

Life After Graduation



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Session Objectives

At the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Understand the process of taking the BOC (Board of Certification) Exam and resources/tips for studying for it
- Learn about interviewing skills and resources to apply for and successfully obtain a job
- Learn more about ASCLS and the benefits, opportunities, and leadership skills it provides



Life After Graduation

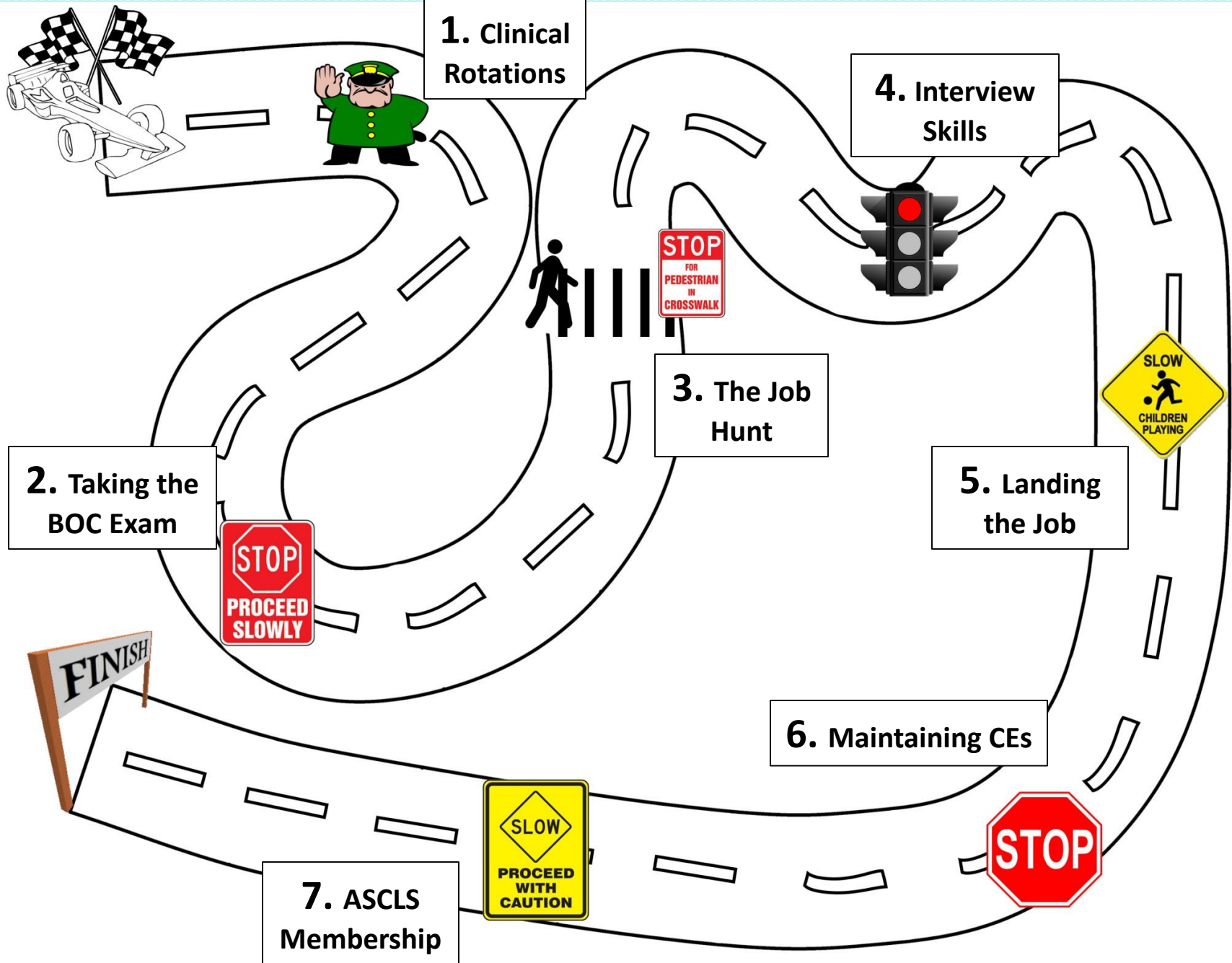
- So you've graduated or will graduate soon, congrats! But now what? There's a lot to think about after graduation...taking the BOC exam, clinical rotations, job hunt, interviews, getting hired, being part of a professional organization, etc.
- Well we're going to help you navigate the road to Life After Graduation!

Road to Life After Graduation

Stops along the way:

- 1. Clinical Rotations
- 2. Taking the BOC Exam
- 3. The Job Hunt
- 4. Interview Skills
- 5. Landing the Job
- 6. Maintaining CEs
- 7. ASCLS Membership





Stop #1 Clinical Rotations

How to have successful rotations

- SHOW UP ON TIME!!!
- Be appreciative, respectful, and polite
- Have an open mind
- Take lots of notes
- Be involved
- Internship = “job interview”
- Review notes and other materials at night to be prepared for the next day
- Ask many questions. This is your time to learn!
- Thank your preceptor. They’re spending extra time to teach you.
- Get plenty of sleep. You will retain the information better.
- Network with as many people as you can.
- Remember you may use different instruments and LIS systems if you get a job elsewhere, so focus on learning the concepts and principles of things in each dept.

Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

You are eligible to sit for the exam upon successful completion of the internship term.

1. Before your internship is over, make an account with BOC.
www.ascp.org/content/board-of-certification
2. Sign up for the exam. You will be asked about the MLS program. You can sign up for the exam without your final transcript. The cost of the exam is \$240. **Note:** the sign up process takes a few weeks.
3. You will receive an email from the BOC once they have confirmed that you are eligible to sit for the exam. Sign up at the closest testing center. You can do all of this online at
<https://home.pearsonvue.com/>
4. Select a testing date sooner than later so you have something to work towards. Understand that the testing center has limited spots and specific times, so you may not get your first choice.
5. After completing the exam, you will see either “PASS” or “FAIL” on the screen.
6. **Your final transcript must be sent in order for the BOC to release your score and certificate.**
7. **DO NOT** lose your certificate! You will need it for every future job.

Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

Exam content info

- Blood Bank 17-22%
- Urinalysis/ Body Fluids 5-10%
- Chemistry 17-22%
- Hematology 17-22%
- Immunology 5-10%
- Microbiology 17-22%
- Laboratory Operations 5-10%

Here's the content outline on the ASCP website:

<https://www.ascp.org/content/docs/default-source/boc-pdfs/exam-content-outlines/ascp-boc-us-procedures-book-final-web.pdf>

<https://www.ascp.org/content/docs/default-source/boc-pdfs/boc-us-guidelines/mls imls content guideline.pdf?sfvrsn=6>

Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

How the test is set up

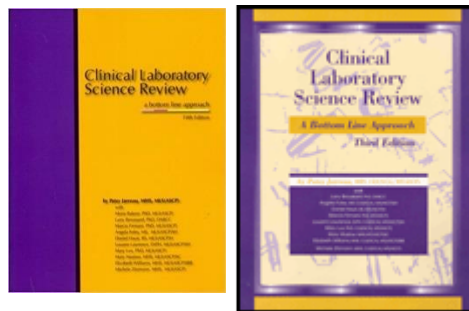
1. 100 Questions
2. Computer adaptive testing
3. Each question is worth a different number of points depending on difficulty.
4. You **MUST** earn 400 points to pass. The highest attainable score is 999.
5. There are no penalties for wrong answers.
6. 2.5 hrs. to complete
7. Answers can be changed at the very end.
8. You will be given a whiteboard, pen, and calculator.
9. It's great if you can answer all of the easy questions, but you may not earn enough points to pass.
10. Most questions will test 2 or 3 pieces of knowledge at once. They're like $A + B = C$ questions.

Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

Helpful Resources

- A Clinical Lab Science Review by Patsy Jarreau, MHS, CLS (NCA), MT (ASCP). This book has a great review section before every set of questions.

https://www.amazon.com/Clinical-Laboratory-Science-ReviewApproach/dp/0967043425/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1522047810&sr=8-2&keywords=clinical+science+review



- LabCE <https://www.labce.com/>
 - Online quiz system for test preparation.
 - Simulated practice quizzes just like the real exam.

Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

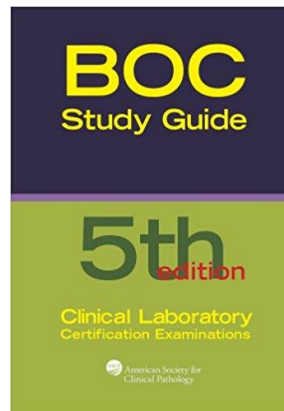
Resources

BOC Study Guide

- Really hard questions, no review material.
- Tests whether or not you really know the material.
- Get a used copy to help offset the cost.


Online copy:

<https://www.scribd.com/document/322723398/Boc-Study-Guide>




Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

- Resources
 - Can purchase study guides or practice exams
 - <https://www.ascp.org/content/board-of-certification/get-credentialed/#about-the-exam-process>



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Product Details

Product	Quantity	Price	
Medical Laboratory Scientist Practice Tests Seven (7) individual 50 question practice tests with question topics taken directly from the ASCP-Board of Certification Medical Laboratory Scientist Content Guideline. Each question is written in the same format as those on the certification examinations. The seven practice tests are: Blood Bank, Chemistry, Hematology, Microbiology, combination of Immunology, Laboratory Operations, and Urinalysis and Body Fluids, and two comprehensive. Order 10 or more and receive a 20% discount.	<input type="text" value="1"/>	\$35.000 - 9\$28.0010+	Add

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Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

Helpful Hints to passing the exam

1. Start with your weakest area.
2. Don't brush over information you don't know. The BOC will probably ask you about it 😊
3. Start studying day 1 of your internship. By the end, you will be ready for the exam.
4. REPETITION!!!!
5. Study smart not hard.
6. When you miss a practice question, seek to understand. Understanding a concept will help you remember it more than just plain memorizing it. You would be surprised how much you can learn from doing this.
7. Go into the test with no regrets. You only want to take it once.

Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

A few FAQs

1. I got offered a job before my internship was over. Should I take the exam before I start working?

Starting a new job can be really stressful while trying to learn everything as you work. If your finances allow, try and take the exam before you start. If you can't, it's okay! I know many techs who have successfully passed their exam while working.

2. Can I get hired without the ASCP certification?

Yes. Many places require you to obtain the certification within 6 months to a year from your hire date. Some places may have a tighter window. Keep in mind that if you fail the exam, you have to wait 3 months to take it again.

Stop #2 Taking the BOC Exam

3. I didn't get a job offer after my internship. What's the next step?

Your next step can be to job hunt or take the exam. I had a few weeks before my term was over to study for the exam. I made this a priority because I knew that I would be more marketable with the certification under my belt. Focusing on just the exam made it less stressful in the long run. If you desperately need a job, go for it! You can get hired.

4. Every open job position requires experience. I have no experience since I just finished school. What should I do?

Apply for them anyway. If a lab is in need, you will have a better chance of getting hired. You never know what can happen. If you don't apply, you won't get it! You need to get your foot in the door.

Stop #3 The Job Hunt

- Resources to find job openings in Idaho
- <https://www.indeed.com/>
- <https://www.monster.com/>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List of hospitals in Idaho](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_hospitals_in_Idaho)
- [https://www.idmed.org/idaho/Idaho Public/Resources/Idaho Hospitals/Idaho Public/Resources/Idaho Hospitals.aspx?key=b89bea50-4345-4624-be76-7b8cd25e9135](https://www.idmed.org/idaho/Idaho_Public/Resources/Idaho_Hospitals/Idaho_Public/Resources/Idaho_Hospitals.aspx?key=b89bea50-4345-4624-be76-7b8cd25e9135)
- Individual hospital websites
- Contacts from your internship
- <http://asclsidaho.org/student-corner/employment/>
- ASCLS member community posts
- <https://ascls-jobs.careerwebsite.com/>
- ASCLS network contacts!

