

Osteopathic Medicine

- **Should I Become An Osteopathic Doctor?**
 - Osteopathic doctors are physicians who focus on holistic treatment. Along with treating diseases or illnesses, these doctors place emphasis on prevention. Osteopathic physicians may practice all kinds of medical specialties in the United States. The terms 'Osteopathy' and 'Osteopath' refer to a more limited kind of healthcare worker who is not a physician.
 - Osteopathic physicians spend a lot of time with patients, which often means working on their feet and exposure to illnesses. Hours can be long and may include nights or weekends, especially during residency. Many doctors earn a substantial income, although the education required is long and expensive. The job can be stressful, but there is great satisfaction in helping people. Career Requirements
- **Degree Level**
 - Doctoral
- **Degree Field**
 - Osteopathic Medicine
- **Training**
 - Beyond osteopathic medical school, an internship or residency training program.
- **Licensure/Certification**
 - Must pass the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination (COMLEX-USA); board certification from the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) is optional.
- **Key Skills**
 - Extensive medical knowledge, detail orientation, empathy, critical thinking, physical stamina, leadership and communication skills, knowledge of medical and scientific software.
- **Salary**
 - \$ 137,568 per year (Median 2015) Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (May, 2014), American Osteopathic Association, ONET Online, Pay scale.'
- **Step 1: Earn a Bachelor's Degree**
 - Acceptance into an osteopathic medicine program generally requires a bachelor's degree. While no specific undergraduate major is required, osteopathic programs do require specific prerequisite courses for acceptance. Course requirements commonly include a strong background in the sciences(biology, physics and chemistry) and English.
 - Success Tip:

- Take the MCAT. The Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) performance scores are required for entrance into osteopathic medical schools. Prospective medical school students take the exam the year before they apply to either a D.O. or M.D. program.

- **Step 2: Complete Osteopathic Medical School**
 - Osteopathic medical programs take four years to complete. During the first two years, students learn clinical skills and take basic science courses. During the third and fourth years, students explore the various medical specialties in clinical settings.

- **Step 3: Obtain Licensure**
 - All doctors of osteopathic medicine are required to pass a national licensure exam. All states accept the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination (COMLEX-USA). The exam consists of three levels. Students take level one in the second year of osteopathic medical school, level two at the end of the third year and level three during postgraduate training. Continuing education is required before doctors can renew their licenses. The minimum continuing education hours and time restrictions vary by state.

- **Step 4: Complete Internship and Residency Training**
 - Graduates of osteopathic medical programs continue their training by enrolling in internship programs. The internship is followed by a residency program in a specialty area such as family or pediatric medicine. The length of residency programs varies by specialty, but typically last from three to eight years. Following a residency program, some osteopathic doctors elect to continue subspecialty training in a fellowship program.

- **Step 5: Advance Your Career By Earning Board Certification in a Specialty**
 - Requirements for certification in specific specialties can vary, but typically, osteopathic doctors should be licensed and have completed a residency program. After meeting eligibility requirements and successfully passing an exam, board certification will be awarded. Osteopathic doctors are required to meet various certification renewal mandates, such as taking continuing medical education courses.