

# Health Professions Info Sheet

What you need to know about  
becoming a .....

## Pharmacist (Pharm. D.)

Pharmacists dispense drugs prescribed by physicians and other health care professionals. They advise physicians and health care practitioners on the selection, dosages, interactions, and side effects of medications. Pharmacists must understand the use, clinical side effects, and composition of drugs to help properly care for patients. They protect the public by ensuring drug purity and strength. The goal of a pharmacist is to maximize positive health care outcomes and improve quality of life with minimum risk. Some pharmacists specialize in areas such as pediatrics, geriatrics, nuclear medicine, oncology, and psychiatry.

### Where do they work?

Pharmacists can work in many aspects of the pharmaceutical field. Most pharmacists work in hospitals and community pharmacies. They can also be found in sales, drug research, insurance and education.

#### Pre-Health Advising

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Pharmacy students complete four years of graduate work to earn a PharmD. degree. Pharmacy students learn about every aspect of drug therapy as well as medical ethics and public health in their graduate program. There are also highly specialized pharmacy fellowships and residencies for those students interested in working in laboratories. All pharmacists across the US are required to pass the North American Pharmacy Licensure Exam and many states require an additional exam covering pharmacy law.

### Education

Entrance to pharmacy schools is very competitive. Academic requirements include:

Biology

General Chemistry

Organic Chemistry

Physics

English

Math

Microbiology

Anatomy and Physiology and social science classes may also be requirements, as well as high scores on PCAT.

### Accepted Student Profile

#### GPA

Overall—3.2-3.5

#### PCAT

Overall—412

### Application

Pharmacy schools use a centralized application service called the PharmCAS. All information will be submitted through the PharmCAS application.

Most pharmacy schools require the Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT). To take the PCAT's, you should have completed coursework in Biology, chemistry, and Calculus. You should be taking Organic Chemistry also.

### Web Resources

PharmCAS Application: <https://www.pharmcas.org/index.htm>

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy : <http://www.aacp.org/pages/default.aspx>

American Pharmacists Association: <http://pharmacist.com>

PCAT: <http://pcatweb.info>