



Wound Care
Education Institute



Wound Care Certification Exam Readiness Kit

Your self-guided plan for confidence,
structure, and success

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Congratulations on taking the next step in your wound care journey!

Whether you're preparing for your first certification exam or returning to build on your skills, this toolkit is designed to help you feel focused, confident, and ready.

This is **not a certification course or exam**, and it does not include practice test scoring. Instead, it's a **supportive planning and readiness guide** to help you get organized and stay motivated as you prepare for your wound care certification with boards such as:

- [National Alliance of Wound Care and Ostomy \(NAWCO\)](#)
- [American Board of Wound Management \(ABWM\)](#)



Am I ready for certification?

(Self-assessment worksheet)

Take a few minutes to reflect honestly. This is not about being perfect — it’s about understanding where you stand and identifying what you need to succeed.

RATE YOURSELF FROM 1 (NEEDS IMPROVEMENT) TO 5 (STRONGLY CONFIDENT)

READINESS CATEGORY	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the exam process and requirements.					
I’ve completed a wound care course or formal training (e.g., WCEI).					
I’m comfortable with wound assessment and treatment fundamentals.					
I have consistent study time blocked on my calendar.					
I meet the eligibility requirements.					
I manage test anxiety effectively.					
I feel supported by peers, mentors, or study partners.					



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Which areas scored the lowest — and why?

What’s one small action you can take this week to improve your readiness?

What motivates you most about becoming certified?

Study Plan Template

(6-8 weeks)

You can personalize this template based on your schedule and learning style.
Use the Focus Topics column to organize key areas from your course materials or exam outline.

STUDY PLAN

WEEK	FOCUS TOPICS	STUDY GOALS	RESOURCES	NOTES
Week 1				
Week 2				
Week 3				
Week 4				
Week 5				
Week 6				
Week 7 (optional)				
Week 8 (optional)				



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Begin by addressing your weakest areas.
- Schedule short review sessions (20–40 minutes) instead of extended cramming periods.
- Revisit challenging topics weekly to reinforce retention.
- Add at least one mock test day to simulate exam conditions.

Resource Guide

Your preparation is only as effective as the quality of your study materials. Here are some trusted resources to guide you:



EXAM BOARD RESOURCES

- [NAWCO certifications](#)
- [ABWM certifications](#)



WCEI STUDY RESOURCES

CERTIFICATION PREPARATION COURSES

- [Skin and wound management courses](#)
- [Diabetic wound management courses](#)
- [Ostomy management courses](#)

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- [Wound care webinars](#)
 - [WCEI blog](#)
 - [Wound care articles](#)



RECOMMENDED READING

- *Wound Care Essentials: Practice Principles (Baranoski, Ayello), 5th Edition, 2020*
- *Chronic Wound Care: The Essential e-Book (Krasner, Rijswijk), 1st Edition, 2014*
- *Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses Society Core Curriculum: Ostomy Management (Carmel, Colwell, Goldberg), 2nd Edition, 2021*
- *Acute and Chronic Wounds: Interprofessionals from Novice to Expert (Bryant, Nix), 6th Edition, 2023*
- [The National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel](#)

Study and Test-Taking Tips From a WCEI Instructor

Becky Strilko, RN, BSN, CWOCN, APRN-FPA, OMS, WCC, Clinical Instructor at WCEI, shares the following tips:

- 1** Since the exam questions are not based on any single source for content information, get the official test handbook from your certification body. This resource will outline the exam's content and structure, allowing you to prioritize your studying and prevent information overload.
- 2** Make sure you have a strong foundation in the anatomy and function of the skin, the phases of wound healing, and how systemic factors affect healing. This knowledge helps you understand why specific actions and treatments are the best choices.
- 3** For each case, always determine the cause of the wound first, as this should guide the treatment plan.
- 4** Ensure you understand the key differences between various wound types, such as pressure injuries, diabetic ulcers, and venous ulcers.
- 5** Read each question carefully and determine the key elements in the question.
- 6** Reading through scenarios can be confusing, as many different facts are given, and some of them are just distractors. In these cases, I sometimes find it easier to concentrate on the answers. Break down each part of the answer to determine whether it applies correctly to the scenario. If any segment of an answer is wrong, the entire answer is wrong. Move on to the next option and assess whether all its components apply. Choose the answer that is 100 percent correct.
- 7** Pay close attention when a specific time frame is indicated, as this is a very important detail. So ensure you know the appropriate frequency of interventions. For example, to be effective, Collagenase (Santyl) needs to be applied daily. On the other hand, hydrocolloid dressings should not be applied daily due to their adhesive nature and the risk of medical adhesive-related skin injuries.
- 8** Build confidence by doing practice exams. Use relaxation techniques if you begin to feel anxious during the exam.

Disaster-Proof Your Prep

Unexpected events such as illness, family emergencies, or work schedule changes can disrupt even the most well-structured study plans. Stay on track with these adaptive strategies:



PLAN FOR FLEX DAYS

Build one to two catch-up days into your schedule per week.



USE PORTABLE TOOLS

Use study flashcards or audio lessons on the go.



FOCUS ON MICROLEARNING

Review one concept or wound type during downtime.



LEAN ON YOUR NETWORK

Study groups, [online communities](#), and peers can help you refocus.



STAY CONNECTED

Watch WCEI's on-demand [Rapid Response: Managing Wounds During Disasters](#) webinar for inspiration and resilience strategies.

Certification FAQ

Q: Which wound care certifications are available?

A: Common boards include NAWCO (WCC®), ABWM (CWCA®, CWS®, CWSP®), and WOCNCB (CWCN®, CWOCN®, etc.).

Q: How do I register?

A: Visit each board's website for application instructions, eligibility requirements, and fees.

Q: What's the exam format like?

A: Most exams include multiple-choice questions with case-based scenarios. Check your board's handbook for specifics.

Q: How should I schedule my exam?

A: Plan to test within two to three weeks after completing your review period. Choose a quiet window in your work schedule.

Q: What if I don't pass the first time?

A: Many clinicians succeed on their second attempt. Use your results as feedback to fine-tune your study approach.

Q: What credentials are required for someone to be eligible?

A: Anyone can take our certification course. If you're a nurse, physical therapist, occupational therapist, physician, or dietician, you may meet the credential board's eligibility requirements to take the certification exam. Visit the following sites to determine your eligibility.

[NAWCO](#)

[ABWM](#)

[WOCNCB](#)



NEXT STEPS

- ☐ Complete your self-assessment and study plan.
- ☐ Schedule your first study session.
- ☐ Explore additional resources at [wcei.net](https://www.wcei.net).

You've made it this far — keep going! Certification is more than an exam; it's a commitment to excellence in patient care.

Remember, **preparation builds confidence**, and confidence leads to success.

About WCEI

The Wound Care Education Institute was founded in 2002 to educate clinicians with evidence-based wound care instruction and improve patient outcomes. To date, over 40,000 clinicians have been wound care-certified or recertified after taking our courses.

Our Family of Brands

In 2018, WCEI joined the [Relias](#) family of brands — [Nurse.com](#), [Relias Academy](#), [FreeCME](#), and [Clinician.com](#) — which serves the entire healthcare continuum and shares the common mission of improving the lives of the most vulnerable members of society and those who care for them.

