

What you need to know about becoming a **Podiatrist (DPM)**

Podiatric medicine is a branch of medicine devoted to the study of human movement, with the medical care of the foot and ankle as its primary focus. A doctor of podiatric medicine specializes in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of foot disorders, diseases, and injuries. A podiatrist performs diagnostic tests and surgeries, prescribes medications, and prescribes physical therapy regimens. Podiatrists detect serious problems that may go unnoticed because a number of conditions manifest first in the lower extremities. Podiatrists are education on state-of-the-art techniques involving surgeries, orthopedics, dermatology, physical medicine, and rehabilitation.

Where do they work?

Podiatrists work in general or group practices and can have a focus on sports medicine, pediatrics, or geriatrics. In addition to private practice, podiatrists can be found in:

- Hospitals
- Armed Forces
- Public health departments

Podiatric students complete four years of medical school plus two to four years in a residency program after receiving their DPM. While in medical school, students will be gaining hands-on experience through clinical rotations. These rotations may include internal medicine, surgery, and emergency medicine. Courses such as anatomy, pharmacology, and biochemistry are typical courses for a podiatric medicine program. These courses and rotations prepare students for their residencies as well as the state licensing exams and national boards.

Education

Entrance to podiatry schools is very competitive.

Academic requirements include

- Biology
 - General Chemistry
 - Organic Chemistry
 - Physics
 - English
 - Math
 - Biochemistry
- Podiatry schools also require above average scores on MCAT's and a high GPA.

Accepted Student Profile

Podiatric medical school programs have many applicants and are very competitive.

Applicants should have:

- High GPA
- Leadership experience
- Excellent entrance exam scores (MCAT)
- Hands-on patient experience
- Excellent fine motor skills
- Shadowed a practicing podiatrist

Application

Podiatry schools use a centralized application service, the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine Application Service. All applications should be submitted through this service.

Podiatry schools require MCAT scores for admission as well. The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) will test you on biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics. These classes should be completed before taking your MCAT's.

Web Resources

AACPMAS Application: portal.aacpmas.org

American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine : www.aacpm.org

American Podiatric Association: www.apma.org

MCAT: www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat