



Be **A** Doctor .ca

A Brief Guide to Becoming a Doctor in Canada



Becoming a Doctor: A Quick Overview

There is a large demand for doctors and other healthcare professionals across Canada.

A career as a doctor can be exciting and fulfilling, but it can be stressful, and requires very long hours of work.

Is a career as a doctor for you? To help answer this question, RPAP has prepared this brief overview.

STEP ONE

Undergraduate Degree

2 - 4 Years



Cost: ~\$20,000 - \$50,000

Enrol in a career- stream university program.

Keep in mind it will likely take several applications (and years) before you get into medical school (approximately 25 percent of Canadian applicants are accepted into Canadian medical schools). You should aim to take a university degree in something that you would help you to gain employment and that you enjoy.

Write the MCAT

Take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) test at least one year before you would plan to start your medical degree. To prepare, it is recommended that you take first year, or introductory-level university courses in physics, chemistry and biology, as well as organic chemistry.

Volunteer

Volunteer in health-related organizations or events to gain experiences, and illustrate leadership and community involvement on your medical school application.

Prepare your application

The applications for medical schools vary across Canada, but all require a large amount of preparation and work. Most of the schools will require letters of references, essays or writing samples, information about your volunteer or extra curriculum activities, as well as transcripts from your undergraduate degree. Start work on your application early. Most medical schools also require an interview for those potential applicants, and the interview process is rigorous, so you will need to prepare for that as well.

A Quick Self Assessment

Some important questions to consider before pursuing a career in medicine:

- Am I willing to put in long hours during both my studies and in my career?
- Can I handle high levels of stress?
- Am I motivated to dedicate many years to education and training?
- Can I afford medical school?
- Can I handle the sight of blood?
- Do I have a love of the sciences?

If you answered yes to all these questions, then might want to be a doctor!

STEP TWO

Medical School

3 - 4 Years



Cost: ~\$50,000 - \$100,000

Once you have entered a medical school program, expect approximately two years of academic study, followed by clerkship and electives, which involved more practical, hands-on training combined with course work.

While you are enrolled in a medical degree program, you may want to develop skills or explore a specific area of medicine, for example family medicine with either a rural or urban focus. Students participate in hands on patient care when possible including opportunities to shadow physicians for two to four week periods

STEP THREE

Residency

2 - 8 Years



Earn: ~\$50,000 - \$85,000/year

Residency is referred to as postgraduate training for physicians, and it is required in Canada to become any type of physician. Residency is the "hands-on" portion of training, during which time doctors or resident physicians, as they are called in Alberta (also known as residents), work under physicians in a clinical or hospital facility and earn an income.

Once a medical degree is completed, it takes between two and seven years of residency to complete medical training. The time of residency varies based on the type of specialty chosen; for example a family or general physician completes two to three years of residency, while a dermatologist must complete five years of residency.

A student submits an electronic application to the Canadian Residency Matching Service (CaRMS), after which the applicants completes an in-person interview with the organization they are interested in training at, such as a teaching hospital.

A resident applicant ranks their choices as to where in Canada they would like to work as a resident, although offers are routinely given outside of the area of the applicant's first choice. Most residents accept their offer, because it is essential to complete residency in order to complete training. The residency program is very competitive, and it is recommended that resident applicants be open-minded about their locations.

Many students must travel to a number of places across Canada, during the residency matching process, which can become costly.





We hear you want to be a doctor

If you're thinking about a career in medicine, our Be a Doctor website gives you the information you need to make the right choices.

From resumés to residencies, BeADoctor.ca is here to help you.

Would you like a exciting in-class presentation?

Contact RPAP at **1-866-423-9911**
or visit **rpap.ab.ca**



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