



WELCOME to The ACN's NUTRITIONIST CERTIFICATION ARM

INTRODUCTION

The Certification Board For Nutrition Specialists (CBNS) was founded in 1993 by the American College of Nutrition (ACN) to help meet the growing demand for knowledgeable, responsible professional nutritionists. The CBNS was created as a national certifying body in response to the many advanced degree nutritionists (master's and doctoral level) from regionally accredited institutions that seek more formal recognition of their knowledge, skills and experience. CBNS certification provides the public a way to distinguish highly trained, competent nutritionists with assurance. The protected title of Certified Nutrition Specialist (CNS) is awarded by CBNS to those nutritionists meeting defined educational, experience and examination requirements. Continuing education requirements help ensure that standards of excellence are maintained. CNS diplomats are found in a variety of professional settings in private practice, public and community health care, universities and industry. Since 1998, CBNS certification has been extended to include physicians with similar expertise and experience in basic and applied nutrition. Some of the most recognized names in the field of nutrition hold the CNS credential.

WHAT IS A NUTRITIONIST?

A nutritionist is a health specialist who devotes his/her professional activity exclusively to food/nutrition science, preventive nutrition, diseases related to nutrient deficiencies, and the use of nutrient manipulation to enhance the clinical response to human diseases. Nutritionists spend a significant part of their training in developing communication skills that enable them to engage in effective nutrition counseling of both healthy and ill individuals. Nutritionists are graduates of regionally or nationally accredited institutions, at the master's, doctoral or post baccalaureate professional degree level, that certify advanced intensive training in human nutrition and related sciences. Extensive post-graduate experience is required, i.e., work activity in the field, with documented results. Finally, a passing grade on a comprehensive examination covering the breadth of both basic and clinical nutrition is required.

NUTRITIONIST SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Nutritionists' scope of practice consists of expertise in:

1. Taking and evaluating patients' nutritional and medical histories
2. Obtaining urine and other non-invasive samples (hair, etc.)
3. Ordering laboratory tests

4. Developing plans of nutritional therapy and counseling
5. Engaging in patient follow-up to assess outcomes of nutritional therapy and counseling
6. Making appropriate referrals to other health care specialists

These nutrition related functions are performed by nutritionists with a high degree of excellence. The nutritionist does not specifically specialize, nor hold him/herself out as being expert, in kitchen management, management of private, public, and governmental food facilities, menu planning, labor relations, and other technical matters within the purview of the dietitian.

WHAT IS A CERTIFIED NUTRITION SPECIALIST (CNS)?

A CNS has an advanced degree (master's, doctoral, or professional level), in nutrition or closely allied subject, and has additionally met the stringent requirements of the American College of Nutrition (ACN)'s certifying arm, the Certification Board For Nutrition Specialists (CBNS). Since 1995, this has included successful performance on a rigorous written examination covering the broad science of nutrition, ranging from basic aspects through clinical and research applications. CNS's are required to maintain their certification by earning extensive continuing nutrition education (CNE) credits, generally through attendance at educational programs in nutrition, such as ACN's annual scientific/clinical meetings. CNS's are required to be active members of ACN.

CBNS OFFICERS:

- President: Harry Preuss, MD, FACN, CNS
- Vice President: Penelope Edwards, MPH, CNS
- Secretary: Carolyn Katzin, MSPH, CNS
- Coordinator: Pearl Small, MA

CBNS MAILING ADDRESS AND CONTACT DATA

Certification Board For Nutrition Specialists

Att: Pearl Small, CBNS Coordinator

300 S. Duncan Ave. Suite 225

Clearwater, FL 33755

Phone: (727) 446 - 6086; Fax: (727) 446-6202

E-mail to: Office@cert-nutrition.org

Web Site: www.cert-nutrition.org

RATIONALE FOR PROFESSIONAL NUTRITIONIST CERTIFICATION

The pivotal roles of nutrition in the maintenance of health, prevention of disease, and management of chronic conditions are widely recognized. Because the complex physical and chemical processes of metabolism that are necessary for the maintenance of health and well being depend on nutritional status, the basic and applied nutritional sciences are integral to the life sciences. In addition, the use of

individual nutrients in therapeutic amounts (“nutritional pharmacology”) increasingly is becoming incorporated into mainstream medical treatment and health maintenance programs.

