

Congratulations!
You have chosen a
physician certified in:



Surgery of the Hand

by The American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery (ABOS)

Your hands, wrists and forearms are in the care of knowledgeable professionals who are well-trained to reduce pain and treat or repair these vital limbs.



What is the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery?

The American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery (ABOS) is an independent, non-profit organization that sets standards of education, training, and expertise for orthopaedic surgeons. The exams and assessment activities are written by orthopaedic surgeons who also must meet the standards set by their peers. These ABOS directors volunteer their time and expertise.

Founded in 1934, ABOS is one of 24 members of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Certifying boards serve the public and the medical profession by improving the quality of health care through setting professional standards for medical specialty practice.

Being **“certified”** is not the same as being **“licensed.”** A state requirement to practice medicine, licensure sets minimum competence requirements to diagnose and treat patients and is not specialty specific.

Board certification is voluntary. Being certified attests to a physician's advanced knowledge, skills, and training in a particular area of medicine, like orthopaedic surgery.

Find out if a physician is board-certified at abos.org

What is a Hand Surgeon?

A hand surgeon is a doctor who has been trained specifically to treat, repair, and restore hands, wrists, and forearms that have been damaged by injury or disease, or that are malformed at birth. A hand surgeon may be an orthopaedic, plastic, or general surgeon. The specialty training and experience they receive in treating the hands is similar and the certification exam is developed and administered by the Joint Committee on Surgery of the Hand, which includes the American Boards of Orthopaedic Surgery, Plastic Surgery, and Surgery.

Even though they are called “surgeons,” these doctors often recommend non-surgical treatments, including physical and occupational therapy to restore movement and reduce or eliminate pain.

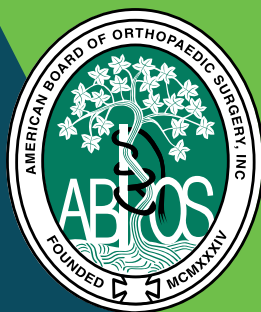
Conditions treated by hand surgeons include:

- Carpel tunnel syndrome
- Wrist pain
- Broken bones
- Torn ligaments and tendons
- Joint repair or replacement
- Inflammatory conditions and diseases, including arthritis

Why Should I Choose a Hand Surgeon Certified by ABOS?

ABOS-certified hand surgeons have more expertise than other specialists in all bones, tendons, ligaments, muscles, nerves, and blood vessels that hold our bodies upright, allow us to move, and protect our internal organs. They have 5 years of education and training in general orthopaedic surgery and pass examinations to become ABOS-certified orthopaedic surgeons before continuing their education and training for an additional year to focus more closely on the specific structure and movement of your hands, wrists, and forearms.

Your hands are the most flexible part of your skeleton. Usually, each hand has 27 bones, 27 joints, 34 muscles, and more than 100 ligaments and tendons. We use our hands for so many of our daily activities – dressing, writing, picking things up, kneading bread, creating art, touching a loved one – that the quality of care your hands receive is vital.



The American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery, Inc.

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Areas of focus for Orthopaedic Surgeons

Orthopaedic surgeons may treat a general range of injuries and conditions, or they may focus on one or more of these areas:

- Pediatric orthopaedics
- Adult reconstructive surgery (including joint replacement)
- Foot and ankle
- Shoulder and Elbow
- Spine
- Oncology (*cancerous and non-cancerous tumors of the bones, joints, and muscles*)
- Rehabilitation to increase strength and mobility

Some Orthopaedic surgeons complete an additional year of training and receive another (subspecialty) certification from the ABOS in sports medicine, as well as surgery of the hand.

Why should I choose a surgeon certified by the ABOS?

The ABOS' purpose is to assure you, the patient, that your board-certified surgeon meets high standards of knowledge, training, and competence to provide outstanding care.

ABOS-Certified Orthopaedic Surgeons are well trained.

- They have graduated from an accredited medical school.
- They have received 5 years of training in an accredited orthopaedic surgery residency program.

ABOS-Certified Orthopaedic Surgeons have been carefully evaluated.

- They sit for an 8-hour computer-based examination.
- After 9-12 months of practice, their medical abilities and professionalism are reviewed by their peers (other doctors and nurses they have worked with directly), who send their evaluations to the ABOS. Only those rated positively are allowed to continue in the certification process.
- They are given an oral examination by certified Orthopaedic Surgeons who assess the candidate's orthopaedic skills and competence, based on 12 of his/her recent cases.

After passing the oral examination, a physician receives ABOS Board Certification, and patients like you can be confident your orthopaedic surgeon is well-prepared to offer you high-quality care.

ABOS-Certified Orthopaedic Surgeons Stay Up-to-Date throughout Their Careers

- Board-Certified orthopaedic surgeons maintain their certification through continuing medical education activities and practice improvement projects that help ensure they stay informed of medical advances and new best practices in the field.
- Once every 10 years, they submit a list of recent surgeries to other ABOS-certified Orthopaedic Surgeons who review and evaluate the quality of their work as well as have their medical abilities and professionalism reviewed by other orthopaedic surgeons
- They also must complete an oral, written, or continuing knowledge assessment to renew their certification.

Our Mission

To ensure safe, ethical, and effective practice of orthopaedic surgery, the ABOS maintains the highest standards for education, practice and conduct through examination, certification, and maintenance of certification for the benefit of the public.

Our Vision

To improve the quality of care and outcomes for patients, the ABOS will establish and maintain high standards for competence and lifelong education of board-certified orthopaedic surgeons.

