

Understanding Healthcare Providers:

MD, DO, NP, PA, and CNM



Doctor of Medicine

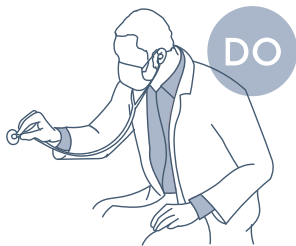
Focus: Allopathic medicine is a classic form of medicine that focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of human disease.

Education:

- Bachelor's degree
- Pass the MCAT
- Attend medical school
- Complete a 3-7 year residency
- Earn and maintain the necessary licenses (requirements vary by state)
- Optional: Fellowship and continuing education

Capabilities

- Performing physical exams
- Diagnosing and treating acute and chronic conditions, infections, and injuries
- Ordering, performing, and interpreting diagnostic tests such as lab work and x-rays
- Prescribing medications and other treatments
- Managing patients' overall care
- Counseling patients
- Educating patients
- Performing surgeries



Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine

Focus: Osteopathic medicine focuses on treating the body as a whole integrated system and uses osteopathic manipulation which is a deep understanding of how to manipulate the musculoskeletal system to treat and prevent pain and illness.

Education:

- Bachelor's degree
- Pass the MCAT
- Attend medical school
- Complete a 3-7 year residency
- Complete 300+ hours of osteopathic manipulation medicine training
- Earn and maintain the necessary licenses (requirements vary by state)
- Optional: Fellowship and continuing education

Capabilities

- Performing physical exams
- Diagnosing and treating acute and chronic conditions, infections, and injuries
- Ordering, performing, and interpreting diagnostic tests such as lab work and x-rays
- Prescribing medications and other treatments
- Managing patients' overall care
- Counseling patients
- Educating patients
- Performing surgeries
- Using osteopathic manipulation tactics for treatment



Nurse Practitioner

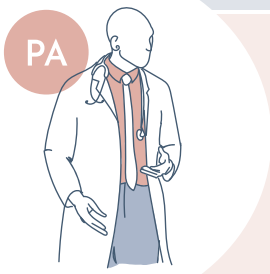
Focus: NPs provide primary care with a focus on health promotion, disease prevention, and health education and counseling. There are also many specialties, such as women's health, that NPs can focus on as well.

Education:

- Earn Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
- Pass the NCLEX-RN exam
- Earn a graduate degree, usually a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) or a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
- Complete at least 500 hours of clinical practicum
- Become a Certified Nurse Practitioner (CNP) by taking a national certification exam through one of the five national certification boards

Capabilities

- Performing physical exams
- Diagnosing and treating acute and chronic conditions, infections, and injuries
- Ordering, performing, and interpreting diagnostic tests such as lab work and x-rays
- Prescribing medications and other treatments
- Managing patients' overall care
- Counseling patients
- Educating patients on disease prevention and positive health and lifestyle choices



Physician Assistant/Associate

Focus: PAs have a more generalized education without specialty fields and mostly practice under the supervision of a physician.

Education:

- Earn a master's degree from an accredited PA program (typically an MS in Physician Assistant Studies)
- Complete 2,000 hours of supervised clinical practice
- Pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE)
- Maintain national certification

Capabilities

- Performing physical exams
- Diagnosing and treating acute and chronic conditions, infections, and injuries
- Ordering, performing, and interpreting diagnostic tests such as lab work and x-rays
- Prescribing medications and other treatments
- Managing patients' overall care
- Counseling patients
- Educating patients on disease prevention and positive health and lifestyle choices
- Assisting physicians in surgery, but not performing



CNM

Certified Nurse Midwife

Focus: Providing reproductive care to people with uteruses during their reproductive years, especially during pregnancy and postpartum.

Education:

- Earn Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
- Pass the NCLEX-RN exam
- Earn a degree from a nurse-midwifery program accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education
- Complete on-site clinical practicum hours, which usually range from 600 to 1,200 hours
- Get certified by passing the Certified Nurse Midwifery Exam
- Apply for state licensure

Capabilities

- Performing physical exams
- Diagnosing and treating acute and chronic conditions, infections, and injuries
- Ordering, performing, and interpreting diagnostic tests such as lab work and x-rays
- Prescribing medications and other treatments
- Managing patients' overall care
- Delivering babies
- Counseling patients
- Educating patients on disease prevention and positive health and lifestyle choices