These trends in modern scientific disease prevention and treatment have increased the demand for innovative, responsible, and creative professional nutritionists. The responsibility for educating and training these professionals is being borne by regionally accredited graduate (post-baccalaureate) programs offering advanced degrees in basic and applied nutrition sciences and in fields closely allied to nutrition. In general, graduates of these advanced degree programs have higher level of competence and a broader scope of knowledge than do individuals who have not received formal training beyond the undergraduate level.

The CBNS endorses voluntary certification for all individuals fulfilling advanced degree educational and experience eligibility criteria. Voluntary certification provides formal recognition that professional nutritionists have met rigorous and demanding eligibility requirements, including postgraduate education, subsequent supervised practices a professional nutritionist, and by examination, demonstration of depth and breadth of knowledge appropriate for effective practice in the profession of nutrition. The primary intent of a certification program is to provide assurance that all those certified as Certified Nutrition Specialists meet or exceed these requirements. The specific purposes of the certification process of the Certification Board for Nutrition Specialists are to:

- 1) Develop objective, fair, and appropriate standards against which professional knowledge, ability, and competence in nutrition science and its application can be evaluated.
- 2) Provide a means of measuring professional nutritionists against these standards;
- 3) Encourage continued personal learning and inquiry, professional growth, adherence to ethical values, and compliance with ethical standards, thereby promoting professionalism among nutritionists.
- 4) Acknowledge, through a formal, voluntary credential, professional nutritionists who meet the competency standards set by the Board and who have fulfilled the requirements for the designation, Certified Nutrition Specialist;
- 5) Achieve national recognition of the validity of the designation, Certified Nutrition Specialist, as identifying those nutritionists with advanced training in nutrition science and its application who embody the principles of professionalism (knowledge, understanding, skills, experience, competence, and ethical behavior).

The CBNS is the only organization providing voluntary certification of professional nutritionists with advanced training in nutrition science. In addition to nutritionists at the master’s and doctoral levels, the CBNS offers certification to licensed physicians, dentists, podiatrists, optometrists, chiropractors, registered dietitians, pharmacists, nurses, and other health professionals with graduate degrees with significant experience as professional nutritionists.

The CBNS is composed entirely of professional nutritionists, each with years of invaluable experience. Acting as a Board, these nutritionists have developed a process for the voluntary

certification of professional nutritionists, based on education and experiential eligibility criteria as well as the ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills through a formal examination process. Attaining certification as a Certified Nutrition Specialist will attest to the qualifications, advanced skills, and professional stature of a nutritionist.

In addition, the Certification Board for Nutrition Specialists:

- 1) Is dedicated to the advancement of basic and applied nutritional sciences and to their ethical and humanistic application to the betterment of the human condition;
- 2) Recognizes the need for strong scientific training and advanced education for professional nutritionists;
- 3) Supports the participation of professional nutritionists in independent evaluations of scientific data and related literature without fear of persecution, political reprisal, or loss of credential;
- 4) Encourages all nutritionists to uphold these fundamental principles.

