Essentials in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery (EMIGS)
FAQs for Residents

EMIGS Overview

What is EMIGS?
EMIGS is a Gyn-specific comprehensive Training and Testing program. EMIGS is comprised of a validated Cognitive examination, an accompanying we-based Didactic component and a validated Manual skills examination of laparoscopic exercises (5) specific to gynecologic surgery using a LaparoBowl; a dedicated platform that is placed inside a standard laparoscopic trainer, simulating the pelvic cavity.

The goal is to provide residents, fellows, and practicing physicians an opportunity to learn the essentials of minimally invasive gynecologic surgery using structured, standardized and validated methods; and to test the basic knowledge and manual skills, with the ultimate goal of elevating Gyn surgical training and improving the quality of patient care.

What is on the EMIGS exam?
The exam includes two assessments: a computer-based multiple-choice cognitive assessment and a performance-based manual skills assessment consisting of five-skills performed on a standardized, FLS Laparoscopic trainer box. Those who successfully complete both components will have demonstrated the knowledge, judgement, and technical skills essentials of the performance of basic endoscopic skills.

Registration

Who is eligible to take the EMIGS exams?
EMIGS certification is available to all US OB/GYN residents.

What is included with an EMIGS registration?
Each EMIGS registration includes the following:

1. Unlimited access to the EMIGS Didactic 12 module series (81+ videos) during residency.
2. One exam voucher to schedule a Cognitive exam attempt with a certified proctor.
3. One exam voucher to schedule a Manual Skills exam attempt with a certified proctor.
4. One year membership in the AAGL. Includes access to JMIG, SurgeryU and Resident discussion forums.

How much does EMIGS cost?
The EMIGS program is $525 per resident.

The program director/coordinator for our residency program on the EMIGS registration site is not correct. How can I update this?
Please reach out to our support line here: support@emigs.aagl.org
We will need to update our EMIGS database prior to registration.

My residency program is not listed as an option in the dropdown list. How can I update this?
Please reach out to our support line here: support@emigs.aagl.org
We will need to update our EMIGS database prior to registration.

My program needs to pay via invoice/purchase order. Is this possible?
Yes, this is possible. Please reach out to our support line here: support@emigs.aagl.org
For a detailed invoice, we will need a list of resident names, and your program's contact information (mailing address). Once received, we will be able to generate an invoice for payment.

ABOG Requirements

Why is ABOG requiring Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB/GYN) Residents to take EMIGS to be eligible for certification?
Requiring completion of EMIGS is part of a broader initiative by ABOG to incorporate simulation and standardize the knowledge and training completed by OB GYN residents. It also establishes an additional objective measure that all U.S. Obstetricians and Gynecologists applying for primary specialty certification must meet. ABOG's goal is to assure OB GYN residents an opportunity to learn the essentials of minimally invasive gynecologic surgery in a consistent, scientifically accepted format, and to test cognitive, surgical decision-making and technical skills, all with the goal of improving the quality of patient care.

When does this requirement take effect?
The requirement to pass a manual skills assessment was announced in January 2018 for all physicians graduating from residency after May 31, 2020. In May 2022, ABOG approved EMIGS as an alternative to meet the standard for board eligibility. This requirement does not apply to candidates who graduated in prior academic years.

When does a candidate have to take EMIGS, and what does ABOG need for verification?
Candidates can take EMIGS at any time during residency, but the ideal time may be during the first or second year as residents are gaining more exposure to laparoscopy. Residents may apply, take, and receive their results for the QE regardless of where they are in their EMIGS certification process. Residents may apply for the QE without verification of EMIGS registration or completion of the EMIGS program.

Residency graduates who pass the Qualifying Examination will be required to provide documentation of EMIGS certification to become active candidates for the Certifying Exam.

My residency already requires training in EMIGS without requiring the examination. Will this meet the ABOG requirement for certification?
No, to meet the certification requirement, residents must take and pass both parts of the EMIGS exam and receive the certificate.

