

## Guidelines for Creation of CME Questions

The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery, Inc. grants Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits to our readers for the successful completion of examinations based on the content of articles in our publications. As the content expert of your article, you are best qualified to identify the major “take-home” finding(s) of your article. We require authors to submit **3** original questions to be used for CME.

**Questions must be written in a standardized, multiple-choice, single-best-response format. Please do not submit true/false or K-type (e.g. A&B, A only, B only, etc.) questions.**

Our [CME Questions Submission Form](#) is intended to make this process as simple and straightforward as possible; if you have questions or suggestions, please e-mail [editorial@jbjs.org](mailto:editorial@jbjs.org).

**NOTE: The questions must be written on the [CME Questions Submission Form](#) and then uploaded as a separate file on the manuscript management website (Editorial Manager).**

### 10 General Question Writing Tips:

1. Each question should consist of a single, clearly formulated problem, ending with a question or a statement to be completed.
2. The most engaging questions utilize a patient-care scenario. When possible, create a brief clinical scenario then pose the question. Include only information needed to answer the question. The correct answer should be related to the key finding(s) of your article.
3. If your article is original research and the content is not applicable to clinical practice at this time, a patient-care scenario may not be useful. In this case, please construct your questions focusing on the most important finding(s) from your research.
4. Pose the question clearly. It should be possible to arrive at the correct answer without looking at all of the options. Avoid vague or non-specific questions such as “Which of the following statements is true?”
5. Use positively-phrased questions such as “Which of the following is...?” Avoid negatively-phrased questions such as “All of the following are correct EXCEPT:” or “Which of the following is NOT correct?”
6. Please focus the questions on the most important “take home” points of your article. Avoid asking questions that focus on memorization of minor details. The purpose of the CME questions is to evaluate whether the reader learned the important concepts included in the article.
7. All of the distractors (incorrect responses) should be plausible (e.g., present common misconceptions) and homogeneous (i.e., be in the same category as the correct answer. If the correct answer is a diagnosis, the distractors should be diagnoses).
9. Do **not** use “none of the above” or “all of the above” as responses.
10. The correct answer must be the best of the responses. Do not include responses that *might* be correct depending on regional or well-respected differences of opinion.

Below is a step-by-step process that may help you write the test questions.

## 5 Steps to Writing CME Questions

**1. Make a list of the 3 most important “take-home” points from your article.** This may be a condition that is difficult to diagnose; a treatment; the results of a study; or how orthopaedic practice and patient care are likely to be affected.

### EXAMPLE

Article Title: What’s New in Hand Surgery

Important Topics: 1. Complications following endoscopic carpal tunnel release  
2. Clinical outcomes of volar plate application and external fixation  
3. Intercarpal injuries after radial fractures

**2. Use the selected topic to write the stem of the question**

Topic: Complications following endoscopic carpal tunnel release

Question Stem: A 45-year-old female patient presents with recurrent pain, numbness and tingling in the thumb and index finger. She was diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome 1 year ago and nonoperative treatment has not relieved her symptoms. You are discussing surgical options with the patient and should inform her that which of the following is more likely after endoscopic release?

**3. Use the important point to write the key or correct answer**

**A. higher incidence of nerve injury\***

**4. Next, write the distracters or incorrect answers.** In this case, these could be things that are not likely after endoscopic release or complications that occur after open release rather than endoscopic or with other upper extremity procedures.

- B. longer time off of work
- C. greater scar sensitivity
- D. reduced grip strength

**5. Identify the section (e.g. Introduction, Results, etc.) within the article and provide 1 sentence from that section that supports the correct answer**

Correct Answer Location: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Section

Supporting Statement: Our study found a higher incidence of nerve injury with endoscopic release.