

**Why should I pursue a medical degree in North America?**

1. Medical training of the highest quality –14 of the top 20 medical schools in the world are in the US and Canada (*Ranked by Times Higher Education*).
2. Universally recognized medical degree of the highest standard.
3. Ability to practice medicine globally without restrictions or the need for additional training. North American physicians have diverse practices including part-time consultant positions in Africa, India, and many Middle Eastern countries.
4. Alongside their medical practice, physicians in North America are able to pursue additional career interests including research, administration, leadership positions, consulting, education, and many others.
5. Potential to immigrate and practice medicine in North America–Immigration programs preferentially seek out North American trained physicians.
6. Physicians trained in North America are compensated at the highest level. Average physician salaries in various regions are listed below.

| Country | Average physician salary/ year |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| US/Canada | USD \$301 127 |
| UK | USD \$147 034 |
| India | USD \$11 436 |

What is the process for becoming a doctor in North America?

High School→Undergraduate degree (B.Sc., B.A., B. Eng., etc)→Medical school degree (M.D.)→Residency

Undergraduate degree (4 years)

After completing high school (CBSE, state board exams, or other equivalent exams), you will typically require a 4 year undergraduate degree to be considered for admission to medical school. While some programs may require just three undergraduate years, most require a four year degree before admission. In addition, the overwhelming majority of students in each entering class at most medical schools in North America complete their undergraduate studies in the US or Canada.

Most medical schools require pre-requisite undergraduate courses in general chemistry, organic chemistry, biology, and physics. Many also require courses in disciplines such as math, statistics, english, biochemistry, and one or more courses in the humanities and/or social sciences to meet breadth

requirements. *We will provide you with individual guidance on picking the right courses to optimize your undergraduate studies for medical school.*

Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)

Most medical schools require a high score on the MCAT, an entrance exam required to be eligible for medical school admission in North America. This exam is typically written in your 2nd or 3rd year of university. *We have an exclusive partnership with one of the premier MCAT prep companies in North America and can offer you resources to best prepare for the MCAT!*

Applying to medical school

In addition to a high Grade Point Average (GPA) and a good MCAT score, applicants are also evaluated based on their extra-curricular experiences, volunteer work, research activities, reference letters, and an admission interview.

Our team of consultants will individually mentor you and provide you with a framework and road map for securing extra-curricular and volunteer experiences. This will enhance your undergraduate experience and demonstrate your commitment to medicine while building strong references.

The cumulative experience of our consultants will also help you to secure high quality research opportunities which can lead to strong reference letters that are a key part of the application process. Every undergraduate institution we recommend is a global leader in research.

The final step of securing admission to medical school involves an interview with the medical school admissions committee. *Having been on previous admissions committees, our consultants have extensive experience with preparation for various interview formats and will provide you with your best chance to succeed!*

Medical school (4 years)

Medical school is a 4 year program at most schools in North America. You are awarded a Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) at the end of your program. The first 2 years generally cover the core disciplines in medicine such as anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, etc. In the final 2 years of medical school, you will have clinical placements in hospitals, clinics, and physician offices. More than 99% of students entering medical school in Canada complete their M.D. program.

During their final year of medical school, in addition to writing licensing exams, students apply for residency programs (or postgraduate training/specialization).

Residency (2-5 years)

Post-graduate training/residency ranges from 2-5 years depending on your choice of specialty (E.g. 3-4 years to be a Pediatrician, 5 years to be a Surgeon, etc.)

How is this process different from medical school in South Asia?

High School → Medical School (6 years) → Specialization/MD (3-4 years) → Additional highly competitive training in North America (2-5 years)

The road to becoming a doctor in South Asia varies since you apply to medical school directly from high school after an entrance exam. Medical school is approximately 6 years long and results in a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (M.B.B.S) degree. After your M.B.B.S, you apply for specialization (e.g. Pediatrics, Surgery, etc) which takes 3-4 years. You are then awarded an MD (Doctor of Medicine) or MS (Doctor of Surgery) degree.

Degrees awarded in South Asia do not allow you to practice medicine in North America or Europe. You are required to pursue further exams and highly competitive fellowship or additional residency training (2-5 years) to be able to practice in North America. In reality, exceptionally few candidates are able to do this.

How much does medical school cost?*

The cost of attending medical school varies based on the specific school. Some examples are listed here:

| Medical school | Tuition / year (USD) |
|---|----------------------|
| University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) | \$62 000 |
| McGill University (Montreal, Quebec, Canada) | \$36 000 |
| Vanderbilt University (Nashville, Tennessee, USA) | \$44 000 |
| Harvard University (Boston, Massachusetts, USA) | \$54 000 |
| Boston University (Boston, Massachusetts, USA) | \$52 000 |

Additional Costs/ year (USD)*

| | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Books & Equipment | \$ 1700 |
| Rent and Food costs | \$ 9580 |
| Other Living Expenses | \$ 7160 |

Total tuition cost for 4 years of medical school is approximately **USD \$200 000-250 000**.

Total cost of additional living expenses for 4 years is approximately **USD \$60 000-80 000**.

*Costs shown here are estimates for general information only and actual costs may vary depending on the medical school and city.

Further reading

1. **Sample Canadian medical school tuition fees and admission requirements.** Accessed at: <http://www.md.utoronto.ca/admissions/information.htm>
2. **Top Medical Schools.** Accessed at: <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/2013-14/subject-ranking/subject/clinical-pre-clinical-health>
3. **Review of universities accepting international students.** Accessed at: <http://premedusa.blogspot.ca/2013/05/medical-schools-admitting-internationals.html>
4. **Sample US medical school admission requirements.** Accessed at: <http://www.bumc.bu.edu/admissions/applicationprocess/requirements/>
5. **Average physician salaries.** Accessed at: http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2013/01/22/canadian_doctors_made_307482_on_average.html