

Example Pre-Medical Timeline



You'll have guidance from your pre-health program advisor and multiple resources -- including the Pre-Health Club and the Center for Career and Pre-Professional Development -- to help you prepare for your path in medicine. Keep in mind there are many pathways to becoming a physician; the following represents just one possible path.

First and Second Years

- Begin taking appropriate pre-med courses. The general chemistry sequence (Chemistry 100A-102A or 100, 101, 102) should be started in order to complete organic chemistry the following year. Either the year-long physics (Physics 110, 120, and 130) or biology (Biology 110, 120, and 130) sequence should be started at some point during your first year.
- Take courses in the natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences to help determine your career interests and broaden your educational background.
- Find out as much as you can about the medical schools you're considering. A good place to start is the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), specifically the Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR).
- Discover more about medicine as a career and the current issues facing the profession. Volunteering at a hospital or observing at a practice is helpful. Obtaining EMT certification and riding with an ambulance crew on a regular basis are also good options. Read the medical sections of *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News & World Report*, etc., to broaden your insights into the field.
- Read as much as you can for your own edification and enjoyment. Reading improves communication skills, vocabulary, and problem-solving ability, all crucial skills for physicians.
- Join the Pre-Health Club and take advantage of the many resources and activities available.
- Contact the Center for Career and Pre-Professional Development for information on local internships. You may also contact hospitals and clinics in your hometown to set up an internship or other experience during summer break.
- At the end of your second year, select your major. Many pre-med students major in a science, but any major is acceptable.

Junior Year

- Complete all courses necessary for taking the MCAT.
- Visit the AAMC site for information on registering for the MCAT. Taking the MCAT in the spring (before mid May) allows for earlier application than taking it in the summer.
- Begin to review for the MCAT in the fall term. Continue through winter break and the winter and spring terms.

- Before the end of winter term, contact faculty about writing letters of recommendation to support your application.
- Register for the MCAT when registration becomes available.
- Take the MCAT in the spring, but no later than the last week of May.
- Starting in the spring, visit the AAMC site regularly for information on the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS). Nearly all U.S. medical schools use this service. Begin to fill out the application in April, after the MCAT. Plan on having the AMCAS application ready to submit as soon as AMCAS begins accepting applications, usually the end of June.
- Before leaving for summer break, follow up with faculty who have agreed to write your letters of recommendation. If you provide them with a copy of your personal essay for your AMCAS application and/or discuss your career plans with them, your referees can write more detailed letters about you and your goals.
- Make sure you have a completed letter of recommendation form on file with the pre-health advisor before you leave for the summer so your letters can be transmitted to AMCAS upon completion of your application.
- Fill out secondary applications as soon as they come in. Early review of your application by medical schools enhances your chances of admission because many schools make admissions offers at multiple points during the year.

Senior Year

- Interviews for many medical schools begin in the fall. Plan on being in the country during your senior year, although you can still participate in an off-campus program. If you're off-campus, make arrangements to expedite your mail delivery.
- The interview at the medical school is a crucial step in acceptance. Prepare for it by keeping current with important issues in health care, particularly in the field that you want to enter. Be able to converse knowledgeably about social issues in health care, as well as scientific ones. Research each school that you visit before you go there.

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