

# RURAL ONTARIO MEDICAL PROGRAM — ROAD TO MEDICINE —

2025/2026



*Becoming a physician in Canada...*



## RURAL ONTARIO MEDICAL PROGRAM

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The information in this guide is accurate at the time of printing and is subject to change. Current information can be found on the ROMP website. If there is a discrepancy between the information provided in this book and the information on the ROMP website, the website prevails. Before making decisions about rotations, please consult our knowledgeable staff.

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## THINKING ABOUT MEDICINE

If you are reading this book, you are probably considering a career in medicine. Medicine is not your typical Monday to Friday desk job. A career in medicine can be fun, challenging, and rewarding! It's also a career that will find you at the grocery store, follow you home, and track you down when you go on vacation!

Every individual's journey towards medicine is unique, and while the path may pose challenges, it's also filled with opportunities for enjoyment and personal growth.

Exploring what lies ahead in the pages to come will offer insight into this fulfilling pursuit. Remember, despite the difficulties, there's ample room for fun, and the ultimate reward awaiting at the end will undoubtedly make every step worthwhile.

If you are interested in pursuing a career in medicine but not necessarily in becoming a doctor, there are many different careers within the healthcare sector to explore. These alternatives can be researched through your local guidance office, university websites, by volunteering and talking with members of your community.

**“Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain and difficulty...” -**  
*Theodore Roosevelt*

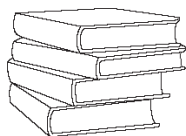


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## START EARLY

Once you've decided to pursue a future as a doctor, you can begin to think about how to make this a reality. Guidance counselors are incredibly valuable resources who can ensure that you take the courses that you will need and work with you to develop a plan. For most premed undergraduate programs, high school course requirements include these top six: 12U math, any two of (biology, chemistry, physics), english; and one non-math, non-science, non-technology 4U/M. For specific undergraduate program admission requirements, you will have to check the school's website. Although medical schools will not see your high school grades, these grades will impact your admission into university, as well as the opportunity to receive scholarships (see "Financial Matters").

Some universities will consider grade eleven marks, and all universities consider grade twelve marks when admitting undergraduate students. It is important to develop good study habits and discover the techniques that work for you to help you learn and retain what you learn in high school. Figuring this out early will help your transition to university, at which point your marks will be an important factor for medical school admissions.



**STUDY!!!**  
**VOLUNTEER!!!**  
**ACADEMICS!!!**  
**EXPERIENCE!!!**



## START EARLY

Beyond academic studies, engaging in community activities and gaining diverse experiences holds significant value in the journey toward becoming a physician. These experiences offer insights into how various sectors contribute to community well-being, that is not solely within healthcare. Volunteering and extracurricular involvement showcase your holistic dedication to serving and understanding diverse community needs. Medical schools seek well-rounded individuals with varied interests, emphasizing the importance of demonstrating commitment and a broad perspective beyond purely healthcare-related endeavors.

Extracurricular activities, such as joining your school's clubs or sports teams, are excellent ways to get involved within your school community. Outside of school, you may choose to volunteer. When deciding where you want to volunteer or what you would like to do as a volunteer, consider what it is that you would like to get out of these activities. Will you be volunteering mainly to learn about healthcare and the healthcare system or to set yourself apart from other medical school applicants? Do you have a different motivation for volunteering? Thinking about this will help you narrow down the types of volunteer experiences to look into.

### **Possible places to volunteer include:**

- Sports or youth organizations
- First aid groups
- Community outreach groups
- Schools
- Charitable organizations
- Healthcare settings



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## START EARLY

Volunteering at hospitals, retirement homes, or other healthcare-focused places will give you a good idea of what to expect as a future doctor. It can be a fun and rewarding experience.

To begin volunteering, check the facility's website, and email or call to inquire about volunteer opportunities. Most hospitals and retirement homes have a volunteer coordinator who will be able to answer any questions you may have. Before you can volunteer, hospitals and retirement homes will likely ask you to submit an application, have a background check, sign a confidentiality agreement and attend an interview or orientation session. Some places require a flu shot and other health-related tests (e.g. TB test). Many healthcare-focused volunteer positions have a minimum time commitment (e.g. 1 year), therefore starting early can ensure you don't miss out on anything.

### The benefits of volunteering:

- **Skill Development:** A way for individuals lacking work experience to gain job specific training
- **Networking:** Create mutually beneficial relationships with peers and mentors at your place of volunteering
- **Practice:** Gain experience writing resumes, applying to and interviewing for volunteer roles
- **Getting Feedback:** Ensure to ask for constructive feedback from supervisors during your volunteer process
- **Cultivating References:** Give as much effort to your role as you would in a paid job to try and acquire references from your supervisors for later use



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## START EARLY

Another way to gain exposure to the medical field is by shadowing doctors. Do some investigating and find out if any of your parents' friends or any friends' parents are doctors. You could also talk to your family doctor or pediatrician about whether they, or any doctors they know, could provide mentorship. If you can, be sure to ask a lot of questions! Ask doctors about their training, their career, what they love about their job and what they wish they had done differently.

Another option for getting involved in the community is to see whether your local hospital has an observership program. Although not all hospitals have them, these programs are a more formal way to shadow a physician and are organized through the hospital.

Thinking about the journey to a career as a physician can be overwhelming – after all, it's still many years and several degrees away! Try not to get carried away by the process. Each step you take towards becoming a physician can be rewarding and exciting – whether it's studying a subject you love in school, getting involved with an organization whose work inspires you, finding a mentor who's been in your shoes and made the same journey which you're embarking on, or any other step you end up taking on your path to medicine.

**“Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out” - Robert Collier**





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## FINANCIAL MATTERS

Training to become a doctor is a costly process. After covering the costs of the MCAT, medical school applications, tuition, and accommodations – not to mention the cost of an undergraduate degree – pockets can become quite shallow. Fortunately, there are many resources available and systems in place to help students with the financial aspect of post-secondary education. These include scholarships, bursaries, RESPs, loans, and lines of credit, among others. Once you enter medical school and residency, you can start looking into the incentives offered to physicians from the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care.

It is a good idea to plan your finances before you leave high school. High school marks are important for many undergraduate scholarships which, along with other financial awards, are an excellent source of revenue to help pay for your education. Research the scholarships offered in your area – including from your school and province – to determine which scholarships you would be a good candidate for.

Some scholarships are awarded to students in their final year of high school, such as The Loran Scholarship, TD Scholarships, Schulich Leader Scholarships, and other major scholarships specific to the university. These scholarships are more competitive and usually involve a supplementary application or even interview. Another avenue could be gaining entrance scholarships, which are automatically awarded with admission to a University and vary in amount depending on grade requirements per school.



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## FINANCIAL MATTERS

Think about starting to research the opportunities, application criteria and processes as early as grade ten or grade eleven. Below are links which you may find helpful:

[www.scholarshipscanada.com](http://www.scholarshipscanada.com)

[www.canlearn.ca](http://www.canlearn.ca)

[www.studentawards.com](http://www.studentawards.com)

<https://scholartree.ca/>

In addition to scholarships, there are many different awards and bursaries given each year by local schools and school boards. Guidance counselors are quite enthusiastic about scholarships, awards, and bursaries and will provide you with excellent information about what is offered in your community. They will also be able to help you determine your qualifications and might even assist you with your applications. Do not hesitate to apply to all of the scholarships for which you are eligible; you can't receive the awards you do not apply for!

A Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) is a fund that some parents start for their children to help with the costs of post-secondary education. RESPs are offered by most financial institutions and are a tax free way for parents and guardians to save money with the help of the government. Ask your parents if they have started an RESP for you and become involved with helping it grow.



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## FINANCIAL MATTERS

Student loans and lines of credit are common ways for university students to meet the costs of tuition and other expenses while obtaining their post-secondary education. Speak with your parents and your bank to learn more about these options. Student loans and grants can be obtained through the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) – visit <https://osap.gov.on.ca/> to learn more about the program.

