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Becoming a doctor is not an easy task. It involves hard work, extensive preparation, and a certain level of intensity. That being said, there are some specialties that are more or less competitive than others. In this post, we'll go over the steps to becoming a doctor, including the process of specializing. We'll also rank the "easiest" types of doctor to
become and what each of those specialties entails. How to Become a Doctor High School If you can't be pre-med in high school, how do you prepare for your future medical career? The answer is to strategically navigate the college application and admissions process. Keep your goal of becoming a doctor in mind as you decide which universities to
apply to. You will want to consider the rigor of each school's science classes, the effectiveness of pre-med advising, how research would factor into your college career, whether hospitals are accessible, and the financial viability of each university. Undergraduate Studies Your time in college is critical to your medical career because your
undergraduate years are when you complete your pre-med requirements and bolster your medical school has extensive requirements to be completed as part of your undergraduate studies. These requirements generally include multiple semesters of biology, physics, chemistry, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and math
While you do need to complete all the pre-med prerequisites to apply to medical school, medical school in their decisions. Preparing for the MCAT should be high on your priority list during your undergraduate studies. Medical School In medical school, you will
have intensive coursework in a variety of subjects—including anatomy, pathology, pharmacology, and more—which will be supplemented by hands-on experience. This includes exploring different specialties through clinical rotations so that you can confidently select your specialty when applying for residency. Residency After finishing medical school
you will be a doctor (sort of)! You will still need to spend three to seven years working as a resident under more experienced doctors. This is where you will become an expert in your specialty. You must pass a board exam in your specialty before you can begin practicing on your own. Learn more about the steps to becoming a doctor in our blog post.
When Do Doctors Specialize? During the first two years of medical school, students do preclinical training and are advised to keep an open mind toward different specialties. In the same way that undergraduates have the freedom to change their major early in their college career, medical students are not locked into their specialty right away.
Usually, at the beginning of the third year of medical school, students start clinical rotations. This is when students shadow physicians and residents, interact with patients, and see the applications of their coursework. You can choose to clerk for doctors in different areas, such as general surgery, gynecology, internal medicine, or orthopedics. Some
people also view clinical rotations as networking opportunities and informal interviews. Clinical rotations exert a major influence on the specialties chosen by medical students, and other times they expose students to new and interesting paths. When doing rotations, it's important to
think about what you want to get out of your job and what you want to achieve during your future career. Some factors that influence a doctor's specialty Length of residency Amount of contact with patients Time in a hospital vs. time in an
office Competitiveness When applying for your residency, you finally decide on your specialty. Residency applications are typically submitted in the fall of your fourth year of medical school. If you need more time to decide your specialty, there are subinternship opportunities, or you can take an extra year. Least Competitive Medical Specialties
Competitiveness is often rated as an important factor for students who are deciding on their specialty. Using the average United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 1 scores—which assess the foundational medical knowledge of medical school students—and the average number of abstracts, publications, and presentations of first-
year residents by specialty in 2020-21, we've created a list of least competitive specialties. 1. Family Medicine Average Step 1 Score: 216.1 Average Number of Publications: 2.8 Family medicine practitioners are trained in pediatrics and adult care (including gynecology and gastroenterology) so that they can treat every member of the family. Their
work involves comprehensive care and requires an understanding of most ailments. Family medicine doctors typically engage more in office-based work—such as "well" and "sick" visits—than hospital-based work. 2. Psychiatry Average Step 1 Score: 223.1 Average Number of Publications: 5.0 Psychiatrists diagnose and treat mental, emotional, and
behavioral disorders, as well as substance abuse disorders. Diagnosis typically involves conversations with patients and common treatments include psychotherapy and medication. 3. Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Average Step 1 Score: 224.2 Average Number of Publications: 4.7 Physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) physicians work
with patients who have physical impairments or disabilities (from disease, condition, or injury) to improve their ability to function and their quality of life. PM&R uses physical therapy and pain management, and it attempts to avoid surgical operations whenever possible. 4. Pediatrics Average Step 1 Score: 226.4 Average Number of Publications: 4.7
Pediatricians focus on children exclusively. They are concerned with the variety of physical, mental, social, and behavioral health factors that affect children to ensure that their patients are developing healthily. 5. Emergency Medicine Average Step 1 Score: 231.1
Average Number of Publications: 3.9 Emergency medicine doctors treat patients in the emergency room. EM doctors are truly the jack of all trades, as they see a wide range of patients, ranging from people with everyday illnesses to trauma victims. 6. Internal Medicine (Categorical) Average Step 1 Score: 231.4 Average Number of Publications: 5.2
Internal medicine exclusively focuses on adult health conditions. These physicians—called internists—prevent, diagnose, and treat diseases and conditions that affect any part of the adult body. They are involved in health maintenance and disease screening, and they often make referrals to other specialists. 7. Anesthesiology Average Step
1 Score: 232.7 Average Number of Publications: 5.3 Anesthesiologists specialize in the administration of anesthetics during room to patients
with chronic conditions such as cancer. If you are interested in any of these specialties, or any others, check out CollegeVine's comprehensive review of medical specialty's duties and salaries. Best Pre-Med Schools It's a common misconception that pre-med is a major—at most schools, it is actually a
"track" that students follow to fulfill the prerequisites for applying to medical school. Find out more about pre-med requirements here. Some colleges that are known for their pre-med advising, access to medical opportunities, rigorous STEM courses, and high medical school acceptance rates include: 1. Harvard University Location: Cambridge, MA
Undergrad Enrollment: 13,100 Acceptance Rate: 4% Middle 50% SAT/ACT: 1480-1580 SAT/ACT: 1
medical school, and in 2012, Harvard pre-med applicants with a 3.5 GPA or higher had a 93% acceptance rate to medical school. There are a variety of resources available to Harvard pre-med students pursuing health-related fields, and publishes a newsletter containing information
about items like upcoming workshops and medical school visits. There are also a number of groups that are beneficial to students interested in medical school visits. There are also a number of groups that are beneficial to students interested in medical school visits. There are also a number of groups that are beneficial to students interested in medical school visits.
