Physicians diagnose illnesses and prescribe and administer treatment for people suffering from injury or disease. Physicians examine patients, obtain medical histories, and order, perform, and interpret diagnostic tests. They counsel patients on diet, hygiene, and preventive health care.

There are two types of physicians: M.D.—Doctor of Medicine, and D.O.—Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine. M.D.s are also known as allopathic physicians. Both M.D.s and D.O.s may use all accepted methods of treatment, including drugs and surgery. D.O.s place emphasis on the body’s musculoskeletal system, preventive medicine, and holistic patient care.

Physicians may work in one or more of several specialties, including, but not limited to, anesthesiology, family and general medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, psychiatry, and surgery. (From the online Occupational Outlook Handbook)

Most colleges of medicine including the University of Iowa College of Medicine require an undergraduate baccalaureate degree. University of Iowa students must choose a degree granting major to go with their pre-med track. An MD is a four-year professional degree. Students follow medical school with three or more years in residency (specialized clinical training).

Sample four-year plans based on UI math and chemistry placement tests

Plan A for students starting with General Chemistry

Year 1:
CHEM:1070 General Chemistry
MATH: based on UI math placement
Diversity class focusing on race in US
CHEM:1110 Principles of Chemistry I
MATH: related to major*
SOC:1010 Intro.to Sociology**

Year 2:
CHEM:1120 Principles of Chem. II
BIOL:1411 Foundations of Biology
PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology**
CHEM:2210 Organic Chemistry I
BIOL:1412 Diversity of Form and Function
Additional Psychology/Sociology**

Year 3:
CHEM:2220 Organic Chem. II
PHYS:1511 College Physics I
BIOC:3110 Biochemistry***
CHEM:2410 Organic Chem. Lab
PHYS:1512 College Physics II
Advanced biology course***
Summer:
Apply to medical
Take MCAT in spring or summer

Year 4:
Courses to complete major
Courses to complete major
Plan B for students starting with Principles of Chemistry

Year 1:
CHEM:1110 Principles of Chem. I
CHEM:1120 Principles of Chemistry II
MATH: related to major*
Biol:1411 Foundations of Biology
Diversity class focusing on race in US
SOC:1010 Intro. to Sociology**

Year 2:
BIOL:1412 Div. of Form & Function
CHEM:2210 Organic Chemistry I
CHEM:2220 Organic Chemistry II
Psy:1001 Elem. Psychology**
CHEM:2410 Organic Chemistry Lab
Additional Psychology/Sociology **

Year 3:
PHYS:1511 College Physics I
PHYS:1512 College Physics II
BIOC:3110 Biochemistry***
Advanced biology course***
Summer:
Apply to medical school

Year 4:
Courses to complete major
Take MCAT in spring or summer

Plan C for Engineering majors who are premed

Year 1:
CHEM:1110 Principles of Chem. I
CHEM:1120 Principles of Chemistry II
MATH:1550 Engineering Math I*
PHYS:1611 Intro Physics I with lab
Courses for the major
Courses for the major

Year 2:
BIOL:1411 Foundations of Biology
CHEM:2210 Organic Chemistry I
CHEM:2220: Organic Chemistry II
BME:2400 Cell Biology for Engineers
HHP:3500 Human Physiology
Courses for the major
Courses for major

Year 3:
PHYS:1612 Physics II with lab
BIOC:3110 Biochemistry***
CHEM:2240 Organic Chem Lab
Courses for major
Take MCAT in spring or summer
Summer:
Apply to med school

Year 4:
Courses to complete major
Courses to complete major

* Calculus is not required for the UI College of Medicine. However, it is required for some science majors. The major will determine which math class is taken.

** While sociology and psychology are not prerequisites for most medical schools, topics from sociology form 30% and topics from psychology form 60% of one of the MCAT tests. To be well-prepared, students may wish to complete SOC:1010 Intro. to Sociology, PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology and additional courses with a social science or public health focus.

***One semester of biochemistry is required by the UI College of Medicine and can count toward its advanced biology requirement. The two-semester Biochemistry sequence (BIOC:3120/3130) is also an option for Biochemistry majors. Additional advanced biology courses are desirable as time and interest permit.

Note: The UI College of Medicine requires two courses in English and four courses in social and behavioral sciences/humanities. These may be satisfied by the courses a student selects for the General Education Program. Other medical schools may have different prerequisites—check websites for the individual medical schools or see your pre-medical advisor for more information.
Starting with the 2022 application cycle, applicants to Carver College of Medicine are strongly encouraged to complete a course on race/racism in the United States. Other recommended courses include behavioral psychology, sociology, foreign language, and other non-science, writing-intensive courses.