Finances will continue to influence your decisions as you progress through medical school. Once you are in your clerkship years (the part of medical school when you do clinical rotations and gain hands-on experience) things might become more expensive, particularly if you plan to travel during your rotations. In Ontario, the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care has established financial incentives for medical students through several programs within the Underserviced Area Program (UAP). Contact the Ministry of Health's UAP department for more information:

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care  
Primary Health Care Team  
Underserviced Area Program  
159 Cedar Street, Suite 402  
Sudbury, ON P3E 6A5  
Toll Free: 1-866-727-9959

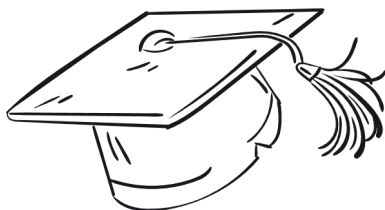


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## JUMP TO UNIVERSITY

For some high school students, the transition to university can be difficult. Between living away from home, balancing the new course load, extracurricular and social activities, and making new friends, you will have a lot on your plate! If you feel that you are not ready to attend university right after you have completed high school, a great alternative is to take the time necessary to prepare yourself for the transition. Do not think that taking time off between high school and university will hinder your chances of being accepted into medical school. Just be sure to make the most of your time - whether it is through a job, volunteer work, or other experiences, try to do things which will help you prepare for university and ultimately for your journey to medical school and becoming a doctor.

University is a time when students assume a greater amount of responsibility. It is important to establish your priorities and hone your time management skills. Reflecting back at their time at university, many remember it as a fun and exciting experience. Enjoy yourself while you are there, but be mindful of keeping your commitments in balance and making the most of your university experience.





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## JUMP TO UNIVERSITY

### **Below are some tips for success at university:**

- Manage your time effectively – plan ahead and balance studying and personal time.
- Take notes efficiently and in a way that works for you – whether in class or studying, your note-taking should help you retain the information and be useful to review and study from later.
- Write practice tests and study with your classmates.
- Be prepared for class – go over the material you will be covering before going to class, and review it after class to help you retain the information.
- Don't be a stranger – keep in touch with family and friends to avoid becoming homesick.
- Network – professors, teaching assistants and classmates can all be helpful now and in the future, and professors may become a link to a summer job.
- Take care of your physical and mental health to avoid burnout - exercise, eat well, use on-campus resources (gyms, physio clinic, counselors, student success centres)
- Utilize Resources – Check out the various student success centres offered on campus

Like in high school, it is always a good idea to get involved while you are at university. Medical schools look for well-rounded applicants – people who are involved in a variety of extracurricular activities, are involved with volunteer and social activities throughout their education, and are able to balance their studies with their social and extracurricular lives. Most importantly, do things for yourself! Joining extracurriculars is a great tool for applications while also giving you a break from your studies.



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# MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

## Applying Within Ontario

The Ontario Medical Schools Application Service (OMSAS) is the centralized application service for all of the Ontario medical schools. OMSAS is a valuable source for detailed outlines of the Ontario medical school application process and deadlines, information about the application requirements and factors considered in assessing applications to the various schools, and information about the medical schools themselves.

You need to register with OMSAS online before you can begin the application process. It is best to register early, familiarize yourself with the application, and make sure that you have all of the information and material ready when it comes time to submit your application.

OMSAS

170 Research Lane

Guelph, ON

N1G 5E2

Phone: (519) 823-1940

E-mail: [omsas@ouac.on.ca](mailto:omsas@ouac.on.ca)

Web site: [www.ouac.on.ca/omsas](http://www.ouac.on.ca/omsas)

## Applying Out of Province

Applications to medical schools outside of Ontario must be submitted directly to the medical school. The Admissions Department of the school should be contacted early to answer any questions about the application process and deadlines.



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# MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

## When to Apply

The most common question about applying to medical school is when to start the process. The “easy” answer is: once you have completed the minimum number of undergraduate years required by the school. You also need to assess at what point during the year the application for each school is due. The OMSAS website will display all of the deadlines for registering with them and submitting applications.

Since applications for schools outside of Ontario go to the schools directly, the deadlines might vary. Most of the medical schools’ deadlines for application are set for late summer or early fall prior to the admitting year. Give yourself one calendar year to gather all of your documents and prepare yourself for the application process.

Once you are done applying, all you can do is wait for a response to see if you have achieved an interview spot. Typically, medical schools will start emailing applicants their interview offers and initial rejections anytime from December to March. Then after interviews, starting in late March to late May, schools will send out final acceptances, rejections, or waitlist offers. Ontario schools have always sent this information out on the second Tuesday of May.



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# MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

## What does the Application Involve?

All Canadian medical schools all have similar application requirements. To highlight the Ontario medical schools, the OMSAS portal requires:

- General information
- University transcript
- 3 reference letters (1 academic- or employment-related, 1 non-academic, 1 of your choice)
- MCAT score
- CASPer score
- Prerequisite course information
- School-specific short-answer essay questions
- Autobiographical Sketch (ABS) & Verifiers

## What is the ABS?

The ABS is a comprehensive list of all activities you have completed since age 16. It has the following categories: employment, volunteering, extracurriculars, awards, research, and other. The ABS has spots for up to 32 activities. Each activity requires a description, start/end dates, number of hours completed, etc.

Importantly, each activity also requires a verifier. This is a person who can verify your involvement in an activity. You will need to reach out to a person to verify each of your activities to get their permission to include their contact information on your application. Medical schools may randomly contact verifiers to confirm the information you provide in your ABS.





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## MCAT

Most people have heard about the Medical College Admission Test (**MCAT**), whether it is from television, your own research, or someone you know. Hopefully it isn't from the person who fainted halfway through the test...

The **MCAT** is a standardized exam comprised of multiple choice questions in four categories: Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems; Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills; Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems; Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behaviour. The **MCAT** is a difficult test - it is long, covers a lot of material, and the format is different from most tests you will see in high school and university. If you decide to write the test, it is important to plan ahead and study effectively to make sure you're well prepared. Keep in mind, though, that not all medical schools in Canada require applicants to write the **MCAT** - check with the schools to find out if it is an application requirement.

There are many ways to prepare for the **MCAT**. One option is to use an **MCAT** practice book or study guide. There are a variety of books and guides available, ranging in cost from fifteen dollars to hundreds of dollars. However, they are also pretty easy to find second hand, if you want to save money. These will familiarize you with the **MCAT** content and format, and can be a helpful part of your preparation.

Another option is to take an **MCAT** Preparation Course. Many of the courses review the **MCAT** content, provide practice tests, and equip you with tips and techniques to tackle the test.



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## MCAT

Depending on what type of student you are, you may find the routine and structure of a Preparation Course to be helpful. There are many companies in Canada who offer a preparation course, including Kaplan and the Princeton Review. The Kaplan **MCAT** Course runs for over two months and offers either an in-class or an online version. The Princeton Review also offers both an in-class Hyperlearning Course and an online Hyperlearning Course.

Practice **MCAT** tests are another useful tool to prepare for the test. They can help you gauge how your preparation is going – whether your studying has been as effective as you think, and highlighting the areas you know well and which you should focus on. Practice tests can also familiarize you with the **MCAT** format– how the questions are asked, what the layout of the test is like, and other details which will be helpful to know and be familiar with. Practice tests are available on the official **MCAT** website ([www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org)) as well as several other third-party websites online.

Ideally, by two months prior to writing the exam you will have covered most of the material and will be starting your final preparation for the **MCAT**. How much time you spend studying and how early you start depends on you; factors such as whether you have a job or are in school, as well as how diligent you are, will play a role in your study regime. Remember, you are better off starting too early than discovering that you have left it too late!



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## MCAT

There are many sources to find material that can help you to prepare for the **MCAT**. It is a good idea to practice taking the test using some of these tools. Some people find it useful to imitate the setting of the exam room, only allowing themselves a certain period of time to complete example questions. Some of the online sources at your disposal are:

[www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org)

[www.princetonreview.com/medical/testprep](http://www.princetonreview.com/medical/testprep)

[www.4tests.com/exams](http://www.4tests.com/exams)

[www.oxfordseminars.ca](http://www.oxfordseminars.ca)

[www.mcat-prep.com](http://www.mcat-prep.com)

[www.mcatprepinfo.com](http://www.mcatprepinfo.com)

[www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat](http://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat)

It is important to remember you are not alone during your preparation for the **MCAT**. There are several online forums (Facebook, Reddit, Discord) available to help you meet others who have or are currently studying for the **MCAT**. Also, many universities have a premed club which is another resource you can use to meet more people with similar aspirations. Networking with like-minded people allows you to gain valuable insight on how to best prepare for your test and also introduces you to potential study partners!



## MCAT

The **MCAT** is administered between April and September. Registration for the **MCAT** is done online and begins as early as the February prior to the test date; the cut-off date for registration is approximately one week prior to the test date. Registration fills up quickly, so apply early to ensure that you are able to write the test when you had planned.

