

**Kathleen:** Hey folks! I hope the break from MCM gave you a second to catch your breath after an intense first few weeks. As you shift back to MCM, there is going to be a lot of content to review in a short period of time. I want to share tidbits of what worked well for me to start. I think much of what you hear about school beforehand is meant to scare you a little... the drinking from a firehose analogy and all the lectures on how to study/what to do/what not to do/etc. I think a little fright at the beginning gives you a push to find study strategies that work for you sooner rather than later. The scariness doesn't last forever though – I promise! Over-study a little now in MCM so that you can figure out what works for you, then settle into a groove for later units.

I know you have been overwhelmed with advice so far and probably don't know where to start. My biggest piece of advice for you is once you find a study strategy that you are confident works for you, run with it. People will always talk and say they do XYZ, and if I listened to everyone I would go to lecture, do Joe's Deck, do Anking, use three million outside resources, do UWorld everyday and who knows what else. There is physically not enough time in the day to do everything, so find some things that generally work for you and adapt as you need for each unit.

MCM is a unit I found to be very Upstate specific and nitpicky but doable. Here was my study plan that I used to be successful in MCM:

- I went to lecture (yikes, I know).
- I came home and made a big list of all the learning objectives from the lectures that day. I set a thirty-minute timer per lecture. I wrote out everything I remembered about the learning objectives associated with that lecture on my whiteboard – whether that was a mind map, diagrams, lists, whatever made sense in my brain. After writing what I knew, I would fill in gaps of what I did not remember about the learning objectives by reviewing the PowerPoint or handout in the time remaining within my thirty minutes. When the thirty-minute timer was up, I was done with that lecture for the day. Some lectures took less than 30 minutes, others probably needed more, but in that thirty minutes that's all I gave myself and I was able to get most of the review accomplished.
- I would do Joe's deck Anki for each lecture either that night or the next day.
- Over the weekend, I would spend a little more time reviewing the concepts I didn't finish fully during my thirty-minute reviews or those I simply thought were worth reviewing more. The review could be just really taking time on the PowerPoint/handout or watching videos on YouTube about the topic. I caught up on Anki over the weekend if I fell behind during the week (you would not catch me up until 11pm doing Anki... I get my 8 hours of sleep every night I promise). I'd also do any prework over the weekend.
- Monday/Tuesday before quiz, I did practice questions from the handouts and Brightspace. Tuesday/Wednesday I would review anything I got wrong in more detail.
- Take weekly quizzes meaningfully. I know they are formative for you all now too, but PLEASE if you take any advice, take those quizzes seriously. It gives you a good understanding of if you are truly grasping the material. Use the non-graded aspect to your advantage only if you have a big commitment/heavy week where it may be harder to study/you may not get to everything in as much detail as you wanted.
- Keep up with Anki/some method of spaced repetition throughout the unit.

- Do practice questions the week of the exam. Spend time on the content you get wrong/guessed on and move on from the content you got correct. You probably will not have time to review everything in detail that week, and if you've been on top of your work you shouldn't have to. I made a list of the top ~10 lectures I thought needed a thorough review and went over those quickly during exam week too.

How you choose to learn the material is up to you. Sketchy is a great resource for micro/pharm and is what I am using now to brush up on MCM content. The one regret I have is not keeping up semi-regularly with bugs and drugs because I have forgotten a lot of stuff by now. If you can, try and review them with Anki or some other method like once a unit? Once a quarter? Whatever you have time for.

**Greenblatt's** summary slides are gold for her MCM exam questions, **Henty-Ridilla's** questions at the end of her PPT often end up as exam Qs. Practice your **pedigree calculations!!!** What Dr. **Glass** says is important to know, just memorize it and you will be fine. **Taffet's** questions are also straightforward but definitely spend time studying immunology because it is a huge part of the exam. **Complement** is tricky, watch outside videos to help you wrap your head around it. Unfortunately, you do have to know minor details about **viruses/bacteria** like structure, stains, etc. Anki or some other repetitive, spaced learning is the best way to go about that in my opinion. Any **practice question** that is given to you (handouts, Brightspace, in lecture, in CCs/TBLs) is fair game to be asked on exam, so have those down pat for easy points.

Good luck!! If you feel like you are struggling or falling behind, seek some guidance sooner rather than later so you don't feel debilitatingly stressed during exam week. If you feel like you are getting this whole med school study thing down and are performing well, run with that!! Do not second guess yourself, you got this 😊

**Ben:** Hi everybody, I hope your first year is off to a good start! Thinking back to when I was in your shoes last year, here are a few bits of advice you might find helpful. As a quick disclaimer, everyone learns differently, so obviously what worked for me may work for you and it may not!

First of all, definitely look over the lecture handouts the professors provide and do all the practice questions they include. Some of them may show up on quizzes and exams, and even if they don't, it's a decent gauge of how well you're understanding the material. When I was in MCM I compiled all the learning objectives and practice questions from a given week into a single PDF (which should be in the google drive still) and at the end of each week I would go through and write out answers to the learning objectives and the practice questions as a way to summarize that week's content. Those also became handy review sheets that I would look back through during the week of the exam.

Next, for MCM I would say definitely don't stress yourself out trying to use outside resources and force them to line up with Upstate content. MCM is kinda just weird and all over the place and I would recommend focusing on primarily just watching or attending the in-house

lectures and doing Joe's Anki deck rather than trying to worry about starting with the AnKing deck as well. Personally I was really overwhelmed by the AnKing deck at first so I used MCM to figure how to use anki and how to study best rather than digging into AnKing too. Joe's Deck will set you up well to pass the MCM final, even if you have to do a bit of digging to find the cards from certain lectures that got moved around between when Joe made the deck and the new curriculum. One outside resource I did end up using a little bit towards the end of MCM was Sketchy micro/pharm which should be in the google drive. Sketchy was particularly helpful for sorting out all the different antibiotics that they threw at us all at once toward the end of the unit. The units that come after MCM lend themselves to outside resources and AnKing much better than MCM does, so don't worry too much about starting that stuff until a little later.

Finally, I would highly recommend treating the weekly formative assessments as if they are graded. They used to be graded for us last year and it definitely helped keep me on track knowing that I HAD to study and do well on the quizzes each week. Reviewing a little extra each week is better for retention and way less brutal than trying to review everything from 6 weeks of content the week of the exam! Personally, I like to spend more time during exam weeks doing practice questions and looking over the answers/explanations than reviewing content.

**TLDR:** Joe's Anki deck is great for MCM, AnKing is better for after MCM + long term STEP preparation. Look over the lecture handouts and do all the learning objectives/practice questions + the practice quizzes on brightspace. Sketchy Micro and Pharm are super helpful for bugs + drugs. Don't slack on studying for the formative assessments just because they don't count towards your grade. And reach out for help if you need it!!