Stop #3 The Job Hunt

- Possible career options for MLS
 - Generalist at a hospital or clinic
 - Work in a specialized lab/dept like a reference lab such as ARUP, Quest, Lab Corp, Mayo Clinic, etc.
 - Work for a vendor company as a field service rep, technical application specialist, phone service rep, instrument sales, etc.
 - Teach at a college/university
 - Go on to medical school, dental school, etc.



Stop #4 Interview Skills

Things to think about before going into an interview

- Relax, take a deep breath
- Wear appropriate clothing. No flip flops or jeans.
- First impressions are everything.
- Your interview may consist of lab managers AND supervisors.

Resume Tips

- Include the instruments you worked on during your internship.
- Include lab managers, supervisors, and preceptors as references from your internship.
- Keep relevant topics on your resume.

Stop #4 Interview Skills

- There are a few things that employers are going to be looking for when hiring such as:
 - Do you have the skills to do the job?
 - Would you make a good fit?
 - How do you stack up with the competition?
 - Do you have the right mind-set of the job/company?
 - Do you want the job?

Stop #4 Interview Skills

- Types of questions you may be asked:
 - Icebreaker questions
 - Ex. “Tell me about yourself.”
 - Traditional questions
 - Ex. They want to gather information about your experience, skills, goals, personality, etc.
 - Situational questions
 - You’ll be asked what you would do in a specific situation.
 - Behavioral based questions
 - Ex. “Tell me about a time.... “ This shows how you behave and handle certain situations.
 - Culture-fit questions
 - These are designed to see if you’d fit well in the job or company

Stop #4 Interview Skills

- Response strategies:
 - What makes you memorable?
 - If you need a second to think about your response say, “Let me think for a minute” rather than just saying, “Umm, umm, etc.”
 - Give examples!!!
 - Be clear and concise
 - Make sure to ask questions of the interviewers
 - Remember you are also assessing whether the job is right for you too!

Stop #4 Interview Skills

- Example interview questions
 - Tell me about yourself.
 - Why should I hire you?
 - What are your strengths/ weaknesses?
 - Tell me a time when you didn't agree with your supervisor or coworker and what did you do to fix it?
 - Why did you choose this profession?
 - What motivates you?
 - How do people describe you?
 - How do you deal with conflict?
 - Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
 - Be able to interpret lab values and what may be going on.
 - Do you have any questions?

Stop #5 Landing the Job

- So you got a job, hurray! Now for training.
- Know the difference between SOP/protocol and your trainer's workflow
 - If you train with multiple people and you see them do things differently, make sure to differentiate or clarify with your trainers what are specific SOP things that need to be done a particular way vs. an individual's workflow to get the task done
- Be engaged! Ask questions! Don't forget about critical thinking!



Stop #5 Landing the Job

- Try to understand ‘the why’ behind things, it will help you know why you are doing something or help answer questions that providers may have; don’t just be robotic
- More than just a job, it’s a profession
- Remember there are people behind those samples!

Stop #6 Maintaining CEs

- Required to renew your certification every 3 years and have 36 continuing education credits (CEs)
 - Don't wait until the very end to do all your CEs, you are required to have them in a variety of categories and also need to submit your renewal about a month before it's due
- Certification Maintenance (CM) in title
 - Ex. Mary Poppins, MLS(ASCP)^{CM}
- ASCLS linked to ASCP to upload CE credits