Always remember, everyone's journey to medicine is different; there is not a single path. For some people this means waiting until their final years of university to complete the **MCAT**. For others, this might be taking multiple attempts at the test to achieve a score they are confident with. Just know, the AAMC grants each individual seven **MCAT** attempts throughout their lifetime. If your first try at the test is not what you hoped, do not give up! Use the time in between attempts to reflect, re-strategize, and resolve the issues you faced to achieve your goal.

You can learn more about the **MCAT** test, registration, and locations from the official **MCAT** website:

[www.aamc.org/students/mcat](http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat).





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## CASPER

The “Computer-based Assessment for Sampling Personal Characteristics” (**CASPer**) test is an online, open-response situational judgment test (SJT). It asks what you would do in a tough situation, and more importantly, why. Specifically, **CASPer** tests a person’s skills in collaboration, communication, empathy, fairness, ethics, motivation, problem solving, professionalism, resilience and self-awareness.

The **CASPer** test is around 90 - 110 minutes long and split into two sections: video-responses and typed-responses. In each, you will either read or watch a scenario and then respond to questions by either recording a video of yourself or typing out your answer.

While the **CASPer** test will not necessitate as much studying as the MCAT, it is helpful to review some example scenarios and questions in advance. Some of the online resources below have some great example questions that you can practice either your video- or typed-responses with:

<https://prepmatch.com/>  
<https://caspertestprep.com/>  
<https://www.caspertest.com/>  
<https://boosterprep.com/casper>

You can learn more about the **CASPer** test and registration from the official **CASPer** website:

<https://acuityinsights.app/casper/>

**CASPER**  
BY ACUITY INSIGHTS



# THE SCHOOLS

The following chart contains a snapshot of the admission requirements of each of the medical schools in Canada, where the language of instruction is English:

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	Province	# of Spots	Length (years)	Minimum GPA (4.0 scale)	Minimum MCAT	CASPer required	Prerequisite Courses	Min. UG years completed
Dalhousie University	Nova Scotia	10*	4	3.7*	Total 503 (min. 123 in each section)	Yes	N/A	4
McGill University	Quebec	11*	4	3.7*	N/A	Yes	6.0 BIOL, 6.0 CHEM, 6.0 PHYS, 3.0 ORGO	4
McMaster University	Ontario	217	3	3.0	123 in CARS	Yes	N/A	3
Memorial University of Newfoundland	Newfoundland	6*	4	85%* (% based scale)	Approx. 510 (127 per section)	Yes	N/A	4
Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM)	Ontario	88	4	3.0	N/A	No	N/A	4
Queen's University	Ontario	114 + 20 for Queen's-Lakeridge	4	3.0	500 (125 each section)	Yes	N/A	3
Simon Fraser University	British Columbia	TBD	3	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Toronto Metropolitan University	Ontario	94	4	3.3	N/A	No	N/A	4
University of Alberta	Alberta	15%* of 192	4	3.5*	128 CARS, 124 other sections	Yes	N/A	4
University of British Columbia	British Columbia	10%* of 328	4	85%*	124 in each section	No	6.0 ENGL	3
University of Calgary	Alberta	15%* of 155	3	3.8	128 CARS	No	Indigenous course (variety permitted)	2
University of Manitoba	Manitoba	5% of 140	4	4.11 (4.50 scale)	Approx. 519	Yes	Indigenous course (variety permitted)	4
University of Ottawa	Ontario	178 (122 English, 56 French)	4	3.5	N/A	Yes	6.0 BIOL, 3.0 BCHM, 3.0 CHEM, 3.0 ORGO, 3.0 STAT, 6.0 Humanities/Social Sci.	3
University of Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan	6*	4	80%	492 (123 each section)	Yes	Indigenous course (variety permitted)	4
University of Toronto	Ontario	289	4	3.6; average 3.95	125 each section (124 allowed in one section)	No	12.0 Life Science courses, 6.0 Social Sci./Humanities/ Language	3
Western University	Ontario	187	4	3.7	126 psych./soc. section, 127 other sections	No	N/A	4
York University	Ontario	TBD	3	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

This chart is current at the time of printing; information changes annually. Information only provides a general overview as separate pathways for each school may exist.  
\* Out of province applicants



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## THE SCHOOLS

It is best to check with the schools for the most up-to-date information about the admissions requirements and process.

The admission requirements for each medical school will also be listed on the admission page of the school's website:

**Dalhousie University:** [medicine.dal.ca/](http://medicine.dal.ca/)

**McGill University:** [www.mcgill.ca/medadmissions/](http://www.mcgill.ca/medadmissions/)

**McMaster University:** [medschool.healthsci.mcmaster.ca/](http://medschool.healthsci.mcmaster.ca/)

**Memorial University of Newfoundland:** [mun.ca/medicine/](http://mun.ca/medicine/)

**Northern Ontario School of Medicine:** [www.nosm.ca/](http://www.nosm.ca/)

**Queen's University:** [meds.queensu.ca/](http://meds.queensu.ca/)

**Toronto Metropolitan University:** [www.torontomu.ca/school-of-medicine/](http://www.torontomu.ca/school-of-medicine/)

**Simon Fraser University:** [www.sfu.ca/medicine.html](http://www.sfu.ca/medicine.html)

**University of Alberta:** [www.ualberta.ca/en/medicine/index](http://www.ualberta.ca/en/medicine/index)

**University of B.C:** [www.med.ubc.ca/](http://www.med.ubc.ca/)

**University of Calgary:** [cumming.ucalgary.ca/](http://cumming.ucalgary.ca/)

**University of Manitoba:** [umanitoba.ca/medicine/](http://umanitoba.ca/medicine/)

**University of Ottawa:** [www.uottawa.ca/faculty-medicine/](http://www.uottawa.ca/faculty-medicine/)

**University of Saskatchewan:** [medicine.usask.ca/](http://medicine.usask.ca/)

**University of Toronto:** [temertymedicine.utoronto.ca/](http://temertymedicine.utoronto.ca/)

**University of Western Ontario:** [www.schulich.uwo.ca/index.html](http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/index.html)

**York University:** [www.yorku.ca/medicine/](http://www.yorku.ca/medicine/)

**“All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.” — Walt Disney**



## ONTARIO MEDICAL SCHOOLS

Each of Ontario’s medical schools offers unique opportunities and challenges for aspiring medical students. Understanding the distinct programs, environments, and values of each institution is key to selecting the best fit for your educational and professional goals. This section provides a detailed overview of each medical school in Ontario, exploring their general information, admission requirements, and program highlights.

Please note that while seven of Ontario’s medical schools are included in this section, York University’s new medical school will not be featured as the school’s first class is not set to begin until July 2028 and admission criteria have not yet been posted.



### McMaster University - Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine

Campus Locations: Hamilton, Niagara, Waterloo

Admission Formula (pre-interview): 32% GPA + 32% CARS + 32% CASPer + 4% Graduate Degree Bonus

Interview Style: MMI



Tuition (per year): \$25,129.96

Program Highlights: 3-year curriculum with a focus on problem-based learning (i.e., learning done through tutorials, rather than lectures).

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	# of Spots	Length (years)	Minimum GPA (4.0 scale)	Minimum MCAT (competitive/cutoff)	CASPer required	Prerequisite Courses	Min. UG years completed
McMaster University	217	3	3.0	123 in CARS; used competitively	Yes	N/A	3





# ONTARIO MEDICAL SCHOOLS

## Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) University

Campus Locations: Sudbury, Thunder Bay

Admission Formula (pre-interview): 50% GPA + 50% Context Score  
(score based on years lived in Northern/rural Ontario or employment in Northern Ontario)

Interview Style: MMI and Panel



Tuition (per year): \$23,247

Program Highlights: Curriculum emphasizes Northern, Indigenous, and rural health; 8-month longitudinal Comprehensive Community Clerkship in third year.

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	# of Spots	Length (years)	Minimum GPA (4.0 scale)	Minimum MCAT (competitive/cutoff)	CASPer required	Prerequisite Courses	Min. UG years completed
Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM)	88	4	3.0	N/A	No	N/A	4

## Queen's University - School of Medicine

Campus Locations: Kingston, Oshawa (Queen's-Lakeridge)

Admission Formula (pre-interview): Randomized

Interview Style: MMI and Panel



Tuition (per year): \$25,254.14

Highlights (Queen's): Small class sizes, new medical school building.

Highlights (Queen's-Lakeridge): New program with family medicine emphasis, allowing medical students direct entry into Queen's-Bowmanville-Oshawa-Lakeridge Family Medicine Residency.