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The Certification Board for Nutrition Specialists (CBNS) administers an examination for professional nutritionists seeking certification as a Certified Nutrition Specialist (CNS) several times each year at different sites. The tentative examination schedule for 2003 and 2004 is as follows:

April 24, 2004	Boston, Chicago, Clearwater, Florida, Dayton, Ohio, Los Angeles, New York City, Tempe, AZ, Washington, DC
October 1, 2004	Long Beach, California

ELIGIBILITY

Certification as a Certified Nutrition Specialist (CNS) requires an advanced degree, professional experience, and a passing score on the CBNS certifying examination. Authorization to sit for the examination requires the following documentation:

- 1) For professional nutritionists, an advanced degree (masters or doctoral level) from a regionally accredited institution in the field of nutrition, or a field allied to nutrition and relevant to the practice of nutrition. A list of eligible educational institutions is compiled by the American Council on Education (Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education). Advanced degrees earned from institutions outside the United States will be considered by the CBNS on an individual basis.
- 2) For licensed health care professionals (includes holders of MD, DO, DC, DDS, and DPM licenses), documentation of graduation from an accredited institution and a current license to practice within the US or country of residence are required. In addition, documentation of additional formal or structured informal course work in nutrition is required.
- 3) All applicants are required to complete by the time of the examination either: a) 1000 hours of

supervised professional experience in nutrition related activities, or b) 4000 hours of independent experience as a professional nutritionist in a professional setting. Professional experience may include, singly or in combination, experience as a nutritionist, dietitian, nutrition researcher, or public policy nutritionist. Documented self-employment is acceptable. This experience may not include work for which graduate credits were awarded while matriculated in a full or part-time program of the degree-conferring graduate study being cited to satisfy the educational requirement noted above. The Credentials Committee of the CBNS will decide on the applicability of unusual experience in individual cases.

4) Successful candidates for CNS certification are urged to become members/fellows of the American College of Nutrition (ACN). Membership for the year 2003, will be processed at a 50% reduction (i.e. \$75.00). All benefits of membership, including a subscription to the Journal of the American College of Nutrition, will accrue.

Application Procedure
(for applications call 727-446-6086)

1) Mail completed application forms to:

Certification Board for Nutrition Specialists
Att: Pearl Small, CBNS Coordinator
300 South Duncan Avenue, Suite 225
Clearwater, Florida 33755

2) Include a check or money order for \$350.00. Arrange for submission of graduate or professional school transcripts with evidence of degrees awarded, and documentation of professional experience as a nutritionist. Checks and money orders should be payable to the CBNS. Payment by credit card is acceptable (MasterCard, Visa & Discover). A credit card authorization form is included on the application page to be signed and returned with the application if you wish to charge this to your credit card. Please detach this authorization and return with application.

3) Documentation of professional experience may take the form of a resume, curriculum vitae, or preferably letters or certification from supervisors. In all cases, the materials provided must be adequate to allow an evaluation of the eligibility of the applicant.

4) Application forms must be accompanied by all fees and must be received by specified deadline dates.

5) Voluntary withdrawals (for any reason) will be honored up to two weeks before the examination date, and the examination fee of \$ 300.00 will be refunded.

CBNS EXAMINATION SPECIFICATIONS/SCHEDULE

Examinees for certification as Certified Nutrition Specialists will be allowed four hours to complete the examination. The examination questions will be drawn from a bank of questions submitted by invited experts. The examination will consist of 200 questions, all in single-answer, multiple choice

format, and will cover the broad spectrum of basic and applied nutritional science. Themes such as nutritional science, nutrition assessment, treatment outcomes, epidemiology, and integration of these areas are threaded throughout examination. An adjusted score of 65% is required to pass the examination. A diploma acknowledging certification as a Certified Nutrition Specialist (CNS) will be sent to successful candidates. Candidates whose examination scores are below the minimum acceptable standard may request manual confirmation of their examination score upon payment of a \$50.00 regrading fee. Unsuccessful candidates are eligible to sit for a subsequent examination (during the next two years) by submission of a re-examination application and a re-examination fee of \$150.00.

The refundable examination fee is \$ 300.00 plus a non-refundable application fee of \$ 50.00. Full payment is required upon submission the application with the required graduate and professional school transcripts and documentation of qualifying professional experience. The \$ 50.00 application fee is not refundable, whereas the examination fee will be refunded if requested two weeks before the examination date. Applicants meeting the educational and experience requirements, and who have paid the application fees in full, will be notified of their eligibility, and the site and time of the examination. Applicants deemed ineligible will also be notified and the \$ 300.00 examination fee will be refunded. Deadline dates for filing the examination application will appear on the application form. Registrations will not be accepted after the deadline.