Stop #6 Maintaining CEs

- Ways to obtain CEs
 - Attend ASCLS Conventions! (State, Regional, and/or National)
 - Vendor or institutional sponsored webinars
 - Educational opportunities through your work
 - Purchase packages online:
 - <http://www.ascls.org/certification-maintenance-packages>
 - <https://www.labce.com/>
 - https://www.ascp.org/content/learning/access-online-courses/#ce_packages

Stop #7 ASCLS Membership

- ASCLS: American Society for Clinical Laboratory Sciences
- What is ASCLS?
 - It's the laboratory's professional society
 - Grassroots organization formed in 1933
 - It is the voice of and represents all medical laboratory professionals, helps advance our interests, and advocates for our profession
 - Provides leadership opportunities, scholarships and research grants, professional awards, and educational conventions (like this one!)
- ASCLS National, Regional, and State Websites:
 - <http://www.ascls.org/>
 - <http://asclsregion8.org/>
 - <http://asclsidaho.org/>

Stop #7 ASCLS Membership

- Difference between ASCLS and ASCP
 - ASCP (American Society for Clinical Pathology) is also a professional society that includes pathologists and laboratorians
 - Although you sign up for the BOC exam through ASCP, you do NOT have to join ASCP in order to maintain your certification
- Testimonial stories of some of our ASCLS members and how ASCLS has benefitted them

Stop #7 ASCLS Membership

- Benefits

- Networking

- Attending convention meetings allows you to network with other laboratory professionals around your state and around the country.
 - You can attend vendor expo sessions and talk with them about new instrumentation and/or problems, questions, or suggestions with your current instrumentation.
 - You can call up another colleague at another facility with questions about validations, borrowing supplies you need urgently that you have run out of, etc.
 - Outside of work, networking can be used for moving/vacationing- Get info from local MLS
 - Places to eat/visit, places to live in a particular area, local places worth seeing

Stop #7 ASCLS Membership

- Benefits cont.
 - Continuing Education
 - Being a part of ASCLS gives you opportunities to attend conventions for State, Regional, and National meetings at a discounted rate
 - More variety of continuing education (and live!) that can be directly applied to the work you are doing (i.e. new information about bacteria in Microbiology, blood banking product processes, etc.)
 - Staying Informed
 - Clinical Laboratory Science Journal
 - National and State Newsletters
 - ASCLS Member Community posts and conversations

Stop #7 ASCLS Membership

- Benefits

- Legislation

- Being a member of ASCLS helps keep you in the know of legislative issues going on that can affect our profession.
 - Members go to Capitol Hill yearly to talk to our legislators to make them aware of the significance of issues and try to fight for issues affecting the lab (i.e. safety requirements, pay, work force shortages, CMS regulations, etc.)

- Leadership Academy

- Being a part of the Leadership Academy on the Regional or National level helps you learn skills you need to become a leader in your laboratory and in the ASCLS society.
 - It helps you learn and incorporate skills to use in order to make for a better workplace (i.e. emotional intelligence, meeting planning, leadership styles, etc.)

Stop #7 ASCLS Membership

- Benefits
 - Friendship
 - Groups of like-minded people doing things they all enjoy (i.e. museums, brewery, marathon, concerts, sporting events, going to lunch, etc.)
 - A work family/family reunion of friends and colleagues at conventions and events



Stop #7 ASCLS Membership

- Ways to get involved
 - Attend conventions
 - Volunteer! Be on a board, part of a committee, forum, or scientific assembly. Your talent, insight, passion, and good work help things move along and make progress; it allows you to have an influence in your professional organization.
 - Be a delegate at the House of Delegates at the National Convention



Stop #7 ASCLS Membership

- How to join/renew
 - Join or renew online at
 - <http://www.ascls.org/membership/join>
 - https://members.ascls.org/content.asp?admin=Y&content_id=151
- Cost
 - First Year Professional/Ascending Professional: \$60 (\$48 to renew) plus \$10 Idaho state dues
 - Open to persons who have graduated within the last 12 months from an accredited program in laboratory science. Prior student membership with ASCLS is not a prerequisite. This membership status is valid for up to five years of continuous membership. After completing five years, members renew/join as Professional membership.