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	# of Spots	Length (years)	Minimum GPA (4.0 scale)	Minimum MCAT (competitive/cutoff)	CASPer required	Prerequisite Courses	Min. UG years completed
Queen's University	114 + 20 for Queen's-Lakeridge	4	3.0	500 (125 each section); cut-off only	Yes	N/A	3



# ONTARIO MEDICAL SCHOOLS

## Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) - School of Medicine

Campus Locations: Brampton

Admission Formula (pre-interview): Step 1 - completion of online written/video assessment, Step 2 - overall file review (GPA, ABS, references, essay questions, regional connectedness to *Brampton/Peel Region*)

Interview Style: MMI

Tuition (per year): \$25,487

Program Highlights: Emphasis on primary care and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in curriculum.



MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	# of Spots	Length (years)	Minimum GPA (4.0 scale)	Minimum MCAT (competitive/cutoff)	CASPer required	Prerequisite Courses	Min. UG years completed
Toronto Metropolitan University	94	4	3.3	N/A	No	N/A	4

## University of Ottawa - Faculty of Medicine

Campus Locations: Ottawa

Admission Formula (pre-interview): GPA, CASPer, and ABS; *please note that 50% of spots are reserved for regional (Ottawa & surrounding area) candidates*

Interview Style: Panel

Tuition (per year): \$25,486.82



uOttawa

Program Highlights: Teaching is offered in both English and French; state-of-the-art medical simulation centre.

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	# of Spots	Length (years)	Minimum GPA (4.0 scale)	Minimum MCAT (competitive/cutoff)	CASPer required	Prerequisite Courses	Min. UG years completed
University of Ottawa	178 (122 English, 56 French)	4	3.5	N/A	Yes	6.0 BIOL, 3.0 BCHM, 3.0 CHEM, 3.0 ORGO, 3.0 STAT, 6.0 Humanities/Social Sci.	3



# ONTARIO MEDICAL SCHOOLS

## University of Toronto - Temerty Faculty of Medicine

Campus Locations: Toronto, Mississauga, Scarborough

Admission Formula (pre-interview): overall academic (GPA) and non-academic (ABS, references, essay questions) file review

Interview Style: vMPI

Tuition (per year): \$23,090



Program Highlights: Top medical school in Canada; large class spilt into smaller academies for intimate learning environment.

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	# of Spots	Length (years)	Minimum GPA (4.0 scale)	Minimum MCAT (competitive/cutoff)	CASPer required	Prerequisite Courses	Min. UG years completed
University of Toronto	289	4	3.6; average 3.95	125 each section (124 allowed in one section); cut-off only	No	12.0 Life Science courses, 6.0 Social Sci./Humanities/ Language	3

## Western University - Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry

Campus Locations: London, Windsor

Admission Formula (pre-interview): GPA, MCAT, references, ABS, and ABS-based essay questions; *please note that there is an admission pathway for students from Southwestern Ontario*

Interview Style: Panel

Tuition (per year): \$23,986



Program Highlights: Competency-based, active learning medical education (CBME) model that supports personal and team learning.

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	# of Spots	Length (years)	Minimum GPA (4.0 scale)	Minimum MCAT (competitive/cutoff)	CASPer required	Prerequisite Courses	Min. UG years completed
Western University	187	4	3.7	126 psyc./soc. section, 127 other sections	No	N/A	4



# MEDICAL SCHOOL ADMISSION STATISTICS

Admission statistics for medical school can be intimidating. Stay positive; you have worked hard and there will surely be aspects of your journey so far which will give you an edge over other applicants.

## CANADIAN MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICANTS\*

Data from AFMC Canadian Medical Education Statistics 2021 report:

Total Applicants	12,417
Total Successful Applicants	1,981

*\*Excludes data from Ontario medical schools; statistics only represent Canadian medical schools outside of Ontario and includes French-speaking medical schools.*

## ONTARIO MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICANTS

Data from 2023 OMSAS System Data:

Total Applicants	7,483
Total Successful Applicants	1,062

**“In the presence of adversity, there are those who use crutches and those who grow wings.”** - Unknown

AFMC 2021 Report:

<https://www.afmc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/CMES-2021-Complete-EN.pdf>

OMSAS Statistics:

<https://www.ouac.on.ca/statistics/>



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## INTERVIEWS

Previously, once applicants progressed to the next stage, medical schools would reach out and schedule in-person interviews. However, those contacted by multiple schools had to travel to each institution for their interviews. This system had many flaws as people would have to travel sometimes far places in a short amount of time which was costly and difficult during the pandemic. Many of these problems were resolved by the increased prevalence of virtual interviews, allowing people to be interviewed from the comfort of their home.

### **Multiple Mini Interview**

The Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) is a series of short, structured interviews that are used to assess applicants' personal traits. Candidates are presented with a question or scenario and given short period of time to prepare. The candidate then has a brief interview – generally with one interviewer, but in some cases with a third party while the interviewer observes the interaction. Once the interview has finished, the candidate moves on to the next station and the process is repeated.

There seems to be a consensus that MMI is the best way to assess non-cognitive abilities of medical school applicants. By 2009, the majority of Canadian medical schools, along with several international medical schools, were using the MMI format as part of their application process.

The MMI interviews are meant to address many dimensions of the applicant – for example, they can provide insight into your ethics, your decision-making and communication skills, and give an overall impression of you as a medical school candidate.



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## INTERVIEWS

Standard interview questions, such as why you would like to study medicine or attend a particular school, may be asked during the interview. It is important to prepare for these questions and have a good, genuine answer. Not only will the content of your answer be important, but your ability to express yourself clearly and convincingly, and to do so within the time limits of the interview will be important as well. These questions are a great opportunity to bring up your volunteer experiences, extracurricular activities, discussions you have had with healthcare professionals, and any other experiences that could showcase what you have to offer as an applicant and future doctor.

### **Panel Interview**

A Panel Interview for medical school is an important component of the admissions process, where applicants are interviewed by a group (i.e. two or more) of individuals, usually made up of faculty, practicing physicians, and sometimes medical students. During the interview, candidates are asked questions that help assess their motivations for pursuing medicine, personal experiences, and understanding of the challenges and responsibilities that come with being a physician. Panelists may also present hypothetical scenarios or ethical dilemmas to evaluate critical thinking, communication skills, and the ability to collaborate in a healthcare setting. This type of interview allows medical schools to evaluate applicants beyond their academic achievements, focusing on key qualities such as empathy, resilience, and a genuine commitment to the field of medicine.



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# INTERVIEWS

## Modified Personal Interview

The Modified Personal Interview (MPI) or virtual MPI (vMPI) was created, and is used by, the University of Toronto. It involves four independent stations assessed by four different interviewers. Each interview provides interviewees 2 minutes to read the question and prepare a response, then approximately 5 minutes to respond. The MPI is a very similar format to MMI interviews, but is more personal. The goal of it is to learn more about the applicant and the qualities they possess, which is reflected in the questions that are asked.

## Practicing for Interviews

Doing practice interviews is a great way to prepare for the medical school interviews. Practicing gives you the opportunity to reflect on some of the questions and topics which are likely to come up in the interviews - why you want to practice medicine, what your biggest strengths and weaknesses are, and how you would handle difficult ethical situations, for example. Practicing also helps to get comfortable answering interview-style questions - you can get a sense of how best to structure your answers, the kind of language you would like to use, the timing of your answers, and how to communicate clearly and concisely during the interview.

There are many places that you can find sample interview questions, and many ways to practice and prepare for a MMI, Panel, or MPI interview.



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## INTERVIEWS

Many medical schools make available to applicants sample interview questions and scenarios, or interview questions from previous years. If you know people who have gone through the interview process, it would be good to speak with them and get their advice. Find out how they prepared for the interviews, what they found worked well and, just as importantly, what they would do differently if they were to go through the interview process again.

Family and friends can also make good mock interviewers. Since these people know you the most, they can help identify the best way to present yourself in an interview, and how you can prove to the interviewers why you are a good medical school candidate and why the school should accept you over the other applicants.

Finally, practice interview groups – whether they are organized groups or just a bunch of applicants who are all trying to prepare for the interviews – can be helpful when getting ready for your interview. Practicing being interviewed is great, but hearing other applicants' answers and seeing how they conduct themselves during interviews can be helpful as well.

