



# MEDICAL DOCTOR

## JOB DESCRIPTION

Medical doctors examine patients to diagnose illnesses, injury, and medical conditions, and prescribe an appropriate course of treatment. They may also advise patients on how to lead a healthy lifestyle or refer them to specialists for further care. Doctors work in a wide variety of settings, including hospitals, community health centers, and the armed forces.



### SALARY

Medical resident ★★☆☆☆  
Attending physician ★★★★★

### INDUSTRY PROFILE

Many and varied global opportunities • Medical training is lengthy, but job prospects are good due to the need for health care • Can specialize in a certain type of care and work flexibly

## AT A GLANCE



**YOUR INTERESTS** Medicine • Caring for people • Physics • Chemistry • Biology • Mathematics • Psychology • Anatomy and physiology • Ethics



**ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS** A recognized medical degree is required, followed by training in a chosen area and passing required licensing exams.



**LIFESTYLE** Doctors work long hours and in shifts, especially during the earlier years of their career. Medical practitioners are never fully off duty.



**LOCATION** Doctors may work in hospitals, general practitioners' offices, or in the community. Some doctors choose to work in the armed forces.



**THE REALITIES** The medical profession is competitive, and training is long and demanding. Responsibility for patients brings intense scrutiny.

## CAREER PATHS

After earning their bachelor's degree, aspiring doctors must take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) and enroll in medical school, where they will combine internships and hands-on clinical experience with academic study. One or more residencies, which can last up to seven years depending on a person's chosen specialty, follows medical school.

**GRADUATE** You will need to complete a medical-school degree—entry to which is fiercely competitive—typically lasting four years.



**MEDICAL RESIDENT** You work and continue study in a residency program, treating patients under an experienced doctor's supervision.



## SKILLS GUIDE



Empathy to understand people's problems, a caring approach, and the ability to put people at ease.



Excellent communication skills for explaining diagnoses and treatments to patients with clarity.



Analytical skills for diagnosing the best course of treatment after assessing illness and injury.



Precision and dexterity to carry out both common medical procedures and complex surgery.



Good technical and computer skills to keep records and operate sophisticated medical hardware.

## RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **NURSE** *see pp. 278–279*
- ▶ **PHYSICAL THERAPIST** *see pp. 288–289*
- ▶ **DIETICIAN/NUTRITIONIST** Works with patients who have eating disorders, are underweight or overweight, or have food allergies, creating appropriate treatment programs for them. They are also employed by the food industry to give advice about ingredients and to analyze products.
- ▶ **PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT** Helps doctors diagnose and treat patients, recording medical histories, reporting test results, and compiling plans to manage a patient's treatment. In order to train, candidates need a related degree, or experience as a qualified health professional.

