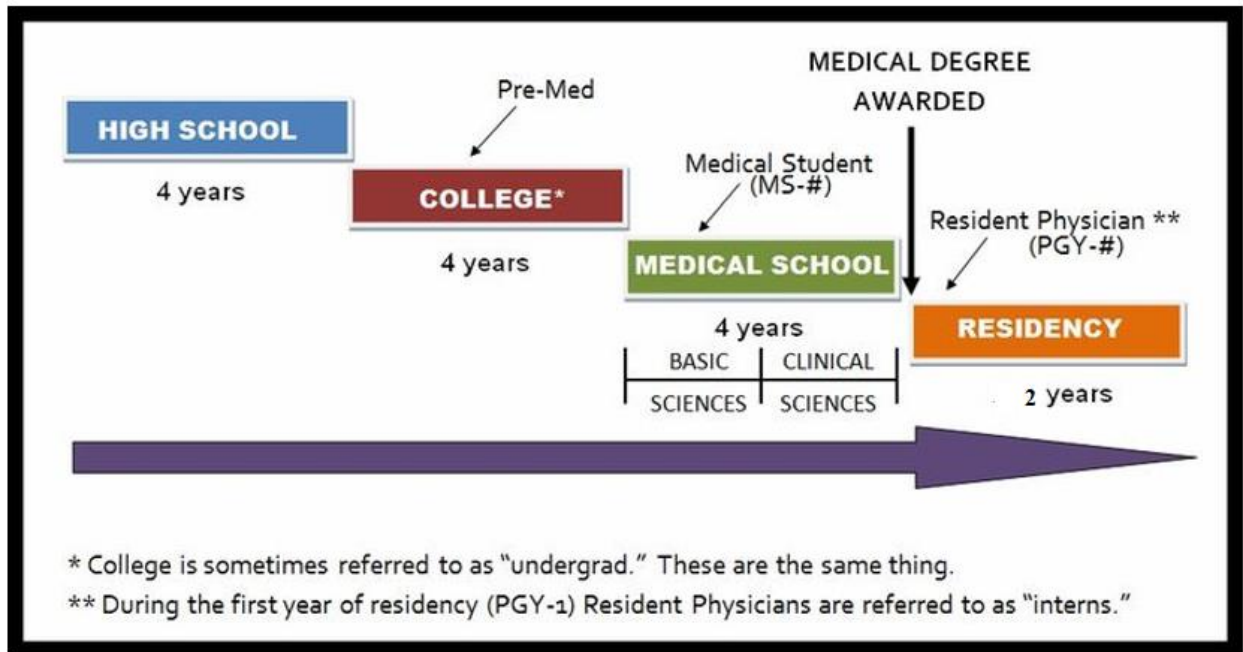


## Navigating through the Medical Pathway

Are you interested in pursuing a career in medicine? If you have ever wondered what it takes to excel in this field and gain admission to a top college, you have come to the right place. There are many paths that you can take to become a doctor, but the three most common routes are described below:

**Traditional:** In the United States, medical education typically involves a four-year pre-medical program (undergrad) followed by a four-year graduate program, which leads to the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree. During the pre-medical phase, students take courses in sciences such as human biology, anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, microbiology, etc. In the clinical phase, students undergo rotations and clerkships to gain hands-on experience in various medical specialties. This combination of coursework and clinical experience gives students a solid foundation for their future physician careers.



**BS/MD and BA/MD:** You may have heard of a program that lets you simultaneously earn a Bachelor's degree and a Doctor of Medicine degree. These programs are called BS/MD programs and can take anywhere from 6 to 8 years to complete.

These programs have some advantages. You'll be guaranteed a medical school spot after finishing your undergraduate degree, saving you time and money in the long run. You'll also get real-world medical experience early on, which can be a big advantage later in your career.

However, there are also some things to consider. For example, you may have less freedom in your undergraduate studies since you must take certain courses to prepare for medical school. You'll also have a heavier workload than most students, which can be challenging. And finally, these programs can be expensive, so you'll need to consider your financial situation carefully.

One thing to keep in mind is that these programs are very competitive. Acceptance rates are generally quite low, so you'll need to be an excellent student to have a good chance of getting in. If you're unsure whether a BS/MD program is right for you, it may be a good idea to wait until after college to apply to medical school.

BS/MD programs can be a great way to jump-start your medical career. However, they're not for everyone, so it's important to carefully weigh the pros and cons before applying.

**BS/DO and BA/DO:** This program offers a streamlined pathway for students who want to become medical professionals. The program typically takes about eight years and is divided into two phases. Students will earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Premedical Health Studies during the program's first four years. They'll take courses in biology, chemistry, and psychology, etc. They'll also learn how to communicate effectively with people. Students transition to a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) program in the second phase. This phase focuses on clinical experience and allows students to integrate their knowledge in real-world settings. DOs are known for their holistic approach to patient care, which means they consider the patient's mind, body, and spirit. If you choose a BS/DO program, you'll have a reserved seat in medical school after completing your undergraduate studies. This program provides a comprehensive education that combines science, humanities, and clinical experience. It's important to note that BS/DO and BS/MD programs differ in the type of medical degree (DO vs. MD). So, it's critical to research and choose the program that aligns with your career goals.

**Other Medical Profession:** In health and medicine, some individuals may wonder what career paths are available besides becoming a doctor. If you are among those individuals, you may wish to consider becoming a **research scientist**. Medical research is a fascinating and important area requiring more people to conduct research to assist medical professionals and benefit society. To pursue a career as a research scientist, a Ph.D. degree is usually required after completing a bachelor's and master's degree. In addition to the roles of a doctor and research scientist, there are a variety of other medical professions that may interest you. Some of these include **Art Therapist, Space Psychologist, Sleep Therapist, Radiologist, and many more**. We encourage you to stay informed and regularly check our website to learn about these intriguing career opportunities.

## Build your profile in high school!

Pursuing a career in medicine,

- ✚ It is a critical decision that requires careful planning and early preparation.
- ✚ Even in high school, taking relevant courses and participating in extracurricular activities can help you stand out and demonstrate your commitment to medicine.
- ✚ To maximize your chances of success, develop a well-rounded academic profile, gain clinical experience, engage in research or community service, and seek guidance from mentors.
- ✚ Adopting a proactive and strategic approach can set you up for success in your journey toward a career in medicine.

What are colleges looking for in students:

- ✓ Excellent Grades
- ✓ Internships and Research
- ✓ Extracurricular Activities

**Note:** Getting good school grades and scores on the SAT/ACT is very important.

Besides excellent grades, admissions officers consider a few key factors in a student's application: **volunteer work, internships, school clubs, and certifications.**

- ✚ Volunteer work shows a student's dedication to community service.
- ✚ Internships provide real-world experience and networking opportunities.
- ✚ School clubs indicate a student's eagerness to learn.
- ✚ Certifications demonstrate a commitment to acquiring valuable skills.

**Balancing your extracurricular activities:** It is important for students to maintain a balance between the variety and intensity of their extracurricular activities while applying for college admissions. Too many or too few activities can be detrimental. Focus on a few activities that showcase passion and excellence to demonstrate various skills. Colleges prefer students with tangible results in their pursuits.

Engaging in strategic extracurricular activities can help high school students develop interests and passions while preparing for college. **Freshman** year is the time to explore multiple clubs and organizations, while **sophomores** should focus on activities that are most meaningful to them. **Juniors** should seek out leadership opportunities, while **seniors** should aim for high leadership positions and establish initiatives that reflect their understanding of past years. This approach showcases critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership skills valued by colleges and universities.

**Different levels of extracurricular activities:** There are four levels of extracurricular activities.

- ✚ **Level 1** activities are the most impressive and rare. They show exceptional achievement or leadership, including being a nationally ranked athlete or winning a prestigious academic award.
- ✚ **Level 2** activities are still very impressive, but are a little more common, like being in a leadership position in a club or winning a regional competition.
- ✚ **Level 3** activities are less impressive than Level 2 but still show participation and leadership outside of the classroom.
- ✚ Finally, **Level 4** activities are the least impressive and include standard volunteer work with no leadership role or major impact.