Academic Guidelines
UI undergraduates must have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA by the end of their third semester to maintain their premedical designation. The mean cumulative GPA for the current entering class at the UI College of Medicine was 3.79 and the mean science GPA was 3.74. Applicants with GPAs well below the averages are unlikely to be accepted to medical school. Admissions committees choose from a large applicant pool of extremely talented students. Therefore, we encourage UI premedical students to aim for a GPA at or above the mean. Undergraduate applicants must have at least a 3.0 GPA for all college work undertaken to apply to the UI College of Medicine.

Non-Academic Guidelines
Successful applicants work or volunteer caring for patients. They shadow physicians and observe a variety of medical specialties. The admissions committee seeks students who participate in research, hold leadership positions in organizations that serve others, and maintain strong relationships with faculty and other mentors. All premedical students must be dedicated to lifelong learning.

UI College of Medicine Admissions Profile 2022:
(152 students admitted)
Mean cumulative GPA: 3.79 Mean MCAT PSBB: 129
Mean science GPA: 3.74 Mean MCAT BBFL: 129
Mean MCAT CARS 127 Mean MCAT CPBS 129

The Application Process
Applications for allopathic medical schools are initiated through the centralized, online American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) (www.aamc.org/students/). Applications for osteopathic medical schools are begun through the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service (AACOMAS) (www.aacom.org). Applications should be submitted one year prior to the year for which a student is seeking admission. Since many medical schools (including UI) have rolling admissions, it is in a student’s best interest to apply early (after June 1st). Students applying to allopathic medical schools should consult the Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR), available for purchase through the AAMC website. The UI College of Medicine gives preference to residents of the state of Iowa: the entering class is 70% residents and 30% non-residents. Students should research the residency preferences at the medical schools to which they are applying.

Entrance Examination Requirement (MCAT)
The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) is a computer-based exam required for admission to both allopathic (M.D.) and osteopathic (D.O.) programs. The MCAT consists of four sections: Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems; Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems; Psychological, Social and Biological Foundations of Behavior; and Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills. We encourage students to spend at least six months preparing for the exam and to take multiple practice exams under timed conditions. Khan Academy partners with the AAMC to offer free MCAT preparation online.
Letters of Evaluation/Recommendation
The UI College of Medicine requires three letters: two academic and one of the student’s choice. One of the academic letters should be from a science professor, and the other should be from a faculty member in the student’s major department. The third letter can come from a supervisor, volunteer coordinator, or research mentor. (Please do not request letters from friends, co-workers, high school teachers, or family members.) Many medical schools require two letters from science professors. Students applying to osteopathic medical schools need to have one letter from a practicing D.O. UI does not have a pre-medical committee; instead, students request individual letters from their evaluators.

Interviews
Interviews vary by school; applicants should check online resources for information regarding the interview format and timeline. Practice interviews are available through the UI Career Center, C310 Pomerantz Center.

Criminal Background Checks
The AMCAS application asks applicants whether they have a record of felonies or misdemeanors, and this information is then communicated to the medical schools. Medical schools and hospitals conduct criminal background checks. Students should make careful decisions throughout their undergraduate years. Charges for drug and/or alcohol use or possession, as well as other charges, can have negative consequences for admission.

Early Decision
The UI College of Medicine does not offer an Early Decision Program. Applicants interested in applying through Early Decision (EDP) to other medical schools should consult the MSAR.

Diversity in Medicine
Medical schools, including the UI College of Medicine, seek to recruit a diverse class of students including students who are underrepresented in the health professions (Black, Latino/a, and Native American students).

The University of Iowa College of Medicine participates in a summer enrichment program, Summer Health Professions Education Program (SHPEP), https://medicine.uiowa.edu/shpep/. SHPEP’s goal is to strengthen the academic proficiency and career development of underrepresented students.

Citizenship/International Students
Only citizens or permanent residents of the United States are eligible for admission to the University of Iowa College of Medicine, with the exception of candidates with asylum status. Students who are not US citizens should order an MSAR to research where they are eligible to apply.

Websites: Allopathic Medicine: www.aamc.org  UI College of Medicine: www.medicine.uiowa.edu
Minority Association of Pre-Health Students (MAPS): https://maps.org.uiowa.edu/