If you do not know anyone who has gone through this process, or if you would prefer to read some sample questions, there are many sources which provide samples of question styles and examples of past interview questions. Aside from the medical school websites, some useful resources are:

<https://www.canadianpremed.ca/blog/how-to-prepare-for-your-medical-school-interview-canada>

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/getting-medical-school/interview-resources-medical-school-applicants>





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## INTERVIEWS

<https://www.shemmassianconsulting.com/blog/medical-school-interviews>

<https://www.princetonreview.com/med-school-advice/medical-school-interview-questions>

<https://bemoacademicconsulting.com/blog/how-to-prepare-for-med-school-interview>

<https://www.videoath.com/community/interviewprep>

### Example Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want to be a physician?
- Why do you want to attend our medical school? How would you be a good fit?
- Tell me about a time when....
  - Your work was criticized
  - You excelled in a team
  - You decided to think outside the box
  - You failed and what you learned
  - Etc.
- A patient from a different cultural background refuses a certain medical treatment because it conflicts with their beliefs. As a doctor, how would you handle this situation while respecting their culture but also ensuring they receive appropriate care?
- You are working in a clinic and suspect that a colleague is under the influence of drugs while on shift. You know this could jeopardize patient safety. However, you are also aware that this colleague is facing personal difficulties. What steps would you take?
- Despite the success of vaccines in controlling many diseases, vaccine hesitancy remains a challenge, especially in the context of the COVID-19 vaccine. How can healthcare professionals effectively communicate the importance of vaccination to the public, and what role does education play in overcoming vaccine hesitancy?



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## OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN HEALTHCARE

The process of applying to medical school can be quite challenging for any applicant, however, some people face more obstacles than others in their life. Factors such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES), and overall bias all play a role in one's opportunity to interview with a medical school, or their acceptance altogether.

According to Quebec application results from 2019, of the 81% of students who were admitted into their desired programs, only 1.2% identified as Black, while 6.4% identified as a person of colour (POC). The bottleneck in the admissions process can be attributed to the opportunities for students leading up to their application. Socioeconomic factors such as family income and social class largely impact the direction of one's education path. A study conducted by the University of Manitoba discovered that white students were more likely to be accepted into medical school because of their built-in advantages, as opposed to their POC classmates. In this study, a majority of the white cohort came from upper-middle class families and the POC cohort came from lower-middle to low class families. This meant the white students were not required to work part-time during their undergraduate school years to pay for tuition which gave them more time and opportunity to focus on their studies. These students were also able to afford MCAT prep courses and speak upon their unique life experiences, such as traveling, volunteering, etc. Further, the white middle/upper-class families in the study were also more inclined to provide their children with mentors and possible connections that could help them in their future with medicine - another advantage that highlighted their applications over their POC classmate's. Other obstacles in the med school process are the application and interview reviews, as they can both be rooted in racism and bias.



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## OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN HEALTHCARE

For example, when a POC applies to medical school, there are chances of their applications being overlooked or automatically discarded, solely based on their race and ethnicity, and the same can be said for interviews. These actions could be attributed to the underrepresentation of people of colour on the application and interview review committees.

Fortunately, medical programs in Canada have become aware of these obstacles, and are using efforts to combat the racism and inequalities that are experienced by POC's as well as other groups that experience inequities in their journey to medicine.

On the next page you will find dedicated pathways created by Canadian medical school programs to reduce inequities in admissions. Please visit each school's website for the most up-to-date information regarding these pathways and opportunities.

Separate from the dedicated pathways, is one unique program highlighted here:

### **University of Calgary - Pathways to Medicine Scholarship Program**

This program is designed to support Alberta students from underrepresented backgrounds—particularly those from low socioeconomic, Indigenous, or rural communities—pursuing a career in medicine. The program offers up to five scholarships annually, each providing \$5,000 per year. Scholarship recipients also receive mentorship, MCAT preparation, and guaranteed admission to the Cumming School of Medicine upon meeting specific academic criteria. Applicants must apply and be admitted to an undergraduate program at the University of Calgary.



# OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN HEALTHCARE

<b>MEDICAL UNIVERSITY</b>	<b>Indigenous Student Pathway?</b>	<b>Black Student Pathway?</b>	<b>Socioeconomic -based Pathway?</b>	<b>Other Equity-based Pathways</b>
<b>Dalhousie University</b>	Yes	Yes	See "Other"	<b>Widening Accessibility Stream</b> - for underrepresented populations or those who encounter significant barriers <b>Rural Applicant Pathway, Cape Breton Medical Campus</b> - for rural Nova Scotian applicants. Includes a return of services agreement in Family Medicine.
<b>McGill University</b>	Yes - Max. 12 seats	Yes	Yes	<b>Rural and Small Populations Pathway</b> - applicants from rural or small town areas of Quebec; max. 5 seats
<b>McMaster University</b>	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
<b>Memorial University of Newfoundland</b>	Yes - Approx. 3 seats	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM)</b>	Yes - Min. 6 seats	Yes	N/A	<b>Francophone Pathway</b> - dedicated pathway for francophone applicants that want to serve French-speaking communities
<b>Queen's University</b>	Yes - Min. 4 seats	N/A	Yes - 8% of MMI spots	N/A
<b>Simon Fraser University</b>	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Toronto Metropolitan University</b>	Yes	Yes	See "Other"	<b>Equity-Deserving Pathway</b> - for 2SLGBTQ+ community members, applicants with disabilities, familial and/or socio-cultural barriers, low socioeconomic status, racialized persons, etc.
<b>University of Alberta</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	<b>Rural Admissions Process</b> - for rural Alberta, Northwest Territories, Yukon or Nunavut applicants; 30 seats
<b>University of British Columbia</b>	Yes	Yes	N/A	<b>Northern and Rural Pathway</b> - for applicants with experiences in rural, remote, northern, or Indigenous settings, along with their community ties and diverse activities; max. 62 seats
<b>University of Calgary</b>	Yes	Yes	N/A	<b>Rural and Remote Applicant Process</b> - applicants from rural and remote communities
<b>University of Manitoba</b>	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>University of Ottawa</b>	Yes - Max. 7 seats	Yes	Yes - 2 seats	<b>Consortium national de formation en santé (CFNS)</b> - for Francophone candidates outside Ontario and Quebec; 8 seats
<b>University of Saskatchewan</b>	Yes - Max. 20 seats	Yes	See "Other"	<b>Diversity and Social Accountability Admissions Program</b> - for applicants facing socioeconomic and other systemic barriers; 7 seats
<b>University of Toronto</b>	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A
<b>Western University</b>	Yes - 5 seats	Yes	See "Other"	<b>Access Pathway</b> - for applicants from/with underrepresented populations in medicine, serious illness/disability, socioeconomic challenges, familial and/or socio-cultural barriers
<b>York University</b>	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Current at the time of printing; information changes annually.

Please note that this chart only includes equity-based pathways to admissions, not admission pathways reserved for students applying through MD/MSc, MD/PhD, MMTP, or regional-based pathways.



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## INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL SCHOOLS

Some applicants choose to apply to medical schools outside of Canada. Some of the reasons to apply internationally are: citizenship in another country, the desire to study abroad, the reputation or medical program of an international institution, and difficulty getting accepted to a Canadian school.

Students who study medicine abroad are able to return to Canada for residency programs following medical school, and as fully trained physicians after completing their schooling. Canadian residency programs have a limited number of spots available for international medical graduates (IMGs), and physicians who complete their medical degrees and postgraduate training internationally may have to complete part or all of their residency training again in Canada. The requirements for IMGs to be able to complete a residency program or practice medicine in Canada vary between residency programs and provinces.

If your goal is ultimately to return to Canada to practice, it is important to try to return to Canada for your residency training. It is essential to be familiar with the most current policies and requirements for returning to Canada for a residency program, so that you can take the necessary steps to meet these during medical school. It is also important to make an effort to make yourself appealing as a candidate. Just like getting into medical school, you have to show the residency programs what distinguishes you from other applicants and demonstrate why you are the candidate that they are looking for.



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## INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL SCHOOLS

Should you wish to pursue a medical education abroad, it is important to thoroughly research the schools you will be applying to. Consider the accreditation of the school and its global standing – factors like its global ranking and reputation. Also consider the practice styles of physicians in the school’s country compared to the practice styles of physicians in Canada. Do they, like Canada, have a model of patient-centered medicine? Look at the course outline and how learning is scheduled. Some international medical schools do not offer clinical rotations, but instead the students are expected to travel to other countries to complete these rotations. The planning and traveling to these rotations can be very costly and induce a lot of stress. It is also important to note that Canadian medical schools limit the number of International Medical Students that they place, which results in tough competition for clinical placements. Just because you are a Canadian citizen does not mean you are guaranteed residency here.

