is supplied to the endothelium by the aqueous humor
- b) **ATP** (Adenosine tri-phosphate) is formed when glucose breaks down into the nucleus of the cells creating a pumping action, therefore maintains the proper water balance in the cornea

## L. Edema:

- a) Swelling of corneal tissue and results when forces normally dehydrating the cornea are overcome by forces driving water into the cornea.
- b) Instrumentation: Pachometer, Keratometry, Slit Lamp
- c) Gross Edema: reversible form of edema, swelling of epithelial cells
- d) Microcystic Edema: Non-reversible edema that involves cell death at the epithelium. Caused by OWS

## M. Anterior Chamber:

- a) Posterior to cornea and anterior to iris
- b) Contains aqueous humor
- c) Trabecular Meshwork- Provides an exit for the aqueous humor

- d) **Canal of Schlemm**- After aqueous flows through the trabecular meshwork, excess aqueous flows to the Canal of Schlemm

**N. Posterior Chamber:**

- a) Behind the iris and bounded by the posterior iris surface the lens the anterior vitreous and the ciliary body

**O. Important Anatomy:**

- b) **Aqueous Humor**: Provides oxygen and glucose to cornea and lens
- c) **Sclera** (Fibrous Tunic)- Outermost tunic made up of fibrous connective tissue. Known as the white of the eye
- d) **The Iris**: Filters light and UV rays due to pigmentation. Controls light by dilating and constricting pupil
- e) **Pupil size**: Varies with individual (average adult – 3-4 mm.). Changes size with intensity of illumination
- f) **Choroid**: posterior portion of the Uveal tract. Composed of blood vessels and lies between the sclera and retina. It provides blood supply for the outer cells of the retina.
- g) **Crystalline Lens**: located immediately behind the iris. Clear, membrane-like structure that is quite elastic
- h) **Ciliary Muscle**: band like structure that encircles the inside of the eye from the iris root to the anterior edge of the retina attached to the ora serrata (accommodation process).

**P. Retina:**

- a) innermost layer of the eye (10 layers)
- b) converts light entering the eye via nerve impulses
- c) **Layers**: photoreceptors: Rods (Night Vision)& Cones (Day/Color Vision)

**Q. Ocular Pathology:** eye care professional must be aware of medications, diseases and viruses that can affect the fitting of contact lens.

**R. Considerations:** Alcohol, Diabetes, Arthritis, HIV

- a) **Sjogren's Syndrome**: Chronic, auto-immune disorder characterized by lacrimal and salivary gland deficiency
- b) **Hordeolum (Stye)**: Blocked Zeiss gland
- a) **Chalazion**: Blocked meibomian gland
- b) **Blepharitis**: Inflammation of eyelid margins
- c) **Herpes Zoster Ophthalmicus (Shingles)**: Adult chicken pox
- d) **Ectropion**: Outward turning of the eyelid
- e) **Entropion**: Inward turning of the eyelid
- f) **Trichiasis**: turning in of one or more eyelashes
- g) **Blepharoptosis**: Paralysis of levator muscle
- h) **Dacryocystitis**: Inflammation of the lacrimal sac

- i) **Subconjunctival Hemorrhage:** Blood behind bulbar conjunctiva
- j) **Pinguecula:** Benign yellowish tumor of bulbar conjunctiva
- k) **Pterygium:** Triangular overgrowth of bulbar conjunctiva
- l) **Conjunctivitis:** Inflammation of conjunctiva
- m) **Giant Papillary Conjunctivitis (GPC):** Papillae form over tarsal region of upper lid
- n) **Vernal Keratoconjunctivitis (VKC):** recurrent ocular inflammatory disease that occurs seasonally.
- o) **Episcleritis:** benign, self-limiting inflammatory disease
- p) **Arcus Senilis-** old age syndrome where there is a white, grey, or blue opaque ring in the corneal margin (peripheral corneal opacity), or white ring in front of the periphery of the iris
- q) **Bullous Keratopathy-** small vesicles, or bullae, are formed in the cornea due to endothelial dysfunction.
- r) **Aniridia-** absence of the iris
- s) **Congenital Coloboma-** missing pieces of tissue in structures that form the eye
- t) **Basal Cell Carcinoma -**
- u) **Keratoconus** - protruding of apex
- v) **Keratoglobus** - protruding on the entire cornea
- w) **Vascularization** - blood vessels entering the cornea
- x) **Leukoma** - dense opacity, Macula - medium opacity, Nebula - slight opacity
- y) **Corneal Ulcer (Disiform)** - area of epithelial loss from corneal surface
- z) **Dendritic Ulcer** - branch shaped corneal ulcer herpes simplex virus
- aa) **Nevus**- a common pigmented skin lesion, usually a birthmark
- bb) **Ecchymosis (Black Eye):** contusion of the eyelid
- cc) **HypHEMA:** blood in the anterior chamber
- dd) **Infiltrates:** accumulation of white blood cells
- ee) **Fuch's Dystrophy-** innermost layer of cells in the cornea undergoes degenerative changes(endothelium)

## II. Domain II: Refractive Errors

- a) **Emmetropia-** no refractive error is present when accommodation is at rest
- b) **Myopia-** focusing defect created by over powered eye.
- c) **Hyperopia-** condition in which the eye is underpowered
- d) **Astigmatism-** Condition in which rays of light are not refracted equally in all directions so that a point focus on the retina is not attained.
- e) **Simple Hyperopic Astigmatism-** Plano sphere and plus cylinder
- f) **Simple Myopic Astigmatism-** Plano sphere and minus cylinder
- g) **Compound Hyperopic Astigmatism-** Both rays of light focus behind the retina
- h) **Compound Myopic Astigmatism-** Both rays of light focus before the retina

- i) **Mixed Astigmatism**-One ray focused in front of retina and one behind the retina
- j) **Presbyopia**- natural lens can no longer control the eye's way of changing it's focusing distance (accommodation).
- k) **Anisometropia**- Very different correction needed in eyes
- l) **Antimetropia**- Very different correction needed in eyes and one eye is minus and the other the eye is plus
- m) **Aniseikonia**- Unequal size and/or shape of retinal images
- n) **Amblyopia**- Loss of vision due to other than normal refractive error
- o) **Suppression**- When the image on one retina interferes with the message from the other retina of the straight eye. does not enter consciousness
- p) **Aphakia**- Crystalline lens not in place
- q) **Pseudophakia**- IOL

Good Luck on the NCLE

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