

Pharmacist

Is it in YOUR DNA?

What do Pharmacists do?

Pharmacists distribute drugs prescribed by physicians and other health practitioners and counsel patients about how to safely use medications. They must understand the use, clinical effects and composition of drugs, including their chemical, biological and physical properties.

Pharmacists also:

- Advise physicians and other health practitioners on the selection, dosages, interactions and side effects of medications
- Monitor the health and progress of patients in response to drug therapy to ensure the safe and effective use of medication
- Supervise Pharmacist Technicians
- Collaborate with other health care practitioners (such as doctors and nurses) to determine drug regimens for their patients

The perks

- Fulfilling—You can have a positive impact on people's lives every day
- Work with other health care practitioners
- The job is constantly changing—you are never bored!
- Scientific advances will keep you on your toes

You'd be a good candidate if you are...

- Great with people and you have strong interpersonal skills
- Intelligent, a critical thinker
- Good with detail
- Able to think on your feet
- Empathetic
- A great team player



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The opportunities

When you think of a Pharmacist, does the image of a guy in a white coat behind the counter at Walgreen's come to mind? How about a Pharmacist who dispenses medications at the hospital? It's not just about that anymore. Yes, you can still work the counter at a retail or hospital pharmacy, but there are many other places you can work as a licensed Pharmacist.

One of the most exciting areas of specialty is called "Clinical Pharmacy." Sometimes these Pharmacists are called "Floor Pharmacists." This is an emerging career and one of the most sophisticated career options available to Pharmacists because you are on clinical rounds at the hospital working directly with patients writing orders and modifying medications.

There are also some non-traditional places you can practice. Here are just a few:

- Skilled nursing facilities
- Home health care companies
- Adult daycare centers
- Poison control centers
- Colleges and universities as a faculty member
- Research
- Sales

The benefits

- Health care benefits
- Retirement benefits—including a pension!
- Paid-time off
- Flexible schedules
- Employee discounts
- Tuition reimbursement
- Hospital-sponsored degree completer programs

The pay

Pharmacists

- Hourly pay \$63 to \$85
- Annual pay \$131,200 to \$177,000

Pharmacy Technicians

- Hourly pay \$24 to \$32
- Annual Pay \$51,400 to \$66,800

Education

To become a Pharmacist, you'll need to attend an accredited college or university and complete a professional doctorate. The curriculum emphasizes courses in math, chemistry, biology and physics. You'll also get specialized courses that focus on the knowledge and skills you need as a Pharmacist. And you will need to pass an exam to get your license.

Some of the best Pharmacy programs in the state of California are located in our area. Check out these local schools that have approved colleges of Pharmacy:

- Touro University, California College of Pharmacy
- University of California San Francisco, School of Pharmacy
- University of the Pacific, Thomas J. Long School of Pharmacy

The demand

- Jobs for Pharmacists will grow faster than average through 2014
- With almost half of the American population on some type of regular prescription medication, Pharmacists will continue to be among the top jobs in the health care field
- A growing elderly population, increasing number of people on prescription drugs and scientific advances will fuel growth in the profession

Want to learn more?

John Muir Health

www.johnmuirhealth.com

American Pharmacists' Association

www.aphanet.org

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

www.aacp.org

UC San Francisco, School of Pharmacy

www.pharmacy.ucsf.edu

California Pharmacists' Association

www.cpha.org

American Society of Health-System Pharmacists

www.ashp.org