Advanced Qualification in Headache Medicine
AQH© Spring 2027 Certification Timeline

Step 1: Explore Further & Collect Documentation



Until February 14

- Visit updated AQH© page
- Review eligibility and exam requirements
- Begin gathering documentation

Step 2: Submit Application Online



February 15 – March 19

- Complete online application, test location
- Upload required documentation
- Pay examination fee

Step 3: Application Status & Schedule Examination



March 29 – April 16

- Applicants notified of acceptance status
- Accepted candidates schedule examination date, time and testing option - test center or online proctoring

Step 4: Take the Examination



May 3 – May 21

- Access scheduled testing option
- Complete AQH examination

Step 5: Results & Recognition



June 2027

- Receive notification of results
- Recognition on NHF website & newsletter
- Provided a frameable certificate

2027 Fall Examination Dates

• August 16, 2027 – September 17, 2027	Application Online Link Open
• September 27, 2027– October 15, 2027	Scheduling Window
• November 1, 2027 – November 19, 2027	Examination Window

www.headaches.org/aqh/

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Benefits of Advanced Qualification in Headache Medicine (AQH©) Certification

Be Recognized for Your Knowledge in Headache Medicine

AQH© Certification recognizes your knowledge and experience in caring for the most prevalent neurological disease in the world.

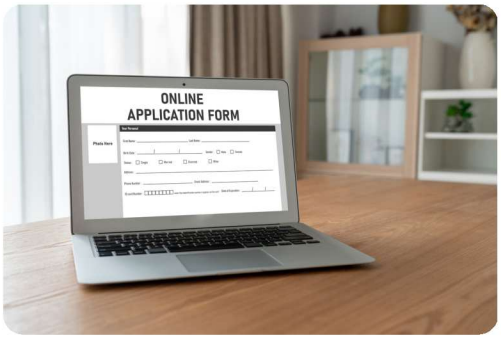
Demonstrate your headache experience in the classification, diagnosis, treatment and management of primary headache, secondary headache, painful lesions of the cranial nerves and other facial pain.

Validation Recognition as a health care provider capable of providing quality care for people living with migraine disease and headache disorders.	**Dedication** Demonstrates your dedication and commitment to the latest developments in headache medicine.
Recognition Provider Finder Listing on www.headaches.org, where patients search to locate certified headache providers near them.	**Credibility** Increased credibility of headache medicine experience, when seeking justification of treatment necessity during reviews with public and private payers.

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Advanced Qualification in Headache Medicine
AQH© Spring 2027 Application

February 15 – March 19, 2027



Welcome to the Spring 2027 AQH© Examination Online Application

- **Opens:** Monday, February 15 at 8:00amCT
- **Closes:** Friday, March 19 at 5:00pmCT

Link: ***Announced February 15th***

#1: Complete Application & Choose: Test Center or Online
#2: Upload Required Documentation
#3: Pay Examination Fee of $875.00

AQH© Certification: Five (5) Years

Fees: Upfront with Application	Amount
Application Fee - Non-Refundable	$375.00
Examination Administration Fee	$500.00

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AQH© Examination & Documentation

Purpose of the Examination

Recognition that a healthcare provider has passed a rigorous high-stakes examination that demonstrates they meet the minimum competency requirements and standards of knowledge set by experts in headache medicine. AQH© Certification Period: Five (5) Years.

Examination Specifications

The AQH© proctored examination consists of 150 questions and candidates have 3 hours and 20 minutes (200 minutes including optional break).
The computer-based exam is available either in person at a test center, or online using your computer at a location of your choice. (ideally: personal computer, hard-wire connection).

Documentation Requirements

Each applicant must provide documentation of the following criteria-

1. License: Copy of current medical license.

2. CV: Copy of current CV.

3. Professional Colleague Letter(s) - on Letterhead

Verifying (1) prescriptive authority and (2) experience with at least one of the following -

A. A minimum of 25% of practice time in independent direct diagnosis, treatment, prescribing, and management of headache for the last 36 months **PRIOR to application** (or for the last 60 months if not continuous), **or**

B. Completion of an accredited Neurology residency (MD/DO), and manages headache patients, or

C. Completion of an accredited headache fellowship, **or**

D. At least one or more years of experience at either a comprehensive headache center or Veterans Affairs (VA) Headache Center of Excellence (HCoE).

