

Medical School (Allopathic Medicine)

Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) organization : <https://www.aamc.org/>

For students: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/> ***this is the most comprehensive and up to date information on applying to medical school. Please bookmark this page and refer to it for best information.**

About Being a Doctor

Physicians diagnose and care for people of all ages who are ill or have been injured. They are life-long learners, good listeners, and problem solvers, and are intrigued by the ways medicine can be used to improve life. Doctors are interested in science, the intricacies of human body's systems, and care deeply about helping people to relieve pain, restore health, and promote well-being.

What are some daily activities/experiences of physicians?

- Diagnose and care for people of all ages who are ill or have been injured
- Take medical histories
- Perform physical examinations
- Conduct diagnostic tests
- Recommend and provide treatment
- Advise patients on their overall health and well-being

What are 3-5 personal characteristics important for happiness and success in the medical profession?

- Interpersonal skills
- Intrapersonal skills
- Thinking and reasoning
- Science

What are 3-5 key questions students should ask themselves as they prepare for a career in medicine?

- Do you like challenges?
- Are you interested in science and how the body works?
- Do you care deeply about other people, their problems, and their pain?
- Do you enjoy learning?
- Are you intrigued by the ways medicine can be used to improve life?

While intellectual capacity is important to success as a physician, so too are other attributes—those that have the ability to develop and maintain effective relationships with patients, work collaboratively with other team members, act ethically and compassionately, and in many other ways master the “art” of medicine. An AAMC publication entitled Learning Objectives for Medical Student Education: Guidelines for Medical Schools (AAMC Medical School Objectives Project (MSOP) web page: <https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/msop>) describes the personal attributes required of a physician. While making note of the fact that graduating medical students must be knowledgeable about medicine and skillful in its application, the publication also emphasizes how vital it is for future doctors to:

- Make ethical decisions
- Act with compassion, respect, honesty, and integrity
- Work collaboratively with team members
- Advocate on behalf of one's patients
- Be sensitive to potential conflicts of interest
- Be able to recognize one's own limits
- Be dedicated to continuously improving one's knowledge and abilities
- Appreciate the complex non-biological determinants of poor health
- Be aware of community and public health issues
- Be able to identify risk factors for disease
- Be committed to early identification and treatment of diseases
- Accept responsibility for making scientifically based medical decisions
- Be willing to advocate for the care of the underserved

Preparing for Admission:

Prerequisite Coursework - Some schools require applicants to complete a certain list of premedical course requirements while others have moved to a competency-based admissions. At a minimum, students will likely complete the following types of courses:

- One year of biology
- One year of physics
- One year of English
- Two years of chemistry (through organic chemistry)

You need to research specific requirements for the schools that you plan to apply to. Each school's specific prerequisites are detailed on their individual websites or collectively in the [Medical School Admission Requirement website](#). A one-year subscription is required to access this information and may be purchased from [AAMC Publications](#).

In addition to challenging coursework, applicants should look for opportunities to demonstrate a range of competencies. To gain experience, applicants should consider volunteering at a local hospital or clinic to gain practical experience in the health professions. [A well-rounded sampling of extra-curricular activities or work experiences, both related and unrelated to medicine, will help broaden an applicant's knowledge and development.](#) Chapter 7 of the *Official Guide to Medical School Admissions*, "The Admissions Decision," describes the evaluation process in to further detail.

Post-baccalaureate programs begin after an undergraduate degree and are designed to support the transition to professional school. Please refer to AAMC page for further information: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/postbacc/>

The Admissions Cycle:

AMCAS for most MD and MD/PhD programs: <http://www.aamc.org/amcas>

- Application opens: May
- Application can be submitted: June
- Application deadlines: AMCAS application deadline dates vary by school and are listed on the AMCAS Schools and Deadlines page. Early decision deadline is August 1, regular deadlines range from August through December. **The earlier in the cycle you apply, the better your chances at admission.**
- Application closes: Varies by school
- Number of schools participating in amcas: 145 accredited US and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools: 7 Texas schools do not participate in AMCAS. For information on TX schools see: <https://www.tmdsas.com/applytmdsas/>
- Fees: \$160 for first school, \$38 for each additional
- Fee waivers: Fee Assistance Program, <http://www.aamc.org/fap>
- **Letters of Recommendation:** Schools generally prefer a committee or composite letter if available from the applicant's premedical program of study (undergrad or postbac program). If no such letter is available, students should follow school's guidelines to determine what letters are required. Letters should be uploaded via AAMC Letter Writer Service for participating schools. Learn more about letters guidelines here: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/amcas-letter-service-advisors-and-other-letter-aut/>
- Standardized test logistics: MCAT scores are automatically sent to AMCAS for distribution to applied participating schools.
- Transcripts: Applicants should send all transcripts to AMCAS attached to an AMCAS Transcript Request Form.
- Instruction manual and FAQ: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/applying-medical-school-amcas/amcas-tools-andtutorials/>
- Background checks: The AAMC-facilitated Criminal Background Check service is run through Certiphi Screening, Inc.
- Contact information: amcas@aamc.org , (202) 828-0600

MCAT information:

The Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®) is a standardized, multiple-choice examination designed to assess the examinee's problem solving, critical thinking, and knowledge of natural, behavioral, and social science concepts and principles prerequisite to the study of medicine. Administrations of the new MCAT exam began on April 17, 2015. The updated exam reflects the changes in medicine and science and tests examinees not only on what they know but how well they use what they know. See this page for further information: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/taking-mcat-exam/>

The AAMC offers free resources for both students and advisors. These include an interactive content outline of the new exam, a course mapping tool, a sociology/psychology "road map" to help identify courses that match to the content on the new exam, and instructional materials recommended for teaching prehealth competencies. See: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/mcatcoursemappingtool/>

The AAMC has many resources to help you understand what is on the MCAT exam. Including:

- Resources to practice for MCAT Exam: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/taking-mcat-exam/prepare-mcat-exam/>
- An interactive tool of concepts and skills tested in each exam section: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/whats-mcat-exam/>
- An official guidebook that includes practice questions and score scale: The cost is \$30, to purchase [Click here](#)

MCAT preparation courses

There are many commercially based MCAT review courses that can help you prepare.

- Kaplan offers in person and on line courses. They also offer a tuition assistance program. See here for further details: <http://www.kaplanpartnerships.com/thestartingline>
- M Prep is another great preparation site and offers free MCAT questions of the day as well as an online based course: <http://www.mcatquestion.com/>