



Osteopathic Medicine

Osteopathic Medicine

You are more than just the sum of your body parts. That's why doctors of osteopathic medicine (D.O.s) practice a "whole person" approach to health care. Instead of just treating specific symptoms, osteopathic physicians concentrate on treating you as a whole.

Osteopathic physicians understand how all the body's systems are interconnected and how each one affects the others. They focus special attention on the musculoskeletal system, which reflects and influences the condition of all other body systems.

This system of bones and muscles makes up about two-thirds of the body's mass, and a routine part of the osteopathic patient examination is a careful evaluation of these important structures. D.O.s know that the body's structure plays a critical role in its ability to function. They can use their eyes and hands to identify structural problems and to support the body's natural tendency toward health and self-healing.



Osteopathic physicians also use their ears — to listen to you and your health concerns. Doctors of osteopathic medicine help patients develop attitudes and lifestyles that don't just fight illness, but help prevent it. Millions of Americans prefer this concerned and compassionate care, and have made D.O.s their doctors for life.



Professional Education

To become an osteopathic physician, an individual must be a graduate of one of the nation's osteopathic medical schools. Each school is accredited by the Bureau of Professional Education of the American Osteopathic Association. This accreditation is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council on Post-Secondary Education. Typically, applicants to osteopathic medical colleges have a four-year undergraduate degree, and complete specific science courses. Applicants must take the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT). Osteopathic medical schools also require a personal interview to assess the student's interpersonal communication skills.

The osteopathic curriculum involves four years of academic study. As a reflection of the osteopathic philosophy, the curriculum emphasizes preventive medicine and comprehensive patient care. Medical students learn to use osteopathic principles and techniques for diagnosis and treatment of disease throughout the curriculum.

After completing osteopathic medical college, D.O.s serve a one-year rotating internship, gaining hands-on experience in internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, family practice, and pediatrics. This experience ensures that osteopathic physicians are first trained as primary care physicians. The internship provides every D.O. with the perspective to see and treat every patient as a whole person.



Most D.O.s will continue their graduate medical education with a residency consisting of two to six years of additional training. Residencies are available in the primary care disciplines—family practice, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics—as well as other specialties such as surgery, radiology, psychiatry and sports medicine.

Licensure

All physicians (both D.O.s and M.D.s) must pass a state medical board examination in order to obtain a license and enter practice. Each state board sets its own requirements for the physician to practice in that state.

Complete Care

D.O.s are complete physicians. That means they are fully trained and licensed to prescribe medication and to perform surgery. D.O.s and allopathic physicians (M.D.s) are the only two types of complete physicians in the United States.

D.O.s practice in all branches of medicine from psychiatry to geriatrics to emergency medicine. However, D.O.s are trained to be generalists first, and specialists second. The majority are family-oriented, primary care physicians. Many D.O.s practice in small towns where they often care for entire families and whole communities.

Some facts about osteopathic physicians:

- D.O.s are one of the fastest growing segments of health care providers. Growth in the number of D.O.s is exceeding projections. Between 1989 and 1994, D.O. growth outpaced M.D. growth by almost two times. By the year 2020, over 80,000 osteopathic physicians will be in practice in the U.S.
- More than 64% of all D.O.s practice in the primary care areas of family practice, internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology and pediatrics.
- D.O.s represent 6% of the total U.S. physician population and 8% of all military physicians.
- D.O.s represent 15% of physicians in small towns and rural areas
- Each year, more than 100 million patient visits are made to D.O.s



"I GO TO A D.O. FOR FAMILY MEDICINE"

AOA is the leader in osteopathic medicine. And the way they lead the industry is changing the way people look at doctors.

As a leader, they specialize in: **Family Medicine**, **Obstetrics/Gynecology**, **Pediatrics**, **Internal Medicine**, **Geriatrics**, **Neurology**, **Psychiatry**, **Cardiology**, **Orthopedics**, **Ophthalmology**, **Otolaryngology**, **Podiatry**, **Urology**, **Radiology**, **Emergency Medicine**, **Preventive Medicine**, **Public Health**, **Biostatistics**, **Health Services Research**, **Medical Education**, **Health Policy**, **Health Law**, **Health Economics**, **Health Administration**, **Health Informatics**, **Health Communication**, **Health Equity**, **Health Justice**, **Health Innovation**, **Health Leadership**, **Health Research**, **Health Systems**, **Health Transformation**, **Health Workforce**, **Healthcare Delivery**, **Healthcare Financing**, **Healthcare Organization**, **Healthcare Regulation**, **Healthcare Reform**, **Healthcare Research**, **Healthcare Services**, **Healthcare Technology**, **Healthcare Training**, **Healthcare Quality**, **Healthcare Safety**, **Healthcare Security**, **Healthcare Sustainability**, **Healthcare Transparency**, **Healthcare Accountability**, **Healthcare Integrity**, **Healthcare Ethics**, **Healthcare Governance**, **Healthcare Leadership**, **Healthcare Innovation**, **Healthcare Transformation**, **Healthcare Evolution**, **Healthcare Revolution**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**.