SAT/ACT: 1490-1560 SAT/33-35 ACT While Duke doesn't offer a specific pre-med path, it does provide all the classes required for students interested in health-related careers. Duke also offers advisors especially focused on assisting pre-health students.
According to Duke, between 70% and 80% of its students are accepted into medical school—a considerably higher percentage than the national average. Outside of the classroom, students will find numerous opportunities to prepare themselves for a career in medicine, from conducting research to volunteering at local hospitals and health centers to
shadowing healthcare professionals. On campus, students will also find groups that support pre-med students, such as the American Medical Students. 3. University of Pennsylvania | UPenn Location: Philadelphia, PA Undergrad Enrollment: 13,000 Acceptance Rate: 5.8% Middle 50%
SAT/ACT: 1480-1570 SAT/33-35 ACT There are a lot of qualities that attract pre-med students to UPenn, such as its Ivy League bona fides and access to the Perelman School of Medicine—founded in 1765, it's the oldest medical school; 82% of
UPenn students and alumni who applied to begin medical school in 2022 were accepted—that's nearly twice the national average (43%)! UPenn accommodates a broad swath of pre-med students. Its Pre-Health Core Studies program is aimed at helping students with little scientific background get up to speed, while its Pre-Health Specialized Studies
program can help students with scientific backgrounds bolster their academic credentials and become more competitive medical school candidates. UPenn offers pre-health advising from professionals with significant healthcare, life-science research, and higher education experience who can assist students with everything from course selection to
application preparation to interviewing. 4. Washington University in St. Louis | WashU Location: St. Louis, MO Undergrad Enrollment: 13,000 Acceptance Rate: 5.8% Middle 50% SAT/ACT: 1480-1570 SAT/33-35 ACT More students apply to medical school from WashU than from any other college on this list—a staggering 372 WashU students applied
to medical school in 2022-2023. It's not just that WashU generates a lot of applicants; it also has successful applicants; it also has successful applicants between 2017 and 2021, their first-time acceptance rate to medical school was 76%. The MedPrep Program is unique to WashU. This two-part program begins with a lecture series detailing the educational pathway to becoming a
doctor and concludes with students getting real-world experience in medicine by shadowing for four hours every other week at the Charles F. Knight Emergency and Trauma Center of Barnes-Jewish Hospital. WashU provides an abundance of research opportunities to pre-med students as well as programs like the Washington University Biology
Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program (BioSURF), which offers an excellent way to improve your med school application while earning funding. 5. Rice University Location: Houston, TX Undergrad Enrollment: 4,300 Acceptance Rate: 9.48% Middle 50% SAT/ACT: 1490-1570 SAT/34-35 ACT Rice University is an extremely popular
destination for students with an interest in pursuing health-related careers—between 30% and 40% of incoming students indicate an interest in pre-health studies. Helping push Rice to the top of many pre-med students indicate an interest in pre-health studies. Helping push Rice to the top of many pre-med students indicate an interest in pre-health studies.
children's hospital and world's largest cancer hospital. Rice pre-med students will find no shortage of support on campus. Specialized advising is available to pre-health students and offers guidance on everything from course selection to applying to medical school. The Rice Pre-Medical Society (RPMS) is an undergraduate organization that provides
resources, advice, and opportunities to students interested in health professions. The RPMS also provides the Big Owl/Little Owl Program (BOP), which connects Rice undergraduates with medical students, physicians, and residents. 6. Stanford University Location: Stanford, CA Undergrad Enrollment: 7,800 Acceptance Rate: 3.6% SAT/ACT: 94.4%
scored between 1400 and 1600 on the SAT 96.1% scored between 30 and 36 on the ACT Graduating from a prestigious college like Stanford doesn't have a pre-med major (like most colleges), but it does provide extensive resources for students interested in health-related
careers. The college provides pre-med advisors to assist students in picking out courses, planning for long-term objectives, and gaining valuable experience. In autumn, the former Assistant Director of Admissions at Stanford University School of Medicine makes herself available to meet with students to discuss the medical school application process.
school selection, and preparation for interviews. Pre-med students at Stanford will find a myriad of application-boosting opportunities on and off campus, from physician shadowing to volunteering to research. 7. Northwestern University Location: Evanston, IL Undergrad Enrollment: 9,900 Acceptance Rate: 6.9% SAT/ACT: 1490-1550 SAT/33-35 ACT
In recent years, Northwestern has sent students on to some of the best medical schools in the nation, including Harvard, NYU, Columbia, Johns Hopkins, and UPenn. The college provides Health Professions Advising (HPA), which assists students in understanding the various pathways to medical school, required courses, and the application process.
