

Oregon State University | College of Public Health and Human Sciences

PODIATRY

What does a podiatrist do?

A Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM) diagnoses and treats conditions of the feet, ankles and lower leg. They also perform surgery and can specialize in many fields, including sports medicine, wound care, pediatrics and diabetic care.

What settings do podiatrists work in?

DPMs work in private practice or in clinic settings, whether specific to podiatric medicine or part of a group practice with other specialist and health care providers. They might work in hospitals or outpatient care centers.

What type of degree do I need to become a podiatrist?

Podiatrists must have a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM) degree from an accredited college of podiatric medicine.

How competitive is podiatry school?

Admission to podiatric medicine programs requires at least three years of undergraduate education, including specific courses in laboratory sciences such as biology, chemistry and physics, as well as general coursework in subjects such as English. In practice, nearly all prospective podiatrists earn a bachelor's degree before attending a college of podiatric medicine. Admission to DPM programs usually requires taking the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT).

Western University of Health Professions:

Applicant Counts

Number of Applications Received 518

Number of Students Enrolled 50

Number of Interviews Conducted 169

Number of Males Enrolled 31

Number of Females Enrolled 19

Number of California Residents 29

Applicant Scores

Average Overall GPA 3.38

Average Science GPA 3.28

Do I need experience?

Understanding and knowledge of the field is imperative. Just like any medical profession, exposure to the field and a clear understanding of why podiatry, as opposed to other types of medicine, is right for you, needs to be clearly articulated.

How long does it take to complete a DPM degree?

A DPM degree program takes four years to complete. In 2014, there were nine colleges of podiatric medicine accredited by the Council on Podiatric Medical Education. Courses for a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree are similar to those for other medical degrees. They include anatomy, physiology, pharmacology and pathology, among other subjects. During their last two years, podiatric medical students gain supervised experience by completing clinical rotations.

After earning a DPM, podiatrists must apply to and complete a three-year podiatric medical and surgical residency (PMSR) program. Residency programs take place in hospitals and provide both medical and surgical experience. They may do additional training in specific fellowship areas, such as sports medicine or pediatrics.

What is the average salary of a podiatrist?

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual wage for podiatrists was \$119,340 in May 2015.

What is the projected job outlook for podiatrists?

Employment of podiatrists is projected to grow 14 percent from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations. However, because it is a small occupation, the fast growth will result in only about 1,400 new jobs over the 10-year period.

As the U.S. population both ages and increases, the number of people expected to have mobility and foot-related problems will rise. Growing rates of chronic conditions, such as diabetes and obesity, also may limit mobility of those with these conditions, and lead to problems such as poor circulation in the feet and lower extremities. More podiatrists will be needed to provide care for these patients.

Where can I get more information?

American Podiatric Medical Association at apma.org

Bureau of Labor Statistics at bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/podiatrists.htm