

## **New ACSM Specialty Certification**

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) is pleased to announce the offering of a new specialty certification. This certification is an industry-first for professionals working in the area of health and fitness, specifically to work with individuals who have been affected by cancer. This specialty certification was developed by a group of subject matter experts representing ACSM and the American Cancer Society (ACS) and was developed with a grant given by the ACS.

Over 10 million cancer survivors are alive today, and because living a healthy, active lifestyle is so important for these individuals, ACSM professionals have the potential to make a significant contribution by earning the specialty certification to safely and effectively work with people who have been affected by cancer.

ACSM is performing BETA testing in preparation for a live exam. BETA testing begins Monday, February 4, 2008 with a final testing date of Monday, March 31, 2008. The BETA exam is offered through Authorized Pearson VUE® Testing Centers. Individuals interested in BETA testing must meet the eligibility requirements to participate. The cost of the BETA exam is \$99USD and is a voucher-only exam. Individuals who would like to participate must request a voucher through the ACSM National Office by e-mailing [certification@acsm.org](mailto:certification@acsm.org). Once the candidate has confirmed eligibility and received the voucher, he/she can register on-line at [www.pearsonvue.com](http://www.pearsonvue.com) or by calling (888)-883-2276.

Registration begins on Monday, February 4th. Due to the nature of BETA testing, immediate results will not be available. Candidates will be notified in May 2008 of their exam result (pass or not pass). If a passing score has been achieved the candidate will earn the credential. If a candidate does not receive a passing score, he/she will be given the opportunity to re-test during the live version of the exam.

### **What are the minimum requirements to take the exam?**

- An ACSM or NCCA-accredited certification **AND**
- Certification in Adult CPR & AED **AND**
- Bachelor's Degree (in any field) **AND** 500 hours of experience training older adults or individuals with chronic conditions  
**OR** 10,000 hours of experience training older adults or individuals with chronic conditions

*Hours of experience with older adults or individuals with chronic conditions include: exercise testing, exercise prescription, group or individual training, group or individual client education, academic coursework and/or continuing education (relating to older adults or individuals with chronic conditions), internships or observational hours in an oncology setting and/or cancer rehabilitation program.*

**What is a common work setting for individuals seeking this certification?**

- Commercial Health clubs
- Community/public health settings
- Hospital/rehabilitative
- Research-based university/clinical
- Corporate Fitness Centers
- Private

**What is the scope of practice for this Specialty Certification?**

- Trains men and women diagnosed with cancer who:
  - were recently diagnosed with cancer and have not yet begun treatment
  - are receiving treatment
  - are classified as class A or B according to the American Heart Association (AHA) risk stratification as outlined in the most recent edition of ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription
  - do not have relative or absolute contraindications to exercise testing as outlined in the most recent edition of ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription
- Performs appropriate/relevant fitness assessments
- Makes appropriate exercise recommendations
- Demonstrates a basic understanding of cancer diagnoses, surgeries, treatments, symptoms and side effects

**What are the exam specifications?**

**BETA Exam Time:** 180 minutes (3 hours)

**Total BETA Exam Seat Time:** 205 minutes; includes tutorial, survey, and non-disclosure agreement prior to exam and 10 minutes at the completion of the exam for comments

**Total Questions:** 130

**What is the exam blueprint?**

Exercise Physiology & Related Exercise Science	10%
Health Appraisal, Fitness & Clinical Exercise Testing	15%
Exercise Prescription & Programming	22%
Nutrition & Weight Management	7%
Human Behavior & Counseling	8%
Safety, Injury Prevention & Emergency Procedures	9%
Program Administration, Quality Assurance & Outcome Assessment	5%
Clinical & Medical Considerations	12%
Physiology, Diagnosis & Treatment	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **What will I be tested on?**

A body of knowledge delineated into **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs)** has been developed specifically for this specialty certification by subject matter experts (SMEs). The SMEs developed the KSAs specifically for fitness professionals working with people affected by cancer. In addition to meeting the minimum eligibility requirements and knowing the KSAs, the following are also recommended competencies.

#### **Recommended Competencies:**

- Knowledge of and ability to discuss cancer diagnoses, surgeries, treatments, and side effects with the cancer survivor and his/her family and health care providers
- Knowledge of and ability to discuss how exercise may improve quality of life following a cancer diagnosis, and potentially improve prognosis
- Knowledge and ability to describe cancer specific benefits and risks of exercise training before, during and after cancer treatment
- Knowledge, skill and ability to select an appropriate exercise program and/or modify the exercise program based on time since diagnosis and cancer-specific surgeries, treatments, side effects, and other non-cancer related morbidities
- Understanding of the potential impact of cancer therapy, especially surgery and chemotherapy, in putting cancer patients at increased risk of injury and other complications, such as lymphedema, from exercise
- Knowledge to evaluate adverse responses to exercise training and how to appropriately modify exercise program and/or when to seek clinical consultation, especially for the client who is currently receiving treatment.

#### **The following subject matter experts were key contributors to the development of the certification.**

##### **Kerry Courneya, Ph.D.**

Professor and Canada Research Chair in Physical Activity and Cancer  
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation  
University of Alberta  
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##### **Melinda Irwin, Ph.D., MPH**

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**Anna Schwartz, Ph.D.**  
Professor & Scottsdale Healthcare Cancer Research Endowed Chair  
College of Nursing  
Arizona State University  
Phoenix, AZ

**Dr. Roanne Segal, M.D., FRCP(C)**  
Medical Oncologist, Regional Cancer Center  
Clinician Scientist - OHRI  
Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Ottawa  
Ottawa, Ontario

**Valuable Team Members include:**

ACS Staff: Colleen Doyle

ACSM Staff: Richard Cotton, Jane Senior, Hope Wood, Beth Muhlenkamp, Kathy Berlin

**The following \*subject matter experts comprised the external review panel to review the body of knowledge during the development of the certification.**

**Claudio Battaglini, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Professor  
Director of the Get Real & Heel Breast Cancer Research Program  
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**Ann Bentz, Ph.D**  
Assistant Professor, Sports and Exercise Science  
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**Tim Burnham, Ph.D.**  
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\*Denotes item writing contribution