Do not be discouraged by the barriers to studying abroad – there is still hope! More students who attend international medical schools were matched to residency training programs in Canada during 2023 than in any previous year. As George Smitherman, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care from 2003 - 2010, said: “Ontario is a leader in Canada in providing opportunities for internationally trained doctors to practice medicine”. When you successfully return to Canada, you will bring your knowledge and experience with you to benefit Canada’s patients and lessen the current shortage of physicians.



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## INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL SCHOOLS

Provided below are websites to help with your decision:

<http://img-canada.ca> (General information for IMGs entering Canada)

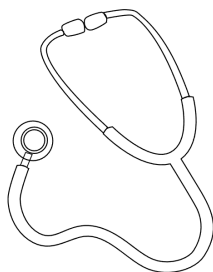
<https://cfms.org> (Downloadable document: Ethical Recruitment of IMGs by Canadian Provinces)

[www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca) (Downloadable documents: Report on Removing Barriers for International Medical Doctors; brochure for process of IMGs to become physicians in Canada IMG Brochure)

[www.cehpea.ca](http://www.cehpea.ca) (Further education for IMGs)

[www.healthforceontario.ca](http://www.healthforceontario.ca) (click Access Centre under Jobs and Advice)

**“Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore” - Andre Gide**





## INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL SCHOOLS

If you have decided that you are going to apply for medical school abroad, then there are a number of steps to take. Once you have an idea as to what country you would like to study in, learn as much as you can about the medical schools. Each medical school will have its own website, complete with admission requirements, tuition costs, course outlines, student testimonials and application processes. You will also need to find out where the interviews take place. Some schools host in-person interviews in a few major cities in Canada, and some schools offer interviews via Skype.

It is also important to ensure that the school has a good reputation within Canada. This is especially important if you are planning on returning to Canada for residency or as a physician. You can check its global recognition through the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER).

FAIMER is a not-for-profit organization that strives to promote international medical education through research and programming. The organization produces an International Medical Education Directory (IMED), which is created by studying the experiences of internationally trained medical professionals and contacting the various ministries of health, education as well as medical councils. Use the IMED to research all of the international schools in which you are interested. The IMED website link is: <https://imed.faimer.org>.





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## INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL SCHOOLS

You will have to research the application process for each school individually because there is no single application service for schools outside of Ontario. Like with the Ontario and Canadian medical school applications, you will need to be aware of the application deadlines, gather and submit the required documents, and fulfill any other application requirements which the international school has.

If you think Ireland may be the place you would like to study medicine, there is a program called Atlantic Bridge. Using this program, candidates can apply to all six Irish medical schools with one common application. If you want to learn more about Atlantic Bridge and applying to Ireland medical school visit their website: [www.atlanticbridge.com/medicine](http://www.atlanticbridge.com/medicine). Alternatively, studying medicine Australia is another popular option. Similar to Atlantic Bridge, OzTREKK is a program used to apply to Australian medical schools and can be found here: [www.oztrekk.com](http://www.oztrekk.com).

It is also important to know that there are different medical doctor (MD) programs available when looking internationally. For instance, some countries offer 4, 5, and 6 year MD programs depending on your level of schooling when applying. These programs all have different criteria so be diligent when looking at the requirements.

The rest of this book explains what to expect in medical school and residency. This information pertains to Canadian medical schools and does not necessarily reflect the expectations or structure of international medical schools.



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## PRE-CLERKSHIP

Congratulations! You've been accepted to medical school and are well on your way to practicing medicine! You have battled the odds and been accepted into a highly competitive program. Although you have already come so far, you still have a long way to go.

Medical school is traditionally split between pre-clerkship and clerkship. The pre-clerkship years are predominately lecture based, but will also involve both “hands-on” learning and group work. Courses are generally structured in units, with each running anywhere from one week to several months. An interesting aspect to the medical school curriculum is problem-based learning, which means studying actual medical cases to learn methods of treatment. Although the overall course material is essentially the same at every Canadian medical school, the division of units varies. If you are curious about the material studied, visit the medical school's website; many schools will post their curriculum and calendar online.

The clerkship years of medical school are very important and they are structured very differently than the pre-clerkship years. During clerkship, students complete hands-on clinical training with preceptor physicians, who provide training and mentorship for medical students. An invigorating feature of clerkship is the freedom and responsibility that the learner has. Instead of attending lectures and performing labs on cadavers and mock patients, you will be dealing with real patients under the guidance of experienced preceptors.



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## CLERKSHIP

Clerkship is structured in a way which exposes students to many different specialties. During clinical rotations, you spend blocks of time in the hospital, clinic or other practice setting, where you will be taught by a physician. You will be given a chance to apply the knowledge acquired during pre-clerkship in practical situations with real patients. The physician, on top of acting as a teacher and mentor, evaluates your performance during a clinical rotation and ensures that your learning objectives have been met. There are two types of clinical rotations: core and elective.

Core rotations are established by the medical school's curriculum and occur at a set time during the academic year. There are very specific guidelines and learning objectives to be reached during each core rotation. The most common core rotations in Canada are: Anesthesiology, Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Surgery. After each rotation there is usually a multiple choice exam as well as an oral exam, during which you would discuss the management of a particular case from the rotation.

Elective rotations are more flexible and are often driven by students' interests. Electives can be taken to explore other specialties not offered as core rotations. They can also be used to gain further experience and insight in a particular specialty of interest to the learner. Locations for completing elective rotations are often more flexible, allowing you to travel to different communities, provinces or even countries to gain a variety of experiences.

**“When encountering an opportunity, remember that 10% of life is what happens to you and 90% is how you react.”**

*- Jack Armstrong*



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## THE ROMP OPTION

The Rural Ontario Medical Program (ROMP) is a great opportunity for **clerks and residents** to gain clinical experiences outside of the traditional academic centres. ROMP connects learners with clinics and preceptors in communities throughout south central Ontario. Funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, ROMP passes funding down to eligible clerks and residents who participate in rural rotations through the program. Through ROMP, trainees are exposed to a variety of experiences and, through one-on-one learning with their preceptors, they are exposed to the perks and realities of living and practicing medicine in a rural community. ROMP can arrange these rotations for clerks and residents, both for their core and elective rotations to help match them with rural preceptors and expose them to the world of rural healthcare.

Additionally, for **pre-clerks**, ROMP Week and summer electives are a great way to get early clinical experience as a medical student, to get to see rural Ontario communities, and to gain insight into what rural medicine is all about. ROMP Week is slightly different than traditional rotations. It is offered in various rural communities, where a small group of pre-clerks are hosted by the community. On top of the clinical training which learners do during ROMP Week, the host communities put on tours, meals, and other extra-curricular events to showcase what rural communities – particularly their own – have to offer.

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## THE ROMP OPTION

Applying for rotations through ROMP is easy! There are two steps to the application process:

1. Fill out an online application at [romponline.com](http://romponline.com).
2. Request an official Letter of Good Standing from your program coordinator and have it sent via email to ROMP.

\*For Summer Electives and ROMP Week, you will also need to submit a letter of intent.

For more information about the Rural Ontario Medical Program, visit our website or contact us directly if you have questions!



Toll Free: 1-877-445-ROMP  
Website: [www.romponline.com](http://www.romponline.com)  
E-mail: [romp@romponline.com](mailto:romp@romponline.com)



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## MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

As you near the end of your clerkship, you will start to have an idea of the type of medicine which you are interested in practicing and the type of physician which you would like to become. Since residency is the final training step to becoming a physician, those years are focused on the specific requirements for each specialty and preparing residents to practice their specialty following their training. There are many fields of medicine, each with its advantages and intricacies. You will have a chance to experience most of the specialties during medical school but there are also many “sub-specialties” - areas of specialization within a specialty - which allow for a more focused scope of practice and expertise. Below are outlines of the more general specialties and the length of the residency programs.

**Anesthesiology:** This field of medicine deals with the administration of medications to control the pain or level of consciousness of a patient. Anesthetists are always present in the operating room to administer anesthetic and monitor the patient’s vital signs during procedures. They are also a part of any childbirth that involves an epidural. Residency is 5 years.

**Dermatology:** This field of medicine focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of skin diseases and abnormalities. Most of the work of a Dermatologist is done in an office or at the hospital. On-call work duties are minimal because dermatology emergencies are rare. Residency is 5 years.