Do I have to complete EMIGS before I apply for the Qualifying Exam?
Candidates who are unable to complete EMIGS prior to the Qualifying Examination (QE) may still take the exam. However, residency graduates who pass the Qualifying Examination will be required to provide documentation of EMIGS certification to become active candidates for the Certifying Exam. This means that these physicians must achieve EMIGS certification to be eligible to move forward as an Active Candidate for OB/GYN certification.

EMIGS Curriculum

What is the EMIGS didactic curriculum?
Included in the EMIGS Program, EMIGS offers web-based didactic content, including 81 narrated video lectures covering 12 in-depth modules on the essentials of minimally invasive surgery, such as anatomy, electrosurgery, surgical planning, decision-making, complications, etc. The didactic program is designed to help you better understand and learn the essentials of endoscopic surgery and the minimum standards for cognitive and technical principles used in performing minimally invasive gynecologic surgical procedures. The didactic content does not have an exam.

Do Program Administrators have access to the EMIGS curriculum?
Yes, one Program Director or Coordinator per ACGME accredited program may have access to the EMIGS didactics free of charge. After an initial request and your credentials are verified via ACGME, you will be given access to the same modules residents use. If you are interested in this access, please reach out to cwagner@aagl.org, or khicks@aagl.org

How do I access the Didactic Modules?
If candidates would like to access the didactic modules, they will click here. This will take them to the didactic module host site, Teachable. If it is their first time logging into this system, they will click the “Sign Up” option, then the “Sign up with email” option. They will be prompted to verify their email address and set a password for the account. Once completed, they will have access to the modules. For every subsequent time they would like to log in, they will simply click the “Login” option and enter their verified email address and established password. Access to the didactic modules may take up to two business days following a successful EMIGS registration.

How long does didactic access last?
Access to the didactic modules lasts through residency. Even if residents complete both EMIGS exams, they will retain access to the modules until graduation.

Exam Prep

Where do I take EMIGS exams?
Both the Cognitive and Manual Skills portion of EMIGS will be completed online and proctored virtually by a real-time virtual proctor. There is no need to travel to a physical testing center or for certified program representatives to be present during the exams. EMIGS exams may be taken wherever the necessary equipment is present.

How do I practice the skills for the EMIGS test?
To practice the manual skills needed for the EMIGS examination, candidates will need to use the EMIGS LaparoBowl, and an FLS/Limbs and Things trainer box. AAGL has created a mobile friendly web page with all necessary videos and instructions here.

Cognitive Exam

What is the Cognitive assessment?
The Cognitive assessment consists of 122 multiple-choice questions, some of which include visuals and clinical scenarios. It is computer-based and designed to test the understanding and application of the essentials of endoscopic surgery with as much emphasis as possible on clinical judgement and intra-operative decision-making.

How do I begin the EMIGS Skills exam process?
To begin the EMIGS Cognitive Skills exam, candidates will log into the EMIGS Candidate Scheduling Portal. On the date of the scheduled exam, there will be a "Begin Exam" option instead of a "Schedule/Reschedule Exam" option. This will establish a connection with the proctor. The proctor will then establish a Zoom meeting. Note: In advance of your exam date, we advise that you install the Zoom desktop application (free) onto the laptop that is to be used during the exam as well as the smartphone you plan to use for communication The exam will begin after the proper connections and setup processes are complete.

How much time will it take to complete the Cognitive exam?
Candidates will have 120 minutes to complete the 122-question, multiple-choice Cognitive assessment.

When will I receive my EMIGS Cognitive exam result?
Results for Cognitive Exams will be provided immediately upon completion of the exam.

Skills Exam

What is covered in the EMIGS Manual Skills assessment?
The Manual Skills assessment consists of the five simulation exercises reflecting skills uniquely required in laparoscopic surgery including: sleeve-peg transfer; pattern cut; extracorporeal knot tying; intracorporeal knot tying; and vaginal cuff continuous running suture. Each task performance is scored on both precision (accuracy) and efficiency (time). All consumables for this exam will be sent in the EMIGS exam kit.