Also helping Northwestern students on the path to a career in health-related fields is the Pre-Health Professional Student Group, which is dedicated to the successful admission of its members into programs that lead to careers in medicine, health, and veterinary practice. The Northwestern Undergraduate Premedical Scholars Program (NUPSP) is a
program unique to Northwestern. The program provides early MD acceptance to Northwestern students who have completed two full years of undergraduate study and are committed to attending Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. NUPSP doesn't require students to take the MCAT examination and accepts between six and eight
graduates gained acceptance into medical school. Brown offers healthcare career advising, along with health career peer advisors (HCPA) who offer first-year students the opportunity to speak with current undergraduates about their experience as health career students. Brown is most notable for its Program in Liberal Medical Education (PLME)-
an eight-year program that combines an undergraduate degree with medical school—and the only program of its kind in the Ivy League. Nearly one-third (32%) of Brown's Warren Alpert Medical School class of 2026 were admitted through the PLME program. Students enter the PLME program directly from high school and can pursue undergraduate.
degrees in a wide variety of fields ranging from the sciences to the humanities. 9. Amherst College Location: Amherst College has a proven track record of getting its students into medical school—on average,
the college enjoys between a 75% and 80% acceptance rate. The school provides pre-health advising and mentoring throughout a student's undergraduate years and be themselves rather than merely checking boxes on the
track to a medical career. Amherst College supports pre-med students in a number of ways, like publishing pre-health guides and a bi-weekly newsletter, hosting small group advising sessions, and providing mentors. It also offers a variety of research, volunteer, and physician shadowing opportunities. 10. Case Western Reserve University Location:
Cleveland, OH Undergrad Enrollment: 5,500 Acceptance Rate: 27% SAT/ACT: 1420-1520 SAT/32-33 ACT Nationally ranked hospitals within walking distance, easy access to healthcare professionals, and an abundance of available research opportunities are just a few factors that attract pre-med students to Case Western. Another impressive
advantage of a Case Western education is the 64% medical school acceptance rate its undergraduates have enjoyed over the last five years—significantly higher than the 42% national average. Recent graduates have enjoyed over the last five years—significantly higher than the 42% national average. Recent graduates have enjoyed over the last five years—significantly higher than the 42% national average.
that catches the eye of many pre-med students. Up to 20 first-year applicants annually are accepted into this extremely competitive eight-year program, in which students earn an undergraduate degree and go on to study at the School of Medicine. Just how hard is it to get into the PPSP? In 2021, Forbes reported it had an acceptance rate of just 1%!
View more top pre-med schools to get an idea of where you might want to apply. And to get an idea of your chances of admission at various universities, we recommend using our free admissions calculator. By inputting your grades, extracurriculars, and more, we'll estimate your odds of acceptance, and help you improve your candidate profile. After
months of studying to get a good MCAT score, drafting dozens of medical school personal statements, and braving interview jitters, you've finally made it to medical school and chosen the right institution to prepare you for your future medical career! Now, in your third year, however, you face the daunting decision of choosing a medical
specialty. With so many possibilities for residency program specialization and so much conflicting advice on Premed Reddit and other medical forums available online, the decision. Much of your immediate day-to-day life will be shaped by the specialty
you choose, starting in your residency program and extending long-term thereafter. Still, it's equally vital to maintain a sense of calm about the decision, keeping a level head so that you can make the right informed decision with confidence. Would you rather watch a video? General Practitioner vs. Specialist Before jumping into our Top 10 Tips for
Choosing a Medical Specialty, let's take a moment to consider the advantages and disadvantages of becoming a Specialist. Both options are equally valid and can lead to a fulfilling medical career, but it's worth assessing each route to determine which one best
suits your career needs and desires, along with your lifestyle. Check out the most and least competitive residencies: General Practitionery ou've probably guessed by now that general practitioners and the services they provide require a substantial
breadth of expertise. Of course, given the necessary breadth of general practitioners' knowledge about each medical specialties and stay current on advancements in medical specialty is not as great as that of specialties and stay current on advancements in medical specialty is not as great as that of specialty is not as great as that of specialty is not as great as that of specialties and stay current on advancements in medical specialty is not as great as that of special tha
research and treatments within all the medical specialties. While keeping up with developments in such a great responsibility, the nature of the general practitioners never know the sort of cases they will see in a given day, which can be exciting to
some physicians and overwhelming to others. Unlike many specialists, general practitioners often provide longitudinal care for their patients. This sort of continuity of care necessitates additional expertise in approaches like preventative medicine and managing chronic diseases. Due to the long-term nature of their work, general practitioners tend to
form stronger bonds with their patients. Further, as the first point of contact for many patients, general practitioners frequently refer patients to necessary specialists and play a significant role in coordinating the various members of an individual patient's care team. If general practitioners don't specialize in one particular area of medicine, do they