4. Continuing Education focused in Headache Medicine

- Completion of at least 50 hours, over the last 36 months prior to application, with ideally at least 20 CME during the last 12 months.
  - Note: The Jefferson program at bit.ly/4wc2iOT is determined to be equivalent for 50 CME.
- CME must be AMA PRA Category 1 CME, issued by organizations accredited by the ACCME (Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education) or another Recognized Accreditor.
  - For purposes of eligibility to sit for the examination, the AQH review committee will **only** recognize **CME specifically focused in headache medicine**.
  - **If** you attend a meeting or conference that includes education in multiple therapeutic areas, you must **clearly identify the headache medicine education**, and the individual CME units specific to each of the headache medicine presentations and/or activities.
    - Note: The review committee **will not** search through pages of uploaded content to find the information if it is not clearly provided, and your application will be declined.

5. AQH© Fees, Terms and Policies

- Review all for readiness to attest to agreement/understanding during application process.
- Files located at:https://headaches.org/aqh/ *(about halfway down the page).*

Note: All documentation provided will be reviewed by the AQH application review team.

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Professional Colleague Letter - United States

(Email and Direct Phone Number of Colleague provided for verification)

Sample of Colleague Letter Documentation

Purpose of the One (1) Required Colleague Letter

Verifying (1)prescriptive authority and (2) experience with at least one of the following -

A. A minimum of 25% of practice time in independent direct diagnosis, treatment, prescribing, and management of headache for the last 36 months **prior to application** (or for the last 60 months if not continuous), **or**

B. Completion of an accredited Neurology residency (MD/DO), and manages headache patients, **or**

C. Completion of an accredited headache fellowship, **or**

D. At least one or more years of experience at either a comprehensive headache center or Veterans Affairs (VA) Headache Center of Excellence (HCoE).

Instructions for Colleague Letter(s):

1. Must utilize proper institution or medical group/organization letterhead.
2. Colleague can use sample text/template below or create own content.
3. Complete all information in sections 1 – 4 in text/template below.
4. Sign the letter using a handwritten signature, digitized signature, or electronic signature equivalent.
5. **Colleague email, direct phone, and mailing address must be included for verification purposes**.
6. Letter is uploaded into the online application.
7. Applicant might need more than one colleague letter if applicant doesn't meet the minimum requirement with one letter.
8. Questions? Contact AQH© Lead at AQH@headaches.org.

Sample Template Letter (on letterhead)

<Insert Date>

Dear AQH© Certification Department,

This letter serves as documentation of headache practice time for the individual listed below:

1. Applicant name and credentials
2. Number of years familiar with the applicant's practice pattern
3. Selection of Experience Required for Eligibility #A or #B or #C or #D from the Experience choices at the top of this page. Please include your role in being able to provide this verification
4. Other area(s) of practice that might be helpful to highlight

Sincerely,

<Insert signature per Instruction #4 above>

Name and Credentials:
Name of Institution or Group:
Full Address:
Direct Phone number:
Direct Email:

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AQH© Examination Preparation

Preparation Ideas

Prepare by considering some of the following optional resources (this list is not all-inclusive and should be considered only as a starting point). There is no "One" definitive resource.

1. **ICHD-3.org**
2. **Textbooks to consider**

- Comprehensive Migraine Management by Teshamae S. Monteith (Editor), Nina Riggins (Editor), Peter J. Goadsby (Editor) - Published October 27, 2025
  - Springer-ISBN-10: 3031869222; ISBN-13: 978-3031869228
- Headache and Facial Pain Medicine, 1st Edition, by Sait Ashina. Published October 10, 2024
  - McGraw Hill Medical - eBook ISBN(s): 9781264804986; ISBN: 9781264803125

3. **American Headache Society**

- Americanheadachesociety.org - Educational Meetings - In-Person and Virtual
- Resources Tab - Clinicians page and Primary Care page

4. **VuMedi.com - non-CME** - Search for headache and migraine content

- Peer-to-Peer education content. No charge for healthcare providers to sign up

AQH© Review Tool

Link to a checklist tool will be provided to accepted applicants.

- This is a review outline directing to topics that are addressed in the examination
  - Links to publication and online resources are from above ideas and blueprint content
  - Not meant to be a comprehensive guide, just a navigation checklist tool
    - It contains all of the resources already listed in the preparation section above

Examination Blueprint

AQH© covers topics in the following four content categories:

1. **Principles of Headache Medicine**
   - Etiology, Pathophysiology, Anatomy
   - Comorbidities
   - Pharmacology
2. **Headache Types & Classification**
   - Primary Headache
   - Secondary Headache
   - Neuropathies & Facial Pains
   - Special Considerations (Pediatric, Women, Elderly)
3. **Headache Evaluation & Diagnosis**
   - Patient History and Physical Examination
   - Neuroimaging Tests, Lumbar Puncture, Laboratory and Other Tests
4. **Headache Treatment Approaches**
   - Acute and Preventive Treatment
   - Pharmacologic and Non-Pharmacologic Treatment

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