

# BRAIN GAINS

Physicians say they benefit from testing their knowledge



**4 out of 5**  
PHYSICIANS

**GAINED KNOWLEDGE**  
— RELATED TO THEIR PRACTICE —

— and —

**79%** SAW A POSITIVE  
EFFECT ON PRACTICE

79% of physicians interviewed gave at least one specific example of how preparing for an MOC exam benefited their practice.



*"It helped me in focusing more on what to order, instead of just ordering a whole battery of tests for certain conditions...Before, we would see, like, this abnormal value, then we would just go order 20 other tests, just to see what we get. But I think in reading for the boards, there [are] a few conditions that I said, 'Okay, maybe this is it, and this is what I need to do.' More focused ordering."*

**General Internist – ABIM**

*"[Before studying] I had a patient who had had a [Transient Ischemic Attack]...and she went on to have a stroke. I had a similar patient recently and, using the ABCD guidelines for TIA, I realized she was at high risk of progressing, so I put her in the hospital and was more aggressive about the management and I suspect her outcome was probably better than it might have been otherwise."*



**Family Physician – ABFM**



*"It just gives you confidence you're doing the right thing, and that you could tell the patient about it...I would say, 'You know, I just read about this on my board exam'...And that was pretty powerful. Otherwise, if I weren't [studying at] that time, I don't think I would have that conversation."*

**General Internist – ABIM**

This interview study was a collaboration between the **American Board of Internal Medicine** and the **American Board of Family Medicine**. Researchers from both boards interviewed 40 general internists and 40 family physicians who had recently taken an MOC exam about what they did to prepare, what they learned, and how this may have affected their patient care.

**References:**

Chesluk B, Gray B, Eden A, Hansen E, Lynn L, Peterson L. "That Was Pretty Powerful": A qualitative study of what physicians learn when preparing for their Maintenance-of-Certification exams. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. 2019 Sept. 34(9):1790–1796

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**American Board of Family Medicine**