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## MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

**Emergency Medicine:** This field of medicine deals with the diagnosis, management, and treatment of all acute injuries and diseases. Emergency Rooms are often fast paced and busy so emergency physicians are constantly on their feet and active during their shifts. Emergency physicians typically work shifts throughout the day and night and are frequently on-call. Residency is 5 years.

**Family Medicine:** This field of medicine involves the diagnosis and treatment of broad medical concerns. In Canada, the Family Physician is the primary contact for people who have non-emergency health concerns. Family Physicians will refer patients to specialists if more specified care is required. Family Physicians are able to complete additional training to enhance their skills in addictions care, anesthesiology, emergency medicine, geriatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, or sports medicine. Residency is 2 years with an option of 1 additional year of Enhanced Skills.

**Internal Medicine:** This field of medicine involves the diagnosis and treatment of medical problems. Internists are frequently called upon for consultations and their patients tend to have undifferentiated or multi-system diseases. Internists will work either in a clinic or a hospital. There are General Internists who maintain a generalized practice, and there are Internists who choose to further narrow their field to one of the sub-specialties: Allergy & Immunology; Cardiology; Critical Care; Endocrinology; Gastroenterology; Infectious Diseases; Nephrology; Palliative; Respiriology; Rheumatology; Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology; Geriatric Medicine; Hematology; Medical Biochemistry; Oncology; Occupational Medicine; Pain Medicine. Residency is 3 years to become a General Internist and an additional 1 - 3 years for each subspecialty.



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## MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

**Neurology:** This field of medicine deals with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting the nervous system and brain. Neurologists typically work in larger hospitals and experience on-call duties. Residency is 5 years.

**Obstetrics and Gynecology:** This field of medicine is specific to the care of women. The reproductive system, pregnancy, birth and the treatment of women's health issues are all the focus of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Obstetricians and Gynecologists work out of offices, clinics and in the hospital; they perform surgeries and have on-call duties. Residency is 5 years.

**Ophthalmology:** This field of medicine deals with the diagnosis and treatment of eye disorders and diseases. Patients are referred to Ophthalmologists, who often have their own clinics and spend some time in the hospital. There are a very limited number of residency positions for Ophthalmology. Residency is 5 years.

**Pathology:** This field deals with all aspects of laboratory investigation in health and disease that focuses on the causes, manifestations and diagnosis of disease. Residency is 5 years.

**Pediatrics:** This field of medicine deals with the care of children from birth through adolescence, including standard immunizations and checkups. Pediatricians also diagnose and treat diseases and disorders affecting children. Pediatricians typically work in larger centers. Residency is 5 years with an additional 1 year for pediatric specialties.

**Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation:** This field of medicine is concerned with the comprehensive diagnosis, medical management and rehabilitation of people of all ages with neuromusculoskeletal disorders and associated disabilities. Residency is 5 years





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## MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

**Psychiatry:** This field of medicine deals with the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness through counseling and the prescription of medication. Psychiatrists work in clinics, hospitals, mental health treatment centers (both residential and outpatient) and may be required to be on-call. Residency is 5 years.

**Public Health and Preventive Medicine:** This field of medicine is concerned with the health of populations. These specialists use population health knowledge and skills to play leading and collaborative roles in the maintenance and improvement of the health and well-being of the community. Residency is 5 years.

**Radiology:** This field of medicine involves diagnosing medical and surgical conditions. Radiologists analyze images created by x-rays, CT scans, MRI's, PET scans and ultrasounds. Radiologists work in a hospital setting and are on-call if a physician requires a consultation. Residency is 5 years.

**Surgery:** In this broad field of medicine, surgeons treat diseases and injuries through surgery. There are General Surgeons, who maintain a broad scope of practice and there are physicians who choose to focus their expertise on a particular sub-specialty. Surgeons work in hospitals and are frequently on-call. The work of the surgeon encompasses pre- and post-operative care, consulting for other physicians and performing surgeries. The more specialized surgeons work at larger hospitals. Residency is from 5-6 years depending on the specific type of surgery (general/orthopedic/otolaryngology/plastic/urology: 5 years; cardiac/neurological/vascular: 6 years). Many surgeons undergo fellowship training for further specialization, which can take a number of years more to complete after residency.



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## LIFE AS A RESIDENT

The application process to a residency program takes place during the fall of your final year in medical school. As a medical student, you would register with the Canadian Residency Matching Service (CaRMS) and receive a personal identification number (called a token). By December, candidates must submit their application, an autobiographical statement, their curriculum vitae, a photograph, any academic publication abstracts (if applicable), reference letters and their undergraduate and medical school transcripts.

There are many factors to consider when applying for residency positions. The most important is for what program you will be applying, meaning, what kind of physician do you want to train to be? There are a limited number of positions for each specialty, spread among the medical schools. Instead of applying for a school, you apply for both the specialty and the school. Interviews are the second step of the admission process, and are held at each school early in the calendar year.

The CaRMS match is the process of matching applicants with their selected programs and schools, and matching the programs and schools with their preferred applicants. These matches are based on the applications submitted, the interviews conducted and a ranking system. Applicants rank the schools and programs based on their preference after attending the interview. The schools and programs also rank the students based on their preference after the interview. The CaRMS match is designed to try to ensure an optimal fit between program and resident, providing the best training environment for the learner and, ultimately, the best outcome for the program and the learner. Residency will be challenging. You will work long hours and have



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## LIFE AS A RESIDENT

additional studying to keep up with, while also working shifts in hospitals, clinics and being on-call. Often, it will feel like you live at the hospital. After all, the term “resident” originated from the days when post graduate medical students were required to live on the hospital premises to be readily available! As a resident you will earn a salary, which will help with living costs and might even allow you to start paying back some of your loans. After each year of residency, your salary will increase. As a resident, your primary education will be from clinical rotations, spending only a few days each month in a classroom setting. Often, if you are at a satellite campus or based in a rural program, you will attend these sessions via video conference, further reducing your presence at the academic centre. There is a lot of educational freedom as a resident and you must be able to self-direct your learning and apply great discipline. At the end of your residency, there is one final examination to pass before you become a fully licensed physician. The testing is conducted not by the residency school, but by the Canadian College of your specialty. For example, if you specialize in Family Medicine, then it is the College of Family Physicians of Canada that administers the final exam. Most of the specialty examinations are administered through the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. The examination styles vary between the specialties, but typically involve a combination of multiple choice and case studies. For case studies you could be asked anything from “how to deal with patient complaints” to the diagnosis and course of treatment of a particular set of symptoms. There is a cost to write the exam and there is also a membership fee associated with each college that is paid at the time of testing and then on a regular basis to continue membership with that college.



## YOUR PLAN: HIGH SCHOOL

Once you have passed the exams you are finally there; you are able to practice medicine as a licensed physician. Whether you choose to work in a hospital, a clinic or open your own practice, you have finally achieved your dream.

### **Congratulations!**

*Photocopy this plan and fill it out. Having a plan will help you to stay focused on your goals.*

**Why do you want to become a doctor?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**List your top 3 back-up careers (just in case....)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Extracurricular interests:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer work:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Top 5 universities and their programs that interest you:**

University

Program

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

**Scholarships & Awards:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## YOUR PLAN: UNIVERSITY

~ Chosen University ~

### FIRST YEAR

List all of the prerequisite courses for the medical schools you are considering. Know which courses have prerequisites and cross them off as you complete them.

Prerequisite for medical school	Prerequisite Needed	Year
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Semester 1 Courses

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Semester 2 Courses

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Extra-curricular/Volunteering/Research: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### *Things to think about:*

*Get a good start, medical school admission requirements, prerequisites for upper year courses, university resources...*



## YOUR PLAN: UNIVERSITY

### SECOND YEAR

Prerequisite for  
medical school

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Prerequisite  
Needed

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Year

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Semester 1 Courses

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Semester 2 Courses

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Extra-curricular/Volunteering/Research: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Things to think about:*

*Get a good start, medical school admission requirements, prerequisites for upper year courses, university resources...*



## YOUR PLAN: UNIVERSITY

### THIRD YEAR

Prerequisite for  
medical school

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Prerequisite  
Needed

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Year

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Semester 1 Courses

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Semester 2 Courses

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Extra-curricular/Volunteering/Research: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Things to think about:*

*Ask professors to write letters of reference, write your personal statement, attend medical tours....*



## YOUR PLAN: UNIVERSITY

### FOURTH YEAR

Prerequisite for  
medical school

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Prerequisite  
Needed

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Year

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Semester 1 Courses

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Semester 2 Courses

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Extra-curricular/Volunteering/Research: \_\_\_\_\_

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Things to think about: \_\_\_\_\_

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## YOUR PLAN: MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Check the boxes of the medical schools for which you will be applying. As acceptances come in, highlight those to which you have been accepted and cross out those to which you have been rejected.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dalhousie University                | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Alberta      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> McGill University                   | <input type="checkbox"/> University of BC           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> McMaster University                 | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Calgary      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial University of Newfoundland | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Manitoba     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NOSM University                     | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Ottawa       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Queen's University                  | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Saskatchewan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Simon Fraser University             | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Toronto      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toronto Metropolitan University     | <input type="checkbox"/> Western University         |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> York University            |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                      |

As you Complete the following components of the application process for each school, check it off. You may need to make a longer list.

