

Alternative Titles: Doctor, General Practitioner, GP

DESCRIPTION

Medical practitioners diagnose physical and mental illnesses, disorders and injuries, and prescribe medications and treatment to promote or restore good health.

A medical practitioner may perform the following tasks:

- Examine the patient to determine the nature of the disorder or illness, and record the patient's medical information
- Order, perform and analyse laboratory tests, X-rays and other Diagnostic images and procedures
- Provide overall care for patients and prescribe and administer Treatments, medications and other remedial measures
- Aid in the prevention of diseases and disorders by advising patients on diet, exercise, hygiene and general health
- Prescribe and administer medication and inoculate patients to prevent infectious or contagious diseases
- Provide pre- and post-natal care
- report births, deaths and notifiable diseases to government authorities
- Arrange for patients to be admitted to hospital
- Refer patients to other medical specialists and exchange relevant medical details.

They are involved in a wide range of activities including consultations, attending emergencies, performing operations and arranging medical investigations. In caring for patients, medical practitioners work with many other health professionals.

Medical practitioners sometimes have to deal with unpleasant conditions due to a patient's illness or injury. Adopting strict hygiene practices is important.

Depending on their area of specialisation, medical practitioners may have to work long, demanding and irregular hours. This may include working on weekends and at night or being on call 24 hours a day.

Graduating medical practitioners may specialise as general practitioners or in a number of fields, including as an:

- Anaesthetist** who administers anaesthetics to patients who are undergoing surgery and takes care of them during and after the operation. Anaesthetists are also involved in pain management.
- Neurologist** who studies and treats injuries and diseases affecting the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nervous system and muscle tissue.
- Obstetrician/Gynaecologist** who provides medical care before, during and after childbirth (obstetrics), and diagnoses, treats and assists in the prevention of disorders of the female reproductive system (gynaecology).
- Ophthalmologist** who diagnoses and treats diseases, injuries and deficiencies of the eye.
- Paediatrician** who diagnoses and treats diseases of children from birth to early adolescence.
- Pathologist** who uses laboratory procedures to identify and diagnose the presence and stages of diseases, and possible sources of infection in body tissues, fluids, secretions and other specimens.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

- Physician** who may specialise in one of many branches of medicine, such as internal medicine, cardiology (treatment of heart disease), rheumatology (treatment of arthritis), allergy, neurology, haematology (treatment of diseases of the blood and blood forming tissues), or geriatrics (diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting elderly people).
- Psychiatrist** who diagnoses and treats mental, emotional and behavioural disorders.
- Radiologist** who diagnoses and treats diseases using radiant energies such as X-rays, ultrasound, gamma rays and radio waves.
- Surgeon** who may specialise in many areas such as orthopaedic surgery (bones and joints), plastic and reconstructive surgery, ophthalmology, cancer surgery and otorhinolaryngology (ear, nose and throat).

PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Good communication skills
- Self-confidence
- Conscientiousness
- Able to relate to people
- Compassion towards others
- Enjoy working with people

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