even attend residency programs? Of course they do! General practitioners are no less qualified, skilled, or knowledge are simply different. Physicians filling general practitioner roles tend to attend Family Medicine or Internal Medicine residency programs in which they
are exposed to the diverse illnesses and approaches to care required to attend to a variety of patient needs. Family Medicine residency program options. Investing just three years in a residency program means general practitioners are able to
start practicing and earning a salary much quicker than specialists who choose lengthier residency programs. Of course, every choice is a trade off in terms of advantages and disadvantages and disadvantages. General practitioners may have relatively brief residency programs, but their salaries are generally lower than those of specialists, as specialist are some of the
highest paid doctors in the United States and Canada. SpecialistLike general practitioners, specialists also accrue a broad understanding of medicine and its various specific disciplines in medical school. Unlike general practitioners, specialists do
possess broad medical knowledge, staying up-to-date in all of the sundry specializations may not be a top priority because specialists' responsibilities require a very profound understanding of their field and every current issue, treatment development, and technique within it. Oftentimes, specialists pick up where the depth of general practitioners'
expertise in that particular specialization ends, but this also means that specialists rely on general practitioners to holistically assess a patient first before referring the patient to the appropriate specialist. These residency programs generally range from three to six years of training, with most specialities occupying the latter half of that
range. It is important to consider the length of time you're willing to dedicate to a residency program, as you will see below in our Top 10 Tips for Choosing a Medical Specialty, but the choice is a bit more complex than just your preferred time commitment. Say you've chosen neurosurgery as your specialty, but the choice is a bit more complex than just your preferred time commitment.
extend to seven years of additional training after four years of medical school, all without a full salary to begin paying off any student loan debt you may have amassed due to high medical school tuition costs, which is constantly accumulating interest. However, on the other hand, when you finally begin practicing, your salary could be two, three, or
even approaching four times the salary of a general practitioner. Needless to say, you would be very well compensated for the time and energy you invested, but it could come at the expense of your work-life balance. Moreover, your ability to establish enduring relationships with patients would be very well compensated for the time and energy you invested, but it could come at the expense of your work-life balance.
rest of your life around early morning surgeries at the hospital each day. As you can see, both options have their pros and cons. Your job is deciding what your priorities are and what you want out of your career and life. Are you getting ready to apply to residency? Check out our ultimate guide to the residency application process:DO vs MDFinally,
before taking a look at our tips for choosing a medical specialty, it's worth addressing any potential differences between the specialty options available to osteopathic physicians graduating with an MD degree. You may recall from your med school applications that osteopathic and allopathic
programs differ from one another in approach to medicine and health care, but neither is necessarily "better" than the other. Allopathic MDs constitute the majority of physicians in the United States and Canada, approaching medicine from a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, often a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, often a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, often a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, often a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, often a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, often a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, often a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, often a strictly evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, but necessarily evidence-based perspective, while osteopathic DOs emphasize holistic and preventative care, and the strictly evidence holistic and the strictl
incorporating alternative treatments in the care they provide. Of course, MD physicians may also integrate non-traditional methods in the treatment plans they create or focus equally on preventative care, but the curricula between the two types of med schools differ. DO school rankings demonstrate that the admission standards of programs are
slightly less strict and don't place quite as much emphasis on research or publication prior to matriculation. Nevertheless, physicians of both types must pass the same board exams in order to practice. As for specialization, both MDs and DOs can and do pursue all available specialties. Osteopathic physicians tend to get a reputation for going into
primary care because a large portion of them do, but a large portion of allopathic physicians means more MDs are present in the various medical specialties, but DOs also possess the option to specialize, despite their smaller ranks. Still, the most competitive residency programs
frequently end up admitting more allopathic MDs than osteopathic DOs simply because of their admission requirements. The bottom line is this: MDs and DOs both possess the ability to specialize in any discipline, provided they have the required experience, grades, and references, to be admitted.Ok, now that we've cleared up a couple of
common points of confusion, it's time to dive into choosing a specialty! Below are ten pieces of advice that will help guide you as you reflect on your options and ultimately choose the right medical Specialty for you. Want to learn more about the differences between DO and MD? Top 10 tips for Choosing a Medical Specialty for you. Want to learn more about the differences between DO and MD? Top 10 tips for Choosing a Medical Specialty for you.