What is in the EMIGS exam kit?
The EMIGS exam kit contains all the consumable materials necessary for the skills exam. Test Kits contain one piece of two-ply gauze for the L2 pattern cut task, two short Penrose drains for the extra/intracorporeal (L3&L4) tasks, a long Penrose drain for the (L5) running stitch, three CT-2 silk braided sutures (L3-L5).

*Please note: If it is determined that any of the skills tasks could not be completed due to faulty materials, residents will be required to retake the affected task.
If it is determined a material failure was caused by the resident due to a mechanical error, no credit will be given for that task.

When will I receive my EMIGS exam kit?
Exam kits are shipped 2-4 weeks prior to the scheduled Manual Skills exam date.
IMPORTANT NOTE: Exam kits are not shipped upon registration. This is done to reduce risk of loss and deterioration of the consumables contained. All kits are shipped via FedEx in a large FedEx Pak padded envelope. The FedEx Pak will also include a prepaid return envelope. If residents are registered for EMIGS as part of a group, all kits will be shipped to the address provided by the program representative during the registration process. If residents register individually, the kit will be shipped to the address provided during the registration process, which is typically a residential address.

When will I receive my Skills exam result?
Results from the EMIGS Skills examination will be e-mailed approximately six weeks after the AAGL receives a completed exam kit. For privacy reasons, exam results are sent only to the residents via email.

Exam Scheduling

How do I schedule my EMIGS exams?
Upon registration, residents will receive an email with a link to their EMIGS Candidate Portal. Here, they will have the ability to select and schedule each exam. After selecting an exam, they will be brought to the website of our proctoring service, MonitorEDU, for scheduling.
Cognitive exams - may be scheduled within 24 hours of the desired exam date.
Skills exams - must be scheduled 3 weeks prior to the desired exam date to allow for processing, shipping, and receiving of the EMIGS exam kit.

On the day of my exam, how do I begin the EMIGS Skills exam?
To begin the EMIGS Skills exam, on the date of your scheduled exam, candidates will log into the EMIGS Candidate Scheduling Portal . There will be a “Begin Exam” option instead of a “Schedule/Reschedule Exam” option. Click this link. This will establish a connection with the proctor. The proctor will then establish a Zoom meeting. Note: In advance of your exam date, we advise that you install the Zoom desktop application (free) onto the laptop that is to be used during the exam as well as the smartphone you plan to use for communication The exam will begin after the proper connections and setup processes are complete.

Can I take the EMIGS exam again?
If candidates fail one or both parts of the assessment, they must retake whatever part was not completed successfully. The cost of retaking the Cognitive exam after a failed attempt is $150. The cost of retaking the Manual Skills exam after a failed attempt is $225. Please refer to the EMIGS Terms and Conditions for more information.

Can I reschedule an EMIGS exam?
EMIGS exams may be rescheduled at no cost if the exam is rescheduled at least 24 hours prior to the exam date/time. The cost of rescheduling an abandoned or missed (no-show) appointment for the Cognitive exam is $150. The cost of rescheduling an abandoned appointment or missed (no-show) for the Manual Skills exam is $225. All rescheduling may be done via the EMIGS Candidate Portal.

Does the AAGL offer exam accommodations for those who qualify?
In accordance with ADA guidelines, the AAGL offers reasonable exam accommodations. For details, please send an email to khicks@aagl.org.

General Information

Will I receive an EMIGS certificate?
Those who successfully complete both the educational and manual assessment components will receive a certificate of completion confirming that they have demonstrated the knowledge, judgement, and technical skills essential for the performance of basic laparoscopic surgery. This certificate does not expire.

EMIGS Recognition
Upon successful completion (passing score on both the Cognitive and Skills exams) of the EMIGS program, residents names will automatically be added to the AAGL EMIGS page for recognition purposes. If you have successfully completed the program but wish to be removed from our recognition page(s) on the AAGL website, please send an email to khicks@aagl.org. Removal takes 24-48 hours.

Where do I direct my questions regarding EMIGS?
For questions about the EMIGS Program, please email: support@emigs.aagl.org
For questions regarding OB/GYN certification requirements, please email ABOG at exams@abog.org.