Medical Doctors diagnose illnesses and prescribe & administer treatment for people suffering from injury or disease. Physicians examine patients, obtain medical histories, and order/perform/interpret diagnostic tests. They counsel patients on preventive healthcare including diet, sleep and exercise. It typically takes 11 to 17 years to become a medical doctor including a minimum of: 4 years of undergraduate college, 4 years of medical school, and 3 - 5 years of “residency.” Some specialties may require additional training for up to 8 years (called “fellowships”).

Degree

There are two types of medical physician degrees: M.D. Doctor of Medicine and D.O. Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine. While both M.D.s and D.O.s may use all accepted methods of treatment including drugs and surgery, D.O.s place special emphasis on the body’s musculoskeletal system.

Admission

Acceptance to medical school is highly competitive. In order to compete for admission, students are advised to complete a bachelor degree at an undergraduate institution with a reputation for academic excellence. While many students choose to major in a science field such as biology or chemistry, students come from a variety of undergraduate degree programs.

Most MCC students are advised to prepare to transfer to a selective 4-year college or university for Biology, Biomedical Sciences, or another science major and then apply to medical school.

Almost all U.S. medical schools and many Canadian schools require applicants to submit Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) exam scores. The MCAT is a standardized, multiple-choice examination designed to assess problem solving, critical thinking, and knowledge of natural, behavioral, and social science concepts and principles prerequisite to the study of medicine. Students will need to complete the AMCAS Application (or AACOMAS for Osteopathic Medicine) and supplemental applications for specific colleges if required.

Typical Minimum Prerequisite Courses

Two semesters of general biology with labs; two semesters of physics with labs; four semesters of chemistry with labs, including organic; two semesters of English AND a Bachelor’s Degree.

Notes: It may not be advisable to take pre-requisite courses over the summer sessions. In addition, courses which tend to duplicate those offered in medical school may not be optimal selections. One of the sections on the MCAT focuses on critical reasoning and another on the psychological, sociological, and biological foundations of behavior. Therefore, courses in psychology, sociology, anthropology, and philosophy are important. Courses in biochemistry, statistics, genetics, and cell biology are strongly recommended. Courses dealing with building interpersonal and communication skills are beneficial as well.

Medical Schools may prefer that some or all prerequisite courses be completed at a 4-year institution. AP and IB credit are not likely to be accepted for science coursework.
Criteria of Importance for Acceptance Include

- Undergraduate grade point average
- Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) score
- Practical experience with patients (ex. volunteering at a hospital or as an EMT)
- Research activities
- Excellent communication skills
- Evidence of maturity, integrity, service to the community
- Work experience, extra-curricular activities, proven leadership ability
- Letters of recommendation from pre-health advisor and/or professors at the 4-year college
- Personal Statement
- Interview

Partial Listing of Colleges in NYS Offering a Doctoral Degree in Medicine

- Albany Medical College
- Columbia University
- Cornell University Medical Center
- New York College of Osteopathic Medicine
- New York University
- SUNY University at Buffalo
- SUNY University at Stony Brook
- SUNY Upstate Medical University
- University of Rochester

Additional Information

- [USDL, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Physicians and Surgeons](#)
- [Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)](#)

*Note: While every effort is made to ensure that the information in this guide is accurate, students are advised to contact transfer institutions for specific course requirements and the most up-to-date information.*

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