choosing the right medical specialty: Now let's unpack these below! Tip #1: Reflect on your interests Upon first glance, this tip may seem obvious and not worthy of discussion. Yet, you'd be surprised at how often it is neglected! Many medical students are unable to ignore the persistent (and usually unsolicited!) advice coming from family, friends, and
peers, to the detriment of advocating for their true interests and passions. Alternatively, some medical students select their specialty of choice by speculating about which special speci
specialty you pursue will be highly influential in shaping your future. Your future, not the future of your family, friends, or peers. And remember why you want to be a doctor, not your mother, father, aunts, and uncles. Take some time to truly reflect on your clinical interests. Which topics ignited your passion to know more throughout medical
school? Was there a particular rotation in which you not only thrived, but enjoyed? The decision possible. Tip #2: Procrastination is not your friendExplore your options early! Juggling the responsibilities of medical school can
be challenging, and the thought of adding one more item to your to-do list might be the last thing you want to do. If you want to explore your options early is key. Depending on which school you're attending, you may have the chance to explore
different specialties in your electives, or you may have to invest some of your free time into delving into the specialization in the United States and 39 in Canada, so understanding your options takes some of your free time into delving into the specialization in the United States and 39 in Canada, so understanding your options takes some of your free time into delving into the specialization in the United States and 39 in Canada, so understanding your options takes some of your free time into delving into the specialization in the United States and 39 in Canada, so understanding your options takes some of your free time into delving into the specialization in the United States and 39 in Canada, so understanding your options takes some of your free time into delving into the specialization in the United States and 39 in Canada, so understanding your options takes some of your free time into delving into the specialization in the United States and 39 in Canada, so understanding your options takes some of your free time into delving into the your free time into the
research! For those of you who do not have the convenience of exploring specialties through elective time, summer breaks provide an excellent chance to seek out opportunities for which specialty might be the right fit for you. Use every possible resource you can to educate yourself on
specialties that pique your interest. Reach out to professors and physicians at your medical school to see how they chose their specialties, seek advice, and utilize their connections to set up shadowing opportunities to get a glimpse of what working in a given specialty is actually like in day-to-day practice. If you're interested in clinical research, make
sure to pursue opportunities for research, whether that's in research courses offered in your program, extracurricular involvement, or summer research opportunities at your university or another institution. Many of the most competitive specialties that require research experience also require an expression of your interest in that field early on, so
don't delay in educating yourself about the field(s) and getting involved in activities that will strengthen your profile as a candidate. Tip #3: Keep an open mindWhether you entered medical school with a particular specialty in mind or not, chances are you will change your mind at some point. Think back to where you were before starting your
undergraduate education. You may have entered your program with concrete aspirations about which field you wanted to study and the career path you intended to follow, but did you graduate with those same exact interests? Chances are the things you learned in both your courses and in life may have motivated you to reconsider. You may have
changed as a person, and will likely change in a similar capacity in medical school as your mind is normal, and even encouraged as you develop and learn more about what each specialty entails and what your priorities are. In fact, the American
Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) indicated in their report on residents that just 26.1% of medical school students reported interest in the same specialty field at the end of medical school as they did when entering medical school. That means 3 out of every 4 students change their minds! So, as you delve into different specialties through
coursework, conversations with professors, and clinical rotations, try to keep an open mind. The specialties that end up appealing to you may surprise you! Only 26.1% of medical school as they did at the beginning! Tip #4: Forget about prestige After the blood, sweat, and tears
spent getting into medical school, covering how much medical school costs, and the effort required to succeed in your chosen program, many students feel they should aim for the most prestigious specialization available, but this may not be the wisest route. While prestige can be tempting in that it offers a certain level of recognition for one's efforts
and abilities, it is neither the key to success nor insurance for professional satisfaction and fulfillment. Selecting a specialty requires a great deal of thought and in-depth reflection about your strengths and what your greatest weaknesses are. It can be easy to get carried away with imagining a dream life for ourselves in which we disregard important
factors like work-life balance in exchange for a level of perceived prestige that we think will ultimately make us happier once we "make it." In reality, if you don't enjoy the process of getting to the point where you think you've made it, chances are that prestige won't result in happiness either. Instead of considering how prestigious a specialty may
be, think about the things that really matter to you? Is clinical research an important aspect of your professional aspirations? Which specialties intrigue you? How much does monetary compensation matter to you? Is clinical research an important aspect of your professional aspirations? Which specialties intrigue you? How much does monetary compensation matter to you? Is clinical research an important aspect of your professional aspirations? Which specialties intrigue you? How much does monetary compensation matter to you? Is clinical research an important aspect of your professional aspirations?
medical school graduates enter a residency program with substantial student loan debt, it is essential when choosing a specialty to remember that physicians in general tend to be well compensated. How much physicians of a particular medical specialty to remember that physicians in general tend to be well compensated.
specialty. Compensation is a factor, among others, that should be considered, but it should not serve as the driving force in your selection of the specialty that is the best fit for you. Keep in mind that becoming the highest paid doctor will not satisfy you in the long-term if you feel burdened by your duties as a physician. Tip #5: Think about the day-to-
dayAs you survey the specialties available to you after graduating medical school, don't be led astray by particularly fascinating, but rare cases you've encountered in textbooks or clinical rotations. Part of why such cases are fascinating is precisely because they are rare! Remember that no matter how intriguing the case of such a patient might be, it
is not likely that you would encounter that same level of stimulation every day. It is wise to think about the majority of your career will look like. Can you picture yourself taking on those responsibilities each day without tiring of them? Do you see
yourself doing those procedures happily day in and day out? Granted, you will never know for sure until you actually do those things every day, but you can avoid the significant disappointment that will inevitably accompany a choice based on an attraction to the extreme cases within a given specialty. Tip #6: Determine how involved you want to be
 with your patientsAlthough patient-centered care is the norm in most healthcare systems in the Global North, there are still variations in degree of patient interaction among medical specialties. Take, for instance, a radiologist. Yes, many specialists in radiology do consult with patients, but a great deal of their time is also spent reviewing images like
X-rays and ultrasounds. Radiologists are often members of a full care team and relay their interpretation of images to other physicians who are in charge of delivering results to the patients. Not only do family medicine is highly involved with his or her patients. Not only do family medicine appropriate treatment plans.
