

# Preparing for the Certification Examination for Diabetes Care and Education Specialists?

## Suggestions & TIPS

### Exam Day

- Dress in layers as room climates may vary.
- Read every question and all the choices carefully before choosing any answer.
- Double-check that you are looking at all the answers – scroll down on the screen if you need to see all your options.
- Don't read too much into the questions. Use your experience together with your common sense. Remember that answers are reference based and are not based on individual practice or institution where you work.

“The most rewarding part of being a CDCES is helping people with diabetes overcome barriers and improve their health. My decision to becoming certified was the best career move I have taken as a Registered Dietitian!”

- D.D., RD, CDCES, Camarillo, CA

### Exam Results

In most instances, you'll receive your score report right after you've taken your exam. Please be sure to read it over in full and follow up as directed. The [Exam Handbook](#) has important information on reading and understanding the score report results.

In the event that you are not successful when you take the exam the first time, be sure to take time to reflect about where your score fell short in relation to the content outline and think about different ways you might address getting yourself up to speed in those areas before applying again.

## Study Tips

- Identify your knowledge gaps in areas that may fall outside your day-to-day experiences in your current practice setting, e.g., pediatric population with type 1, adult population with type 2
- Review the [Exam Handbook](#)
  - Exam content outline (self-assessment)
  - Information on studying
  - Sample questions and references
  - Policy on when new information can be tested
- Find continuing education activities or other resources, i.e., consider utilizing resources from different diabetes-related organizations such as the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists, the American Diabetes Association, etc.
- Think about effective study strategies
- Establish a timetable to focus your study efforts
- Set a modest amount of time aside each day, rather than studying for several hours at a time
- Think about studying in a group. Contact other diabetes care and education specialists in your area who might be interested.

- Network with interdisciplinary diabetes care and education specialists at your institution or at local and/or state diabetes care and education specialists group meetings
  - Do they have any resource recommendations?
  - Can you spend some time with them when they are providing DSMES?
- Take the practice exam to increase your comfort level on exam day. The practice exam will give you a good feel for how questions are worded, as well as how the exam will look on the screen when you are actually sitting at the testing carrel. Learn more here: [Practice Exam](#). (Fee required)
- Be aware that each question, written by a CDCES and reviewed by a committee of CDCESs, must be matched to a task on the exam content outline and cannot be used as a scored question on an exam until the question has met certain statistical quality assurance indicators when it is pretested.

“It is crucial to have a CDCES as a team member in the hospital, as well as, outpatient setting. The credential empowers the patient to implement care that the physician prescribed and learn day-to-day lifestyle management. Not only does the CDCES educate, they also encourage and collaborate on how to manage and improve care. CDCESs are a vital part of the diabetes management team and have the time to spend with patients that physicians do not always have to help achieve the best outcomes.”

- R.M., BSN, RN, CDCES,  
Marietta, GA

- Understand that the questions are not written in order to trick you, rather they are written in a way that allows the exam to verify mastery of a body of knowledge related to diabetes and diabetes education and your ability to apply that knowledge, as well as analyze situations in relation to that knowledge.

## Plan and Prepare for the Exam

- Don't apply until you are ready to take the test. You'll have to take the exam no later than 90 days from the date your application is approved, so be sure you're ready to sit when you apply.
- Keep your confirmation notice handy and look at it from time to time. There is a lot of important and valuable information in it.
- Put the test date, time, and location in your calendars.
- Double-check the location of the testing center and, if feasible, take a drive by prior to the appointment.
- Take a few minutes to review the video provided by PSI/AMP, CBDCE's testing agency. It provides you with information and details about the exam appointment day and test center procedures. Watching the video can help you be fully prepared for exam day. [Click here to access the video.](#)
- Be sure to get a good night's sleep before your exam appointment.