

Boards Review Resources

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This column highlights a few of the most popular board review resources available for dermatology residents. These sources are compiled from recommendations from fellow residents who have found them helpful.

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Books

There are a number of classic textbooks that serve as primary resources for dermatology training¹⁻⁴; however, there also are other options if memorizing these books seems a little daunting. The “first aid” books of dermatology are the Derm In-Review binder and Jain’s⁵ *Dermatology: Illustrated Study Guide and Comprehensive Board Review*. Mariwalla and Leffell’s⁶ *Primer in Dermatologic Surgery: A Study Companion* is helpful for surgical review and is available at a discounted price for members of the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery (<https://www.asds.net/store/product.aspx?id=3914&terms=primer%20in%20Dermatologic%20surgery>). The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) provides a list of additional textbooks that dermatology residents may find useful for board review.⁷

Guided Study

The AAD offers board review courses for dermatology residents (cost varies).⁷ The Florida Dermatology and Dermatopathology Board Review Course (<http://dermatology.med.ufl.edu/education/florida-dermatology-and-dermatopathology-board-review-course/>) is an annual review course held in Tampa (early registration fee, \$800 [does not include travel costs]). The Oakstone Institute also

offers its Dermatology Board Review Course, which is a self-study program that can be completed online for approximately \$1195 (<http://www.oakstone.com/dermatology-board-review-course>). Be sure to take advantage of free didactics lectures, society meetings with board review courses, and study groups, as these resources can be just as helpful and more budget friendly.

Digital Resources

The Derm In-Review question bank (<http://dermatologyinreview.com/Merz>) is probably one of the most popular board review resources and is free to US dermatology residents; however, be cautious when using this resource, as a fair number of the answers to questions may actually be outdated or based on older studies. A group study session can help tease out why certain answers are erroneous and provide a forum for discussing what would be a more correct answer. Take advantage of the opportunity to provide feedback on this website, as your comments will improve this resource for future dermatology residents.

Beyond traditional dermatopathology textbooks, there also are some excellent mobile applications (apps) available. The Clearpath app is a user-friendly dermatopathology study tool that is free for download in the iTunes store (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/clearpath/id540260769?mt=8>). However, the app is only compatible with iPads. The Clearpath website also offers virtual study slide sets that are easier to access (<http://dermpathlab.com/slide-study-set-program>). Your institution’s glass slide sets also are useful for building pattern recognition skills and practicing for the actual board examination. The DermOID website (<http://www.derm-oid.com>), which is powered by the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles, is another online dermatopathology

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study database with free registration for access to the site. Another fun way to test your dermatopathology skills is in the exhibition hall at the AAD annual meeting where some vendors may offer daily dermatopathology quizzes and prizes for the residents with the most correct answers. Also, it is worth reviewing the *Cutis*[®] Fast Facts for Board Review (<http://www.cutis.com/articles/fast-facts-for-board-review/>), as this section offers many outstanding fact sheets that are an easy read and an efficient way to gain board knowledge. Some recent topics include fillers, paraneoplastic skin conditions, and medications in dermatology.

Many residents enjoy using the Anki flashcard app (<http://ankisrs.net>) for reviewing kodachromes. The AAD website also includes a Boards' Fodder archive that is worth reviewing (<https://www.aad.org/members/residents-fellows/boards-study-tools/boards-fodder/boards-fodder>). New board review resources are constantly being posted on the AAD website, so definitely check this out. You may be able to access this resource through your residency program; it is also available for purchase (\$425 for AAD members; \$850 for nonmembers).

Journals

All the major dermatology journals are helpful in preparing for the board examination. Your resident journal club will likely review many of the most clinically relevant dermatology articles published over the course of your residency. Some other helpful journal resources that are recommended for board review include the *Journal of the American Medical Association's* Clinical Challenge, which has many dermatologic cases (<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/public/QuizzesAndPolls.aspx>), and the *New England Journal of Medicine's* Journal Watch (<http://www.jwatch.org>) and Image Challenge (<http://www.nejm.org/image-challenge>).

Practice Examinations

The American Board of Dermatology's In-Training Examination is the most well-known practice examination among dermatology residents.⁸ A link to an additional practice examination usually is provided a few weeks prior to the examination. The Derm In-Review website also offers diagnostic practice examinations with some ability to custom select questions for your studying needs.

Conclusion

There are many board review resources out there. Find the ones that work for you, and be encouraged that your studying and hard work will pay off!

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