



## Fundamentals of Laparoscopic Surgery FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ***What is FLS?***

The FLS program is a comprehensive, CD-ROM based (soon to be web-based) educational module and assessment tool designed to teach the fundamental knowledge, judgment and technical skills required in basic laparoscopic surgery. The learning and application of these fundamentals will help ensure a minimum standard of care for all patients undergoing laparoscopic surgery. FLS consists of cognitive learning, hands-on skills training and a proctored exam giving surgeons and surgeons-in-training the opportunity to assess and document their skills.

### ***What can I purchase from FLS?***

FLS packages are specifically structured to meet the purchaser's needs. An individual may purchase an FLS Individual package and review the study guides to prepare for taking the test at a regional Test Center, the SAGES Annual Meeting or ACS Clinical Congress. An institution or residency program can purchase an education package including multiple test vouchers and, with Package B or C, a laparoscopic trainer box. For larger programs, Education Package C also includes the option for group testing by an FLS test proctor.

### ***What is the FLS Trainer Box?***

The Laparoscopic Trainer Box is a device for surgical residents and practicing surgeons to develop psychomotor skills and dexterity required during the performance of basic laparoscopic surgery. The device is a portable unit that includes a set of accessories used to simulate specific surgical techniques.

### ***Do I have to buy the FLS Trainer Box?***

No, a different trainer box or simulator may be used to practice the FLS tasks. However, because the FLS Exam is a standardized, high-stakes exam, you must take the FLS manual skills test on the FLS Trainer Box.

### ***What do I learn from the FLS curriculum?***

FLS includes a multimedia presentation of didactic content with interactive patient scenarios and a presentation of "watch & do" exercises that focuses on manual skills training. The content is now available in a CD-ROM format and will soon also be available in a web-based format.

### ***What is a testing voucher?***

A testing voucher is the "admittance ticket" needed in order to take the FLS exam. Each voucher has a unique identification number and can be redeemed one time only. Test vouchers are included with the purchase of FLS individual package or with any educational package. Additional vouchers may be purchased.

### ***What is the FLS Exam?***

The exam includes two assessments, a computer-based 75 multiple-choice question cognitive assessment and a performance-based manual skills assessment consisting of five skills performed on the FLS Trainer Box. Those who successfully complete both the educational and assessment components will have demonstrated the knowledge, judgment and technical skills fundamental to the performance of basic laparoscopic surgery.

### ***What is covered in the FLS manual skills exam?***

The manual skill assessment consists of the five simulation exercises presented in the FLS CD-ROM educational module, reflecting the type of basic skills uniquely required in laparoscopic surgery. Such skills as ambidexterity, depth perception, hand-eye coordination and controlled movement of instruments are involved in all the exercises and others such as dissection, cutting, suturing, traction-countertraction are limited to one or more of the exercises.

**What is the cognitive assessment?**

The cognitive assessment consists of 75 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 basic fundamentals of laparoscopy with as much emphasis as possible on clinical judgment or intra-operative decision-making.

**Who is eligible to take the FLS Exam?**

Anyone is eligible to review the curriculum, but FLS certification is limited to senior residents, fellows, and practicing physicians.

**How does FLS work for large residency programs?**

FLS provides objective evidence to a residency program that its residents have gained the basic knowledge and skills fundamental to the performance of laparoscopic surgery before completing the residency program.

**I'm a practicing surgeon, why would I need the FLS Program?**

Many surgeons who were already in practice during the advent of the laparoscopic revolution learned basic information and skills that were still a work in progress. FLS will help to refresh those cognitive and technical skills and provides you with a way to document those skills.

**How much time will it take to complete the FLS Exam?**

You will have 90 minutes to complete the cognitive assessment that contains 70 to 75 multiple-choice questions. The manual skills assessment includes the five designated skills administered on the FLS Trainer Box and lasts approximately 30-45 minutes. Both are administered by a trained FLS proctor.

**Can I receive CME credits?**

SAGES is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor Continuing Medical Education for physicians. By completing the program, you will earn 5.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits for FLS educational activity.

**Where can I take the FLS exam?**

You can take the exam at the Annual SAGES Meeting and during the ACS Clinical Congress or at a FLS Regional Test Center.

**REGIONAL TEST CENTERS - UNITED STATES and CANADA**

Akron	Baltimore	Bethesda	Boston
Chicago	Cincinnati	Columbia, MO	Dallas
Detroit	Durham, NC	Fresno, CA	Honolulu
Houston	Los Angeles	Miami	Montreal
Nashville	Newark, DE	New York City	Philadelphia
Portland, OR	Seattle	Springfield, MA	St. Louis
Stanford, CA	Toronto	Vancouver	

**When will I receive my FLS exam scores?**

Typically, score reports will be mailed approximately two to three weeks after the testing date. For privacy reasons, scores will not be transmitted by telephone or facsimile. Those who successfully complete both the educational and assessment components will also receive a certification of completion confirming that they have demonstrated the knowledge, judgment and technical skills fundamental to the performance of basic laparoscopic surgery.

**Can I take the FLS exam again?**

If you fail one or both parts of the assessment, you must retake whatever part was not completed successfully, and there is a \$95.00 fee to retest. If one or both are still not passed after the first retake, then the participant must wait 6 months for the next retake. After three retakes a new registration process is required and both assessments must be undertaken anew even if one had been passed previously.

**How do I purchase the FLS Program?**

Download an Order Form by visiting [www.flsprogram.org](http://www.flsprogram.org) or call the SAGES office at 310.437.0544, ext. 121, and ask for one to be faxed or e-mailed to you. Complete the Order Form and return it with payment by check or credit card. If a purchase order is used, all payments must be made within 30 days.