A passing grade on the examination will maintain the certification of successful examinees for five years (i.e., until December 31, 2008 for those certified in 2003). Recertification is required at five year intervals and this includes a recertification fee and documentation of 75 credit hours of acceptable continuing nutrition educational (CNE) credits. A yearly maintenance fee is also required to permit CBNS to provide continuing logistic support for successful examinations, and maintain a data base for CNS's.

CBNS STUDY GUIDE

A new 3rd Edition Study Guide to assist in preparation for the examination is available at a cost of \$125.00 which includes postage and handling. If you wish to purchase the study guide please indicate on the authorization form.

RECERTIFICATION

Certified Nutrition Specialists (CNS) are required to recertify every five years from their date of certification. A recertification fee and 75 continuing nutrition education credits (CNE's) are mandatory to maintain the CNS designation.

Continuing Nutrition Education CONTINUING NUTRITION EDUCATION (CNE)

The term Continuing Nutrition Education (CNE) refers to participation as a learner (attendee; student; trainee) in formal structured educational opportunities that are targeted to the practitioners of professional disciplines that build upon previous knowledge, skills, training and experience in nutrition. Activities during which nutritional practices are explained and described in a balanced and objective manner that includes frank discussion of the nature, degree, and reliability of the available relevant scientific evidence are appropriately considered Continuing Nutrition Educational activities.

In contrast, activities whose purpose is to advocate the use of specific products for the purpose of promoting sales, especially in the absence of relevant scientific evidence, are not considered to be of appropriate intellectual quality to qualify as professional quality CNE.

Although many valuable services provided by professional nutritionists have educational components, they are more justifiably professional activities (such as direct dietary counseling, the interpretation of clinical chemistry profiles, formal teaching, oral presentations, conversations with representatives of commercial enterprises, authorship, etc), and do not necessarily contribute to the continuing education of the nutritionist per se. Nonetheless, self directed education is recognized as a valuable component of any life long professional Continuing Nutrition Education program

Currently, the CBNS recognizes primarily CNE credits earned by Certified Nutrition Specialists for participation in education opportunities in the broad field of nutrition that are sponsored by organizations that are accepted by the American College of Nutrition, the American Dietetic Association, the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, the Accreditation Council on Pharmaceutical Education, the American Osteopathic Association and the American Medical Association. Other meetings and other activities may be eligible based on their "common sense" validity as educational activities.

CNE REQUIREMENTS:

An average of 15 CNE credits per year (or 75 credits per 5 year recertification period) is required. Documentation should be obtained by the individual (attendance certificates indicating CNE's awarded) and be sent to the CBNS office when applying for recertification. Maintain a file for CNE credits; do not send CNE data until recertifying.

HUMAN NUTRITION REVIEW COURSE SCHEDULE

The American College of Nutrition and CBNS offers a 20-hour Review Course in the fundamentals of Nutrition, targeted to physicians, advanced degree nutritionists, and other health care professionals. This course is designed to help prepare participants in the application of nutrition to their health care practices. It also serves as a review for qualified health care professionals who wish to sit for the Certification Board For Nutrition Specialists certifying examination to become Certified Nutrition Specialists. The course provides a comprehensive CBNS 3rd Edition Study Guide, 16 hours of lectures and 4 hours of discussion on two consecutive days and carries 16 CME/CNE credits. This course has been expanded to 2 1/2 days to include a detailed discussion of nutritional biochemistry statistics and food safety. An additional 4 CME/CNE credits will be awarded.

March, 26th, 27th, 28th, 2004

**New York City (2 1/2 Day
Week-end Review Course)**

April, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 2004

**Chicago (2 1/2 Day Week-
end Review Course)**

Interested individuals should contact Pearl Small at the American College of Nutrition at 727-446-

6086 for applications.