

Your Options

There are many alternatives to the standard four-year “MD” degree. Now is the time to investigate these options and discuss these pathways with the Pre-Health Advisor. Unless otherwise indicated, the annual salaries indicated are from the current US Bureau of Labor and Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/>

Anesthesiologist Assistant

Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAs) are highly skilled health professionals who work under the direction of licensed anesthesiologists to implement anesthesia care plans. All CAAs possess a premedical background, a baccalaureate degree, and also complete a comprehensive didactic and clinical program at the graduate school level. <https://aaaa.memberclicks.net/faqs>

Salary Range¹: The job outlook for CAAs is very favorable. Many AA students receive multiple job offers before they even graduate. The starting salary for CAAs is about \$110,000 annually, with generous sign on bonuses, an average of five weeks of vacation each year, pension and profit sharing, and other excellent benefits.

Optometry

Optometry is a health care profession concerned with the health of the eyes and related structures, as well as vision, visual systems, and vision information processing in humans. More information can be found at http://www.optomcas.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10&Itemid=8
Median Salary: \$111,790

Physical Therapy

Physical therapy, or physiotherapy, is a health care profession primarily concerned with the remediation of impairments and disabilities and the promotion of mobility, functional ability, quality of life and movement potential through examination, evaluation, diagnosis and physical intervention carried out by Physical Therapists. More information can be found <https://www.apta.org/>.
Median Salary: \$87,930

¹ https://aaaa.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46:become-a-caa&catid=20:site-content&Itemid=119

Physician Assistant

Physician Assistants conduct physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, counsel on preventive health care and may assist in surgery. More information can be found at <https://paeaonline.org/>.

Median Salary: \$108,610

Podiatry

Podiatry or podiatric medicine is a branch of medicine devoted to the study of, diagnosis, and medical treatment of disorders of the foot, ankle, and lower extremity. More information can be found at <https://www.apma.org/>

Median Salary: \$129,550

Surgical Assistant

<https://www.absa.net/>

Surgical Assistants are divided into “first” and “second” assistants. The first assistant on a surgical procedure is defined as the individual providing primary assistance to the primary (main) surgeon, during a surgical procedure. This individual CANNOT be involved in any other role or function, during the surgical procedure (i.e. first or second scrub and/or passing instruments).

Although descriptions may vary from institution to institution, the role of the first assistant requires active participation, during the surgical procedure. This involves providing exposure, hemostasis, tying or sewing plus other functions (excluding acting as the scrub nurse or technician) as determined by the primary surgeon, responsible for the patient and procedure.

The second assistant is not the primary assistant to the primary surgeon and is hereby defined and designated as a retractor holder. An assistant as defined under this section does not qualify as a first assistant.

Salary²: Salaries vary nationwide! There are many variables to consider when comparing wages...

- Type of Practice (General Surgery, Orthopedics, Neurosurgery etc.)
- Location (City and State or Region)
- How Employed (Independent Contractor, By a Physician, a Group, a Hospital or Clinic)
- Type of Compensation (Independent Billing, Salary or Hourly Wage... Number of Cases or Hours each Month)

² <https://www.absa.net/salaries.php>

- Benefits and/or Bonuses (Professional Liability Insurance, Health and/or Dental Insurance, Pager or Cell Phone etc.)

Pharmacy

Pharmacists, also known as druggists or chemists, are healthcare professionals who practice in pharmacy, the field of health sciences focusing on safe and effective medication use. More information can be found at <https://www.aacp.org/>

Media Salary: \$126,120

Veterinary

A veterinary physician is usually called a vet, which is shortened from veterinarian or veterinary surgeon, which is a professional who practices veterinary medicine by treating diseases, disorders, and injuries in animals. <https://www.avma.org>

Median Salary: \$93,830

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