Trivia Game for BOC preparation



Trivia Questions

- What are the Vitamin K dependent factors?
 - II, VII, IX, and X
- What anticoagulant most commonly affects this?
 - Coumadin/Warfarin

Trivia Questions

- The most specific enzyme test for acute pancreatitis is:
 - a. Trypsin
 - b. AST
 - c. Amylase
 - d. Lipase

Trivia Questions

- The following results are obtained from a manual diff.
What is the ANC?

WBC: $3.8 \times 10^3 \mu\text{l}$

Segs: 52%

Bands: 7%

Meta: 3%

Lymphs: 31%

Monos: 4%

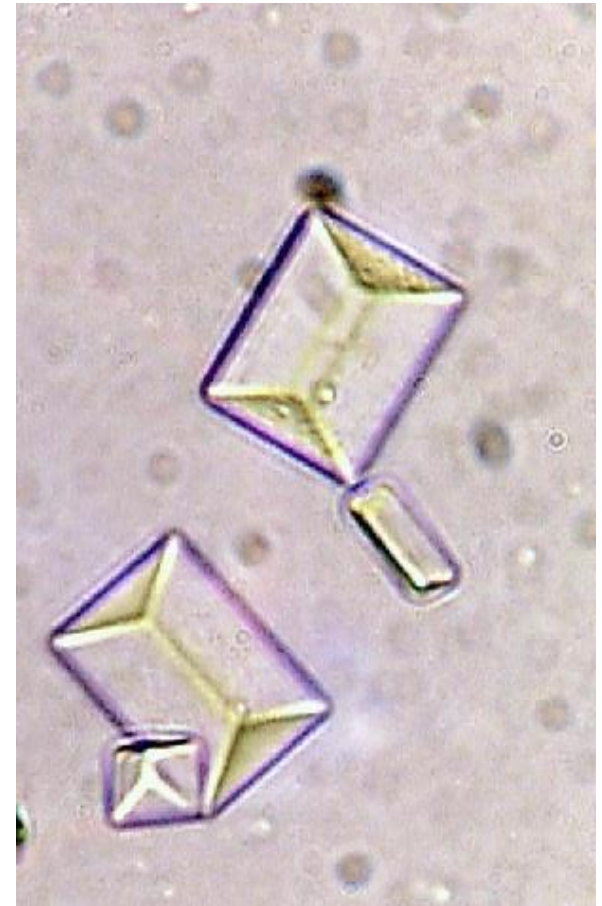
Eos: 2%

Baso: 1%

- a. 2.4 #
- b. 2.8 #
- c. 2.2 #
- d. 3.1 #

Trivia Questions

- This crystal is found in:
 - a. acid pH and is non-pathogenic
 - b. alkaline pH and is nonpathogenic
 - c. acid pH and is pathogenic
 - d. alkaline pH and is pathogenic



Trivia Questions

- The presence of HBsAG, anti-HBc, and often HBeAG is characteristic of:
 - a. early acute phase HBV hepatitis
 - b. early convalescent phase HBV hepatitis
 - c. recovery phase of acute HBV hepatitis
 - d. past HBV infection

Trivia Questions

- A thin gram-negative bacillus with tapered ends isolated from an empyema specimen grew only on anaerobic sheep blood agar. It is indole positive, lipase negative, and inhibited by 20% bile. The most probable identification of this isolate would be:
 - a. *Bacteroides distasonis*
 - b. *Prevotella melaninogenica*
 - c. *Fusobacterium nucleatum*
 - d. *Clostridium septicum*

Trivia Questions

- ABO hemolytic disease of the newborn
 - a. usually requires an exchange transfusion
 - b. most often occurs in first born children
 - c. frequently results in stillbirth
 - d. is usually seen only in the newborn of Group O mothers

Q&A Time

- Time to ask questions of or get advice from other professionals in attendance



Student Activity Info



Good Luck on your Adventure!