doctors see more patients on a day-to-day basis, but they also tend to follow patients throughout the course of their lives, which involves building and sustaining strong and trusting relationships with patients. The degree to which you desire to interact with patients on a daily basis comes down to personal preference, and you must be honest with
yourself about how involved with patients you would like to be. Tip #7: Work Environment Define where you want to practice, we don't mean geographic location. Residency programs for specialties of all sorts can be found in numerous locations. Rather, think about what sort of work environment appeals to you. Would
a bustling, hectic emergency department thrill you or exhaust you? Do you enjoy the intimacy of a small family medicine practice? Can you picture yourself conducting early morning surgeries in the operating room each day? Your working environment can play a substantial role in shaping your sense of job satisfaction and enjoyment. Consider a brain
surgeon versus a dermatologist, for example. A brain surgeon would spend a significant amount of time in the operating room at a hospital, while a dermatologist, for example. A brain surgeon would spend a significant amount of time in the operating room at a hospital, while a dermatologist, for example. A brain surgeon would spend a significant amount of time in the operating room at a hospital, while a dermatologist, for example.
best for you. Tip #8: Get significant clinical experience in specialties you're considering experience in specialties in which you're interest in order to accrue sufficient
exposure to the field. Go to presentations from physicians in your specialization of choice, read up on hot topics within that specialization, and absorb as much information about it as you can make an informed decision. Oftentimes, these clinical experiences within different specialization of choice, read up on hot topics within that specialization, and absorb as much information about it as you can make an information about it as you can ma
you aren't interested, which is equally valuable. Part of determining the specialty you want to pursue is ruling out those that don't interest you! Tip #9: Decide how long you are willing to commit to a residency programWhile some med school graduates feel invigorated and ready to pursue their chosen specialties, others graduate medical school
feeling burnt out from the rigors of the last four years. You must reflect whether you are ready to spend time and effort on preparing your residency CV, etc. This kind of commitment takes a lot out of students. Additionally, when applying to a residency program
directly after medical school, you have to think about how much time you are willing to commit to a residency program, as they vary in length from three to six years long in most cases. Three years is certainly a commitment
but six years is an even more significant commitment. Are you willing to hold off on earning a physician's salary and paying down your student loans for six years? Do the higher salaries of plastic surgeons make up for the six-year commitment to a residency program? If you desire to have a family while enrolled in a residency program, do you have a
supportive partner who can take over a great deal of childcare responsibilities and/or supplement your limited resident salary? Again, be honest with yourselfWe've mentioned this tip a few times throughout this article, but it bears repeating
because it is crucial to making a wise choice. Be honest with yourself about what you want out of a residency program and future specialization, for
instance. Being honest with yourself comes into play when assessing the strength of your application as well. The strength of your residency personal statement, your board scores, your letters of recommendation, and the ranking of your medical
school. Knowing whether you are a competitive applicant requires a certain degree of self-awareness and being realistic about the level of competitive programs, in the very least you should: Would you like a
quick summary of our tips? Check out this infographic:FAQs To your success, Your friends at BeMoBeMo Academic ConsultingWant more free and useful content!TikTok YouTubeInstagramApple PodcastsSpotify LinkedInTwitter 1. Family Medicine 2. Emergency Medicine 3. Internal Medicine 4. Pathology 5
Preliminary Surgery 6. Orthopedic Surgery 7. Plastic Surgery 8. Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation 9. Neurology These are the specialties that are the easiest to get into based on the fill rate; the "fill rate" represents the percentage of US MD graduates who match into a specialty, so the higher the fill rate; the more competitive the
don't explain the whole story. If we use only these categories, family medicine is clearly the easiest doctor to become is, we'll go through each stage of becoming a doctor starting with medical school, then onto residency
Except, we'll even go beyond that. We'll also examine which medical specialties are the easiest (and hardest) to be, according to several factors, such as job satisfaction, burnout rate and salary. For example, which are the hardest board exams? And what exams? And what example, which are the hardest board exams? And what example, which are the hardest board exams? And what example, which are the hardest board exams? And what example, which are the hardest board example, which are the hardest board exams? And what example, which are the hardest board example, which are the hardest board example.
