# MEDICAL FIELDS

**Medicine, Dentistry, Podiatry, Optometry, Chiropracty, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Medicine**

What can I do with these professional degrees?

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## MEDICINE

**Some Areas of Specialization**

- Allergology
- Anesthesiology
- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Emergency Medicine
- Family and General Practice
- Gastroenterology Internal Medicine
- Gynecology Obstetrics & Gynecology Orthopedics
- Pathology
- Pediatrics
- Psychiatry
- Radiology
- Surgery
- Research
- Public Health

### Hospitals
- Clinics
- Private or group practice
- Health networks Nursing homes
- Rehabilitation centers
- Mental health institutions
- Federal, state, & local health departments
- Government agencies
- Armed services
- Correctional facilities
- Colleges or universities
- Medical schools
- Large corporations

**Test Required:** MCAT

**Schooling Required:** After earning an undergraduate degree, the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) requires 4 years of medical school, followed by 3-8 years of internship and residency depending on specialization chosen.

Some physicians pursue the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degree. D.O.s emphasize the body’s musculoskeletal system, preventive medicine, and holistic patient care and often work in family and general practices, although they may be found in many specialties.

## DENTISTRY

**Some Areas of Specialization**

- Endodontics
- Oral Pathology
- Oral & Maxillofacial Radiology
- Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- Orthodontics
- Pediatric Dentistry
- Periodontology
- Prosthodontics
- Public Health
- Research

### Private practice (80% of dentists)
- Armed services
- Federal, state, & local health departments
- Correctional facilities

**Test Required:** DAT

**Schooling Required:** After earning an undergraduate degree, the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) requires 4 years of dental school (last 2 years are clinical rotations).
### Podiatry

**Some Areas of Specialization**
- Surgery
- Orthopedics
- Primary Care
- Sports Medicine
- Pediatrics
- Dermatology
- Radiology
- Geriatrics
- Diabetic Foot Care

Private practice
- Community health clinics
- Hospitals
- Residential and nursing homes
- National Health Service
- Sports clubs
- Some specialty retail chains

**Test Required:** MCAT or GRE

**Schooling Required:** After earning at least 90 hours of undergraduate course work, the Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM) requires 4 academic years (last 2 years are clinical rotations). One year of post-doctoral residency is required in most states.

### Optometry

**Some Areas of Specialization**
- Family Practice
- Pediatric Optometry
- Geriatric Optometry
- Vision Therapy
- Contact Lenses
- Hospital-Based Optometry
- Primary Care Optometry
- Ocular Disease
- Public Health
- Research

Private practice
- Vision care centers
- Hospitals
- Physicians’ offices
- Armed services
- Government organizations

**Test Required:** OAT

**Schooling Required:** After earning an undergraduate degree, the Doctor of Optometry (OD) requires 4 academic years at optometry school.

### Chiropractic Medicine

**Some Areas of Specialization**
- Sports Injuries
- Neurology
- Orthopedics
- Pediatrics
- Nutrition
- Internal Disorders
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Ergonomics

Solo and group practices
- Hospitals or health clinics

**Test Required:** GRE or MCAT

**Schooling Required:** After earning at least 90 hours of undergraduate course work, the Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) requires 4 academic years at a chiropractic school.
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**Schooling Required:** After spending 2 to 3 years in undergraduate coursework, the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) requires 4 academic years.

**Schooling Required:** After earning an undergraduate degree, the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M. or V.M.D.) requires 4 academic years at a college of veterinarian medicine. Veterinarians who plan to specialize will spend additional years in internships or residency programs.
STRATEGIES FOR GAINING ADMITTANCE INTO PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

- Choose an appropriate undergraduate major and include prerequisite courses required by the professional program, e.g. biology, chemistry, and physics, if they are not a requirement of the chosen major.
- Meet with a pre-health advisor periodically to discuss curricular decisions.
- Maintain a high grade point average, particularly in the sciences, to improve chances of admission to graduate or professional school.
- Develop strong computer, mathematics, and verbal and written communication skills.
- Build strong relationships with professors and/or employers in order to secure strong recommendations.
- Join related student organizations, such as Alpha Epsilon Delta, and assume leadership roles.
- Obtain summer jobs, volunteer positions, or internships to test fields of interest and gain valuable experience.
- Develop a backup plan in case medical/graduate school admission is denied.
- Look at entrance requirements for desired institutions. Be aware of any standardized test requirements, minimum grade point averages, and prerequisites.
- Talk to professionals already in your desired field regarding their backgrounds. Arrange a shadowing experience.
- Join professional associations and community organizations to stay abreast of current issues in the field and to develop networking contacts.
- Read scientific journals related to your area of interest.
- Research accredited institutions. Check graduation rates, success rates on licensing exams, cost, location, etc. If possible, speak with current students.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Develop a desire to help people of all backgrounds and ages including various races and socioeconomic groups.
- Gain an understanding of the rigorous education and training required in the medical professions to ascertain your willingness to complete the required experiences.
- Study the demands required by each of the medical fields. Many physicians work very long, irregular hours. Consider your tolerance for such a schedule.
- All fields require licensure that is generally regulated by the state of residency.
- Plan for a lifetime of learning to stay abreast of new trends in the field and to fulfill continuing education requirements for licensure.
- In some medical fields, additional training is necessary for advanced research and administrative positions, university teaching, and independent research.
- Some medical fields offer the opportunity for post doctoral experiences which can allow one to gain additional training or specialize in a particular area.
GENERAL SITES
- *Sloan Foundation Careers in Science, Technology and Medicine
- Lifeworks from NIH
- Explore Health Careers
- Medical and Public Health Jobs with the Federal Government
- Healthcare Industry Guide

MEDICINE
- Physicians and Surgeons
- *The Student Doctor Network
- *American Medical Association Becoming an MD
- Association of American Medical Colleges
- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
- American Osteopathic Association

DENTISTRY
- Dentists
- American Dental Association
- American Dental Education Association
- Dental Students Network

PODIATRY
- Podiatrists
- American Podiatric Medical Association
- American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine
- The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists

**OPTOMETRY**
- Optometrists
- Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
- American Optometric Association
- American Academy of Optometry

**CHIROPRACTICS**
- Chiropractors
- American Chiropractic Association
- Council on Chiropractic Education

**PHARMACY**
- Pharmacists
- American Pharmacist Association
- American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
- Pharmacy Choice
- American Society of Health-System Pharmacists

**VETERINARY MEDICINE**
- Veterinarians
- American Veterinary Medical Association
- Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
- Vet Med Center
- American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians
- American Animal Hospital Association

* = Recommended Sites