

What you need to know about becoming a

Physician (MD)

Allopathic physicians (MDs) examine patients, obtain medical histories, and order, perform and interpret diagnostic tests. They counsel patients about illness, injuries, health conditions and preventive health care. Some physicians conduct medical research or teach and run medical centers. There are demands for physicians in a wide range of settings. There are several medical specialties an MD can focus on, and the job can vary widely.

Where do they work?

Few professions offer the variety of settings available to an MD. Just some of the specialties are

Family practice
Anesthesiology
Internal medicine
OBGYN
Psychiatry

Surgery
Pediatrics
Urology
Allergy and Immunology
Nuclear Medicine

Allopathic medical students complete four years of medical school plus three to eight years of additional medical training through residencies. Students will apply for their residency through the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS). While in medical school, students will be gaining hands-on experience through clinical rotations. These rotations may include neurology, family medicine, surgery and pediatrics. Courses such as gross anatomy, immunology and genetics are typical in an MD program. These courses and rotations prepare students for their residencies as well as the state licensing exams and national boards.

Education

Academic requirements include:

Biology (BIO 105 and 106)
General Chemistry (CHE 110 and 111)
Organic Chemistry (CHE 210 and 211)
Physics (PHY 110 and 111)
English (ENG 110)
Math (MAT 190 and 150)

Recommended courses include:

Anatomy and Physiology (BIO 245 and 345)
Biochemistry (CHE 310)
Psychology (PSY 105 and 250)
Sociology (SOC 150)
Genetics (BIO 200)

Accepted Student Profile

Medical school programs have many applicants and are very competitive. Applicants should have:

High GPAs
Leadership experience
Excellent entrance exam scores (MCAT)

Hands-on patient experience
Participation in research
Experience shadowing a practicing physician

Application

MD schools use a centralized application service to apply for admissions. Official transcripts and recommendations must be submitted through the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS).

MD schools require MCAT scores for admission. The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) will evaluate knowledge of and problem-solving skills in biology, chemistry, organic chemistry and physics. These classes should be completed before taking your MCATs.

Web Resources

AMCAS Application: www.aamc.org/amcas
Association of American Medical Colleges: www.aamc.org
American Medical Association: www.ama-assn.org/ama
MCAT: www.aamc.org/mcat