about when you become a doctor and start practicing? Which specialty has the highest paid doctors, or best hours? Which medical School Rotations In medical school, the first time you get a taste of what it's like to be a real doctor comes in your
clerkship years (the last two years of medical school). During this time, you meet and interact with patients, work under supervising physicians and apply all the knowledge that you learned in your pre-clerkship years (the first two years of medical school). But not all medical specialties are the same. There are some rotations that are harder than
others, which is why it is important to know how to prepare for clinical rotations. But another reason why we're looking at the easiest and nardest rotations in medical school compared to the real world. I here are no scientific measures we're
using other than what medical students usually report when discussing this topic. In general, out of all the core rotations that students have to do, they report the following as the easiest (1) to the hardest Clinical RotationPsychiatry is often reported to
be the hardest rotation because it is usually the first time you encounter people with serious mental illness, which can be mentally draining. But, despite its challenging nature, once you pass the gauntlet of medical school, you usually only have to spend four years in a psychiatry residency, and, if you decide not to train in a sub-specialty, can get your
license to practice right after. But many practicing psychiatrists report having a high level of job satisfaction, along with high salaries between $208,462 and $311,334, in the US and Canada, respectively. But, again, all this is relative. Many medical students, while saying a psychiatry rotation is the most emotionally taxing, also say that is the easiest
rotation to do in terms of content and exams. Similarly, many students say that internal and family medicine rotations are the hardest because of the extensive knowledge base you have to develop for either specialty, as they are primary care specialty, as they are primary care specialty.
reasons. including the content, the difficulty of the exams, and the skill set needed. So, there is no real consensus on which are the easiest or hardest rotations. But when we compare what medical students say about these rotations and where these specialties rank for highest burnout rate, there are some similarities. According to a recent survey by
the American Medical Association, 46% of internal medicine, family medicine and OBGYN physicians reported experiencing burnout; only critical care physicians and neurologists had higher rates of burnout at 48%. So, there is some consistency between what medical students think and the real-world conditions of being a physician in any of these
specialties. But the point to all this is to challenge the widely held assumption that a family doctor is the easiest doctor to become, simply because it takes the least amount of time. We'll go into more detail later about why. But now we'll discuss which are the easiest and most difficult residencies to complete and see whether there is any connection to
whether these specialties are also easy or hard in the real-world. Here's how to answer "why do you want to become a doctor?" Easiest Doctor to Become in terms of how long residency is, the answer is family medicine. You can enter a family medicine residency
right after graduation, unless you decide to take a gap year before residency, or pursue some other postgraduate activity. But what are the hardest specialties that takes the longest and is often considered the hardest is radiology. Why is
Radiology the Hardest Residency? A radiology residency can last anywhere between three or five years, depending on the program, the location and which sub-specialty you're going into - interventional radiology; diagnostic radiology; diagnostic radiology; or radiation oncology. In general, radiology is a difficult specialty you're going into - interventional radiology; diagnostic radiology; diagnostic radiology; diagnostic radiology; diagnostic radiology is a difficult specialty you're going into - interventional radiology; diagnostic radiology;
effective radiologist. Radiologists use a variety of techniques and methods to properly diagnose everything from a broken bone to cancer. This means having knowledge of both anatomy and practicing radiologists are happy with their
work. Close to half of all radiologists in both the US and Canada report being satisfied with their careers. This might not seem like a lot, but radiologists may be satisfied with their job, the other half is still more satisfied with their
profession than those specialties which experience burnout most often. But there are exceptions. Interestingly, another study found that radiologists who chose it because of its intellectually challenging nature. It's true that radiology attracts a certain type of
personality - studious, unrelenting, intellectually curious and maybe a little introverted. But it is also these types of people who enjoy radiology the most. What you may think is the easiest doctor is to become is not always the easiest doctor to be.
You need to do as much research as possible, mostly by speaking to physicians in these fields or alumni from your medical school or residency doesn't last forever; so even though the specialty you chose may seem like the easiest or hardest
now, during your residency, there are so many things that change when you finally become a doctor. And there is no better evidence of this than the difference between how easy it is to become a family doctor compared to what it is like to be a family doctor, which we'll finally discuss here. Easiest Doctor to Become: Family Doctor Why is family
medicine, or a family doctor, considered the easiest doctor to become? The simple answer is that it takes the least amount of time. After your four years at medical school, (or a 3-year medical school) you can do a three-year family medicine residency, pass your board exams, and that's it, you're a doctor! You can choose to enter any type of practice,
from private practice to group practice, which have their advantages and disadvantages, but both types of practice means you get to choose your own hours. But surprisingly, family doctors are not always the happiest. Several studies point to the pressures of being a family doctor owing to external factors such as: Financial concerns of owning a
private practiceOverall burnoutNever-ending workloadDifficulty in achieving a satisfactory work-life balanceIn Canada, 61% of family physicians reported having poorer mental health post-pandemic. Family medicine is also becoming less attractive for Canadian medical graduates. According to CaRMS (Canadian Resident Matching Service), only 33%
of medical graduates in Ontario choose family medicine; the lowest percentage in nearly a decade. When you also take into consideration the fact that family doctors in the US is $197,655, while it is $308,317 in Canada) compared to surgical specialties
($340,000) or niche specialties like dermatology ($350,627) or anesthesiology ($366,640), then the rosy picture that is family doctors take on a lot of responsibility. They are often the first point of contact for the entire healthcare system, especially for people in
underserved areas, and unless a patient requires specialized care, they are also the last, meaning their workload can often become overwhelming. Taken all together, these statistics point to the fact that a family doctor may be the easiest doctor to become in terms of length of time, but it is a challenging practice once you get in. So, now that we've
established that even though a family doctor to become in terms of length of time it takes to be one, it is not the easiest doctors to be? What are the medical specialties that may take longer to become, but have higher rates of job satisfaction, higher
salaries, better work-life balances? Hardest Doctors to Become, but the Easiest Doctors to Be Even though we took the time to make the case for how family doctors in the US report being happy in their careers. So, despite each specialty having its own
challenges, in general, being a doctor brings a great amount of satisfaction in various areas of a physician's life from their renumeration, work-life balance, level of patient interaction and sense of fulfillment. With that said, and recognizing that all doctors are relatively happy, we can start talking about the medical specialties that have some of the
happiest doctors in terms of: SalaryLifestyle and autonomyJob satisfactionProfessional and personal fulfillmentTwo specialties that often report being "very satisfied" across all these categories are dermatology and gerontology, surprisingly enough. Easiest Doctor to Become: GerontologistThe reason that doctors in these specialties are satisfied vary.
