

What you need to know about becoming a **Pharmacist (PharmD)**

Pharmacy careers are patient-focused and put you on the front lines of patient care. Pharmacists are responsible for dispensing the drugs prescribed by physicians and other health practitioners and providing information to patients about the safe and effective use of those medications. Pharmacists help advise other health professionals on the selection, dosage, interactions and side effects of medications as part of a patient's comprehensive medical team. Increasingly, pharmacists are also responsible for administering vaccines and providing lifestyle and health and wellness counseling.

Where do they work?

Pharmacists work in a variety of settings. Most pharmacists work in community-based or "retail" pharmacies, but pharmacists can also be found in these areas:

- Pharmaceutical Research
- Pharmacy Management
- Academics and Education
- Clinics or Inpatient Facilities
- Hospital/Emergency Room Pharmacies

Pre-pharmacy students complete a **minimum** of 72 credits of undergraduate coursework before applying to pharmacy school. Those credits must include all the required coursework for application to PharmD programs, including specific science, math, English, public speaking, psychology, and sociology courses. Applicants must take the PCAT standardized test before applying to a PharmD program. A PharmD is typically earned over four years and includes extensive classroom and experiential learning. Pharmacists must apply for and maintain current licenses in the state(s) in which they intend to practice.

Education

Academic requirements include

- Biology (BIO 105 and 106)
- Anatomy and Physiology (BIO 208 and 209)
- General Chemistry (CHE 110 and 111)
- Organic Chemistry (CHE 210 and 211)
- English (ENG 110)
- Math (MAT 150 and 190)
- Psychology (PSY 105)
- Public Speaking (SCP 100)
- Physics (PHY 110 & 111)
- Intro to Pharmacy (PHM 100)
- Additional courses in Sociology and Humanities

Recommended:

- Microeconomics (BUEC 204)
- Microbiology (BIO 232)

Accepted Student Profile

Pharmacy programs have many applicants and can be very competitive. Ideally applicants should have:

- High GPAs
- Good scores on the PCAT
- Internship or pharmacy technician work experience
- A passion for and understanding of the field of pharmacy

Application

Many pharmacy schools require students to use a centralized application service to apply for admission. Official transcripts and recommendations must be submitted through the Pharmacy College Application Service online portal (PharmCAS).

Pharmacy schools require all students to take the PCAT (Pharmacy College Admission Test). Make sure to check with each school to which you wish to apply for its specific application requirements.

Web Resources

Pharmacy College Application Service: www.pharmcas.org

PCAT Official Site: www.PCATweb.info

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy: www.aacp.org