

PHARMACIST

What does a pharmacist do?

Pharmacy is a blend of science, health care, direct patient contact, technology, ethics, and business. A pharmacist is a highly-skilled and trusted medication expert. They know and understand everything there is to know about drugs. Pharmacists undergo extensive education in order to understand the role that drugs play in different situations. They are familiar with the biochemical make up of drugs and how that impacts their use, side effects, interactions, and implications of effectiveness. Their role revolves around dispensing prescriptions to patients, conducting health screenings, giving immunizations, and advising on the safe use of medicine.

Scope of practice

Pharmacists work with doctors, [nurses](#), and pharmacy technicians. Common tasks and duties include:

- Dispensing medication per the prescription, or doctor's orders
- Consulting patients on prescribed medication usage
- Communicating with physicians to dispense medication correctly
- Directing patients toward over the counter medications to treat their ailment

Specializations

Specialization by location

One way that pharmacists can specialize is in their practice area. Pharmacists are able to practice in a variety of industries and other settings. These specialty areas will impact roles, responsibilities, and career paths:

- Academia pharmacist
- Community pharmacist
- Government pharmacist
- Hospital pharmacist
- Industry pharmacist
- Military pharmacist
- Research pharmacist
- Wholesale pharmacist

Specialization by specialty area

Licensed pharmacists can become board certified in a specialty area of pharmacy, including:

- Ambulatory care
- Critical care pharmacy
- Nuclear pharmacy
- Nutrition support pharmacy
- Oncology pharmacy
- Pediatric pharmacy
- Pharmacotherapy
- Psychiatric pharmacy

Work environment

Employers of pharmacists typically include hospitals, retail stores, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, universities, governmental facilities, mail services, and internet companies. They spend the majority of their work day on their feet, consulting with patients and physicians. They may need to work a variety of shifts, including nights, weekends, and holidays.

What Can Pharmacists Do For You? Your Pharmacist = Your Medication Expert

Interpret Drug Interactions

Pharmacists look at all possible interactions between not only prescriptions, but also over the counter, herbals, and supplements, so be sure your pharmacist knows *everything* you're taking.

Counsel on Prescriptions

Whether handing you a new prescription in your community pharmacy or visiting your room in the hospital, pharmacists explain what you need to know about your medication and answer any questions, so ask away!

Make Medication Information Understandable

We know you don't need to know everything, so we determine what is important to you, such as how to use a medication, when to expect results, and what to do if you experience side effects.

Provide Vaccines

Pharmacists give vaccines that prevent serious diseases, such as the flu, shingles, and pneumonia.

OTC Counseling

Pharmacists also know about the over the counter (OTC) and natural products out there, so the next time you're not how to treat your cold symptoms or if you should try glucosamine for your arthritis, talk to your pharmacist.

Help You Stay Out of the Hospital

Whether it's in an emergency room, hospital, nursing facility, or at home, pharmacists are key partners in ensuring that you and your providers are up to date about your medications



Manage Chronic Diseases

Diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol...pharmacists know about treating these conditions and can be a valuable resource between physician visits. We can also help you figure out what to do when a problem arises.

Help You Quit Smoking

Pharmacists are knowledgeable about tobacco use, and can offer you support and encouragement, as well as recommend options to help you quit.

Make it Easier to Take Your Medication

Pharmacists help pinpoint why it might be hard to take your medication as prescribed (whether it's keeping you up at night or you simply forget to take it) and recommend strategies to help you remember to take your medication.

Stay Up to Date on What Matters to You

We follow all the latest science, and filter through new updates to find out what will impact you.

Verify, Prepare, and Check Medication

Pharmacists ensure the medication is right for you based on your medical condition and lifestyle. Then they check the medication, dose, and instructions to be sure you receive the right drug for you.

Wellness Screenings

Many pharmacies will offer screening for blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes, and can help you figure out what to do next if there is a problem.

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Reference:
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Oversee daily ordering

Check for drug interactions

Review prescriptions

Counsel patients about prescriptions

**A Day in the Life of a
PHARMACIST**

The Balance / Nusha Ashjaee