

## WHAT DOES A PHARMACIST DO?

- Pharmacists are medication experts who help patients achieve optimal outcomes for their health through:
  - Disease prevention (e.g. providing immunizations)
  - Promotion of wellness (e.g. lifestyle and dietary counseling)
  - Working as a team with prescribers to ensure that the most appropriate medications are utilized
  - Educating patients on safe and effective use of their medications
  - Developing systems to safely prepare and dispense medications to patients
  - Monitoring the effects of medications to ensure they are adjusted to patient needs

## WHAT SKILLS WILL YOU DEVELOP AS A PHARMACIST?

- You will have specialized and unique expertise in medications to help other healthcare professionals determine what is best for patients.
- This includes knowledge of appropriate medication use, dosing, drug interactions, and side effects.

## WHAT IS A HEALTH SYSTEM?

- A health system is the organization of people, institutions, and resources to deliver health care services to promote, restore, or maintain patient health in target populations.
- Hospitals, outpatient clinics, and urgent care facilities are common components of a health system.

## WHAT DOES A PHARMACIST IN A HOSPITAL OR HEALTH SYSTEM DO?

- Pharmacists are critical to the care provided in hospitals or health systems
- They are an important part of the healthcare team and use their expertise to help patients and prescribers make the best medication decisions
- In a hospital or health system, pharmacist roles may include:
  - Engaging with prescribers and patients to discuss medication decisions
  - Counseling patients on their medications
  - Developing pharmacy policies and procedures to ensure medication quality and safety
  - Leading appointments with patients to discuss and manage their medications
  - Preparing and dispensing medications
  - Screening patients for important drug interactions
  - Monitoring and adjusting medication therapies
- There are many different areas of the hospital or health system where a pharmacist may work and specialize. <https://pharmacyforme.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/100pharmacycareers-1.pdf>

## WHAT CAREER PATHS ARE THERE FOR PHARMACISTS?

- There are over 100 different career paths for pharmacists
- Many think about their local community pharmacist when thinking about a career in pharmacy but that is just one of many options
- Many work in hospital or outpatient medical clinic, where they offer direct patient care in a variety of settings such as:
  - Ambulatory care
  - Emergency medicine
  - Critical care
  - Surgical care
  - Internal medicine
  - Specialized medicine (infectious disease, oncology, pediatrics, cardiology, etc.)
- Some other career pathways include:
  - Pharmaceutical industry
  - Academic pharmacy
  - Government and regulatory
  - Technology and health informatics
- A more complete list of career options for a pharmacist to work and specialize in health system pharmacy can be found here: <https://pharmacyforme.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/100pharmacycareers-1.pdf>

## WHAT CLASSES IN HIGH SCHOOL SHOULD BE OF INTEREST TO YOU IF INTERESTED IN PURSUING A CAREER AS A PHARMACIST?

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Math

## HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU WANT TO BE A PHARMACIST?

A good pharmacist has the following characteristics and skills:

Characteristics	Skills
Detail oriented	Communication
Strong science background	Critical thinking
Empathy	Problem solving
Desire to continually learn	Time management
Honest	Multi-tasking
Patience	Prioritization

## HOW DO YOU BECOME A PHARMACIST?

- You will need to earn a Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree from a College/School of Pharmacy
- To be accepted into a Pharm.D. program, you will need to complete at least 2 years of undergraduate college study
- Some schools of pharmacy take students right out of high school

## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO BECOME A PHARMACIST?

- The Pharm.D. degree program is four academic years (or three calendar years) of professional pharmacy study.

## WHAT PRE-REQUISITE COURSES ARE NEEDED IN UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE?

- Prerequisite courses will vary by pharmacy school. Common course prerequisites for all colleges include:
  - General Chemistry
  - Organic Chemistry
  - Biology
  - Anatomy and Physiology
  - Microbiology
  - Physics
  - Calculus
  - English Composition
  - Communication or Public Speaking
  - Psychology or Sociology
  - Statistics

## IS THERE A LICENSURE REQUIREMENT?

- After completion of the Pharm.D. program, you must pass two exams for licensure.
  - North American Pharmacist Licensure Exam (NAPLEX), which tests knowledge of the practice of pharmacy
  - Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Exam (MPJE), which is a state-specific exam that tests on pharmacy laws and regulations

## WHAT DOES A PHARMACIST EARN?

- Median annual salary: \$129,000