Gerontologists (specialists who treat the elderly) say that their patients are what bring them the most happiness. They report their patients are inspiring and joyous. But other factors include having a stable work-life, and the growth of this specialty as more and more people age. Gerontology is a very specialized field of primary care medicine. It is not
something that you have to spend years studying or training in, as you usually only need to have completed medical school, spent three years in a family medicine or internal medicine or internal medicine a gerontologist as it
does a family doctor. But the salary prospects are different from those of a family doctor. A starting salary for a gerontology specialist starts at $195,386 but can go as high as $437,000 for someone with years of experience, and which is much higher than for family doctors with the same amount of experience. So, it's no wonder that gerontologists
report having high levels of job satisfaction - great patients and high salary! And from this conclusion, we could also reasonably assume gerontologist an easy doctor to be, based on the factors we talked about. Easiest Doctor to Become: Dermatologist an easy doctor to be, based on the factors we talked about. Easiest Doctor to Become: Dermatologist an easy doctor to be, based on the factors we talked about. Easiest Doctor to Become: Dermatologist an easy doctor to be? There are many reasons. For one, the pay is
good. We mentioned the average salary for dermatologists and how high it is compared to other specialties, but even starting salaries for dermatologists are higher than some salaries for dermatologists and how high it is compared to other specialties, but even starting salaries for dermatologists are higher than some salaries for
specialty in recent years. Dermatology is also one of the most competitive residencies to enter. It has a fill rate for all applicants, including DO graduates, even though there are only about 50 resident positions available in the US. Becoming a dermatologist takes, on average, about four years after you
graduate medical school. You can enter either a categorical dermatology residency, or an advanced residency, the latter meaning that you can only apply if you are a PGY2 residency usually takes about four years, but an advanced
one takes three, without counting the year you spent in a preliminary residences are split up like this because it is not a required rotation in medical school, so you need an extra year to cover other specialties to enter it. So, in total, you can spend about the same amount of time to become a dermatologist as you would to be a
family doctor, but, after everything (medical school, residency, fellowship) you'll have better work hours, higher salary, and be happier with the work. Easiest Doctor to Become: Which are the easiest and, by contrast, the hardest, doctors to become, there
are no right or wrong answers. There may be dermatologists who are unhappy and unsatisfied, while there might also be family doctors who love their patients and their work and wouldn't trade them for anything. But the one certainty we can take away from all this is that being any kind of doctor is hard, and rarely easy. If you are thinking about
becoming a doctor and going to medical school, you should understand this and temper your expectations for what you think is the easiest doctor to be. After all, you will becoming that doctor, so you should choose your specialty based on what you feel
will be the most stimulating and fulfilling in every aspect, from lifestyle and money to satisfaction and patient interaction. But here are some other things to think about when deciding on your medical specialty. Think Long-Term Being a physician is a life-long profession, usually. You should keep this in mind when deciding what the best specialty is
for you, rather than which doctor is the easiest to become. As the study about job dissatisfaction among radiologists who choose it for the lifestyle shows, if you are thinking about choosing a specialty that will be good for you meet
those short-term goals. But if you internalize the idea that there is more to being a doctor than money and lifestyle, you'll choose a specialty that offers the most stimulating, both intellectually and professionally. Do Your Research A majority of medical students end up pursuing the specialty they decided on at the
beginning of medical school, even after doing their medical rotations. But if this doesn't apply to you and you are vacillating between one specialty, residents, chief residents, alumni) and ask them questions about job satisfaction,
length of residency training, and personal opinions so you can have a better idea of which specialty appeals to you. You can also consult professional associations in these specialties to get even more current and up-to-date information on burnout rates, job prospects and career longevity. 3. Find your Motivation Once you've decided on a specialty and
you're in a residency program, you need to stay motivated to get through the hard times that come with completing any residency, no matter the specialty. Of course, you can always try a residency swap if you find that the specialty you chose is not for you. But the fact that only 2.5% of residency swap if you find that the specialty.
rare, although not unheard of. But giving up on a specialty because it's hard is something you need to fight against. Every residency is hard, but they eventually end so you need to remember why you decided on this specialty, and why you decided to become a doctor in the first place to get you through the toughest moments. FAQs To your
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