Medical School					
Online Application					
Supplemental Applications					
Transcripts					
MCAT Score					
CASPer Test					
Letters of Reference					
Application Payment					
Interview					
Medical School Response					
Your Decision					



## YOUR PLAN: MEDICAL SCHOOL

*You're finally here!*

- Medical School Accepted to -

Fields of medicine that interest you:

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Why:

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Elective Rotation Interests:

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Location:

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Residency Program Options:

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Details:

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## GLOSSARY

**AAMC:** Association of American Medical Colleges

**Acute:** Quick onset.

**AFMC:** Association of Faculties of Medicine in Canada

**Anesthesiology:** The branch of medicine specializing in the use of drugs or other agents that cause insensibility to or ease pain.

**Arthro:** Refers to joints.

**Attending Physician:** Licensed doctor who oversees the work of their residents.

**BP:** Blood Pressure

**Cardio:** Refers to heart.

**Central nervous system (CNS):** The central nervous system is that part of the nervous system that consists of the brain and spinal cord.

**CFPC:** College of Family Physicians of Canada

**Chief Resident:** Resident physician in their last year of post graduate training who is elected and represents other residents.



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## GLOSSARY

**Clerk:** Medical student in the last 2 years of med school (last 1 ½ years for McMaster and Calgary).

**CMA:** Canadian Medical Association.

**Code blue (Code):** Typically refers to a patient in cardiopulmonary arrest.

**CT scan (Computerized Tomography scan):** Pictures of structures within the body created by a computer that takes the data from multiple X-ray images and turns them into pictures on a screen.

**DOA:** Dead on arrival.

**Dx:** Diagnosis.

**EM:** Emergency Medicine.

**ENT:** Ear Nose Throat (doctor).

**FM:** Family Medicine.

**Gerontology (Geriatrics):** The branch of medicine concerned with the diagnosis, treatment of disease in older people and the problems specific to aging.

**GP:** General Practitioner.

**Grand rounds:** A formal meeting at which physicians discuss the clinical case of one or more patients.

**GS:** General Surgery.



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## GLOSSARY

**Gynecology:** The branch of medicine particularly concerned with the health of the female organs of reproduction and diseases thereof.

**Hypertension:** High blood pressure.

**Internal medicine (IM):** A medical specialty dedicated to the diagnosis and medical treatment of adults. It also involves many sub-specialties.

**Junior Resident:** Physician in lower years of medical residency.

**Medical Doctor (MD):** A health professional who practices medicine.

**MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging):** A special radiology technique designed to image internal structures of the body using magnetism, radio waves, and a computer to produce the images of body structures.

**NOSM:** Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

**NP:** Nurse Practitioner.

**Nuclear Medicine:** The administration and observation of radioisotopes ingested by a patient as a means for diagnosis.

**Obs/Gyn:** The combination of two branches of medicine, being Obstetrics and Gynecology.

**Obstetrics:** The branch of medicine that deals with all stages of pregnancy, delivery and post-delivery.



## GLOSSARY

**Osteo-:** Refers to bones.

**PARO:** Professional Association of Residents of Ontario.

**Peripheral nervous system (PNS):** The portion of the nervous system that is outside the brain and spinal cord.

**PET Scans (Positron Emission Tomography):** A highly specialized imaging technique that uses short-lived radioactive substances to produce three-dimensional colored images of those substances functioning within the body.

**Preceptor:** An attending physician who teaches medical students, clerks and residents.

**Pre-clerk:** Medical student in the first 2 years of medical school (first 1.5 years for McMaster and Calgary).

**Pulmonary:** Refers to lungs.

**RCPSC:** Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

**Resident:** Medical school graduate in the post graduate years of medical study.

**RESP:** Registered Education Savings Plan.

**ROMP:** Rural Ontario Medical Program.

**OMSAS:** Ontario Medical School Application System

**OSAP:** Ontario Student Assistance Program



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## GLOSSARY

**PA:** Physician Assistant

**Rounds:** The act of seeing patients in the hospital or another in-patient setting.

**Rx:** Treatment.

**-scopy:** Implies the viewing or observation.

**Senior Resident:** Physician in upper years of medical residency.

**SOB:** Shortness of breath.

**SRPC:** Society of Rural Physicians of Canada.

**Sx:** Symptoms.

**Syringe (Needle):** A device used in medicine to inject fluid into or withdraw fluid from the body.

**Thoracic:** Refers to chest.

**Ultrasound:** A radiology technique using high- frequency sound waves to produce images of the organs and structures of the body.

**Urinalysis:** The analysis of urine for evidence of disease.

**VSA:** Vital signs absent.

**VSS:** Vital signs stable.

**WHO:** World Health Organization.



## USEFUL WEBSITES

**Each link is current at the time of printing.**

Gastroenterology Endoscopy:

<http://www.endoatlas.com/>

Ophthalmology:

<http://www.eyeatlas.com/Eyeatlas/Home.html>

The Basics of MRI:

<http://www.cis.rit.edu/htbooks/mri/>

Examination of the Abdomen:

<http://medinfo.ufl.edu/year1/bcs/clist/abdomen.html>

Neuroscience Tutorial:

<http://medi-smart.com/tut-29.htm>

Selection of Tutorials:

<http://medi-smart.com/tutorials.htm>

Gray's Anatomy Online:

<http://www.bartleby.com/107/>

McGill's Virtual Stethoscope:

<http://sprojects.mmi.mcgill.ca/mvs/MVSTETH.HTM>

Orthopedics:

<http://www.wheelessonline.com/>

Anatomy Atlases:

<http://www.anatomyatlases.org/>

Medical Ethics:

<http://virtualmentor.ama-assn.org/>

Radiology Websites:

<http://www.radiologyeducation.com/>

<http://www.learningradiology.com/>

Live Surgeries:

<http://www.or-live.com/>





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## USEFUL WEBSITES

Medical Encyclopedia's:

[http://www.medcyclopaedia.com/?tt\\_topic=](http://www.medcyclopaedia.com/?tt_topic=)

Trauma Cases:

<http://www.trauma.org/index.php/>

Multiple Links Sites:

<http://www.medicalstudent.com/>

Military Medicine:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/education-training/establishments/canadian-forces-health-services-training-centre.html>

US National Museum of Health and Medicine:

<https://www.medicalmuseum.mil/>

Bone Anatomy:

<http://www.anatomyatlases.org/bonebox/index.shtml>

U of Iowa Virtual Hospital:

<http://www.uihealthcare.com/vh/>

Merck Manual:

<http://www.merck.com/mmpe/index.html>

Neurological Examinations:

<http://www.neuroexam.com/>

MCAT Flash Cards:

<http://www.studystack.com/category-63>

The Not So Short Introduction to Getting Into Medical School:

<http://studentdoctor.net/reference-materials/free-downloads/>



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## REFERENCES

### Books

Health Force Ontario. Health Human Resources Toolkit.

Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2007.

Lawrence, Carmela. Unit Five Clerkship. Hamilton: McMaster University, 2005.

Malladi, Nirikisha. So you want to become a doctor? Fell's KIA. Florida: Frederick Fell Publishers, Inc., 2005.

### Websites

Canadian Medical Association

<https://www.cma.ca/resources/>

American Association of Medical Colleges:

<http://www.aamc.org/students/>

Association of the Faculties of Medicine of Canada:

<http://www.afmc.ca/index.php>

Health Canada:

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/index\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/index_e.html)

Ontario Medical School Application Service:

[http://www.ouac.on.ca/omsas/pdf/rc\\_omsas\\_e.pdf](http://www.ouac.on.ca/omsas/pdf/rc_omsas_e.pdf)



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# NOTES

Lined area for notes, consisting of 24 horizontal lines.



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