

## What is the American Board of Surgery?

The American Board of Surgery (ABS) was founded in 1937 through a joint effort of the American Surgical Association, American Medical Association, American College of Surgeons and regional surgical societies. These organizations recognized the need for a board that would evaluate individual surgeons and certify those who met a defined standard of training and knowledge. Additionally, the ABS would work to improve the education and training of surgeons.

The American Board of Surgery is an independent, nonprofit organization with worldwide recognition. Its directors are distinguished surgeons in education, research and practice, and represent the principal surgical organizations in the United States. The ABS is one of the 24 certifying boards that are members of the American Board of Medical Specialties.



This surgeon is certified by the  
**American Board of Surgery**

**SURGEON  
NAME &  
ADDRESS  
HERE**

To learn more about ABS certification,  
visit our website at the address below.



**The American Board of Surgery**

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Your Surgeon  
is Certified by

**The American  
Board of Surgery**



**THE AMERICAN  
BOARD OF SURGERY**

## What are the Qualifications of a Certified Surgeon?

A surgeon certified in general surgery by the American Board of Surgery has expertise in the diagnosis and care of patients with surgical conditions in the areas listed below. This includes preoperative, operative, and postoperative care, as well as the treatment of complications.

- **Digestive tract** – esophagus, stomach, small intestine, appendix, large intestine, rectum and anus
- **Abdomen** – diaphragm, gallbladder, biliary tract, liver, pancreas, spleen, and all types of hernias
- **Breast** – all types of benign and malignant disease
- **Skin and underlying tissues** – all types of benign and malignant disease
- **Endocrine system** – thyroid and parathyroid glands, pancreas and adrenal glands
- **Head and neck surgery** – endocrine, benign and malignant disorders, birth defects
- **Trauma and burns** – all phases of care for the injured or burned patient from initial hospital care to rehabilitation, including intensive care
- **Pediatric surgery** – surgical care of children, including newborns
- **Surgical critical care** – care of critically ill patients with surgical conditions requiring intensive care
- **Surgical oncology** – surgical management of cancer treatment and coordination of all aspects of cancer care
- **Transplantation** – including liver, kidney, pancreas and small intestine
- **Vascular surgery** – vascular surgery emergencies, vascular access surgery for kidney dialysis patients, and other procedures involving arteries and veins

General surgeons are also trained in minimally invasive (laparoscopic) surgery, ultrasonography and endoscopy — surgical techniques that use small videoscopic instruments to examine or treat internal organs.

General surgeons may obtain additional training and develop special expertise in related areas, such as bariatric (weight loss) surgery, transplant surgery, or end-of-life care, among others.

## What is Board Certification?

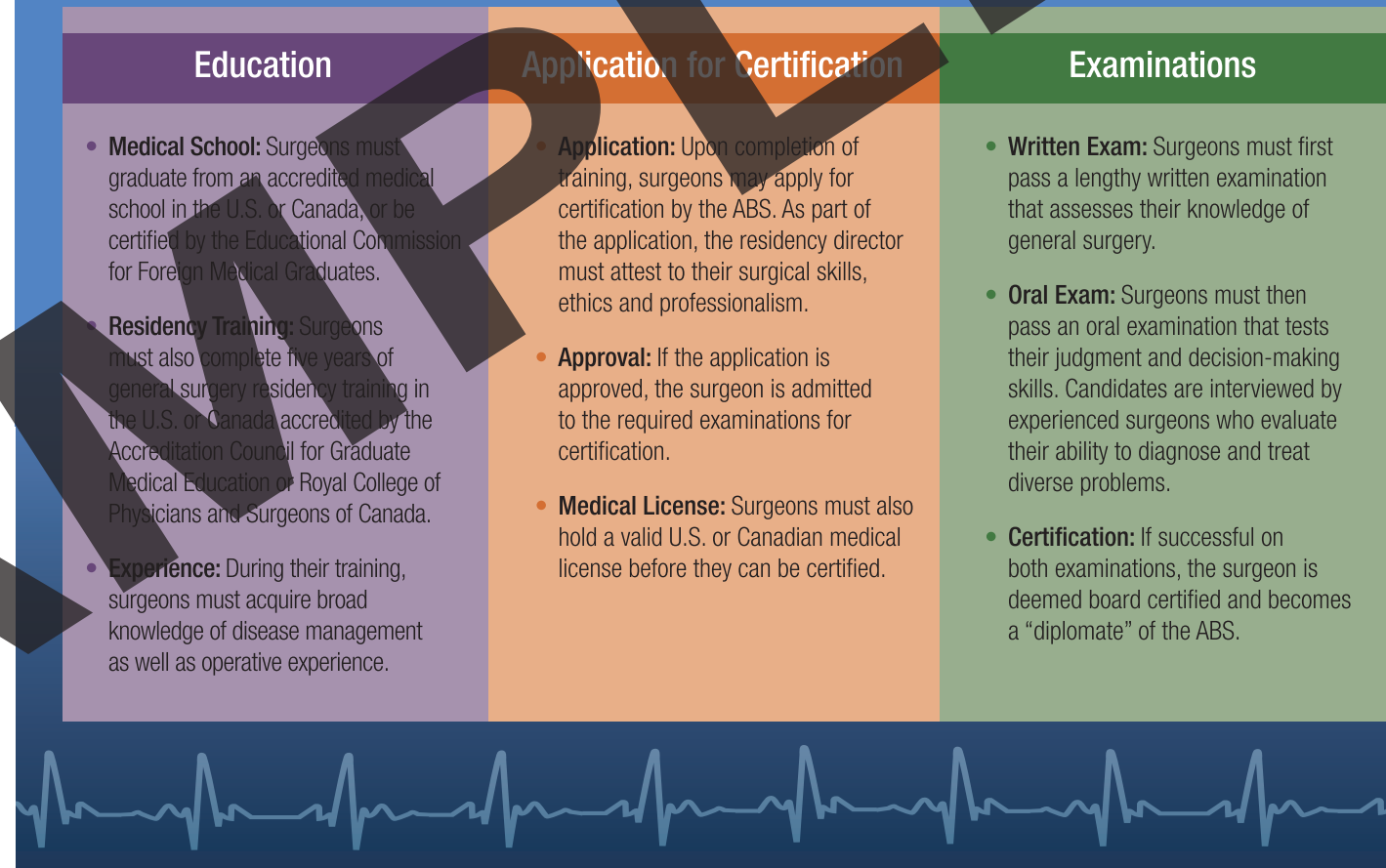
Not all surgeons are board certified. To be certified by the ABS means that a surgeon has met the highest standards of education, training and knowledge in the field of surgery. Board certification is voluntary and demonstrates a surgeon's commitment to quality patient care. This is different from possessing a medical license, which is required by state law and is not specialty specific.

## What is Specialty Certification?

The ABS also offers specialty certification in vascular surgery, pediatric surgery, surgical critical care, complex general surgical oncology, hand surgery, and hospice and palliative medicine. Board certification in these areas requires training in an accredited training program for that specialty and passing of the required examinations.

## What are the Requirements for Board Certification?

Board certification is intended to assess the qualifications of individuals who have completed extensive education and training in surgery.



## Continuous Certification

To continue their board certification, surgeons must demonstrate an ongoing commitment to professionalism, continuing education, and practice improvement, as well as complete periodic assessments of current surgical knowledge. A surgeon's certification status may be verified anytime on the ABS website.



For more information, please visit the American Board of Surgery website at

[www.absurgery.org](http://www.absurgery.org)