AOA is the leader in osteopathic medicine. And the way they lead the industry is changing the way people look at doctors.

As a leader, they specialize in: **Family Medicine**, **Obstetrics/Gynecology**, **Pediatrics**, **Internal Medicine**, **Geriatrics**, **Neurology**, **Psychiatry**, **Cardiology**, **Orthopedics**, **Ophthalmology**, **Otolaryngology**, **Podiatry**, **Urology**, **Radiology**, **Emergency Medicine**, **Preventive Medicine**, **Public Health**, **Biostatistics**, **Health Services Research**, **Medical Education**, **Health Policy**, **Health Law**, **Health Economics**, **Health Administration**, **Health Informatics**, **Health Communication**, **Health Equity**, **Health Justice**, **Health Innovation**, **Health Leadership**, **Health Research**, **Health Systems**, **Health Transformation**, **Health Workforce**, **Healthcare Delivery**, **Healthcare Financing**, **Healthcare Organization**, **Healthcare Regulation**, **Healthcare Reform**, **Healthcare Research**, **Healthcare Services**, **Healthcare Technology**, **Healthcare Training**, **Healthcare Quality**, **Healthcare Safety**, **Healthcare Security**, **Healthcare Sustainability**, **Healthcare Transparency**, **Healthcare Accountability**, **Healthcare Integrity**, **Healthcare Ethics**, **Healthcare Governance**, **Healthcare Leadership**, **Healthcare Innovation**, **Healthcare Transformation**, **Healthcare Evolution**, **Healthcare Revolution**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**.

AOA is the leader in osteopathic medicine. And the way they lead the industry is changing the way people look at doctors.

As a leader, they specialize in: **Family Medicine**, **Obstetrics/Gynecology**, **Pediatrics**, **Internal Medicine**, **Geriatrics**, **Neurology**, **Psychiatry**, **Cardiology**, **Orthopedics**, **Ophthalmology**, **Otolaryngology**, **Podiatry**, **Urology**, **Radiology**, **Emergency Medicine**, **Preventive Medicine**, **Public Health**, **Biostatistics**, **Health Services Research**, **Medical Education**, **Health Policy**, **Health Law**, **Health Economics**, **Health Administration**, **Health Informatics**, **Health Communication**, **Health Equity**, **Health Justice**, **Health Innovation**, **Health Leadership**, **Health Research**, **Health Systems**, **Health Transformation**, **Health Workforce**, **Healthcare Delivery**, **Healthcare Financing**, **Healthcare Organization**, **Healthcare Regulation**, **Healthcare Reform**, **Healthcare Research**, **Healthcare Services**, **Healthcare Technology**, **Healthcare Training**, **Healthcare Quality**, **Healthcare Safety**, **Healthcare Security**, **Healthcare Sustainability**, **Healthcare Transparency**, **Healthcare Accountability**, **Healthcare Integrity**, **Healthcare Ethics**, **Healthcare Governance**, **Healthcare Leadership**, **Healthcare Innovation**, **Healthcare Transformation**, **Healthcare Evolution**, **Healthcare Revolution**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**.

AOA is the leader in osteopathic medicine. And the way they lead the industry is changing the way people look at doctors.

As a leader, they specialize in: **Family Medicine**, **Obstetrics/Gynecology**, **Pediatrics**, **Internal Medicine**, **Geriatrics**, **Neurology**, **Psychiatry**, **Cardiology**, **Orthopedics**, **Ophthalmology**, **Otolaryngology**, **Podiatry**, **Urology**, **Radiology**, **Emergency Medicine**, **Preventive Medicine**, **Public Health**, **Biostatistics**, **Health Services Research**, **Medical Education**, **Health Policy**, **Health Law**, **Health Economics**, **Health Administration**, **Health Informatics**, **Health Communication**, **Health Equity**, **Health Justice**, **Health Innovation**, **Health Leadership**, **Health Research**, **Health Systems**, **Health Transformation**, **Health Workforce**, **Healthcare Delivery**, **Healthcare Financing**, **Healthcare Organization**, **Healthcare Regulation**, **Healthcare Reform**, **Healthcare Research**, **Healthcare Services**, **Healthcare Technology**, **Healthcare Training**, **Healthcare Quality**, **Healthcare Safety**, **Healthcare Security**, **Healthcare Sustainability**, **Healthcare Transparency**, **Healthcare Accountability**, **Healthcare Integrity**, **Healthcare Ethics**, **Healthcare Governance**, **Healthcare Leadership**, **Healthcare Innovation**, **Healthcare Transformation**, **Healthcare Evolution**, **Healthcare Revolution**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**, **Healthcare Renaissance**, **Healthcare Reformation**.

Look for our osteopathic public education advertisements in these magazines:

- Oprah
- Parents
- Self
- Reader's Digest Family Edition

For more information on osteopathic medicine, contact:

American Osteopathic Association
142 E. Ontario Street
Chicago, IL 60611
1.800.621.1773, ext. 8252
www.aoa-net.org

D.O.s: Physicians Treating People, Not Just Symptoms

 American Osteopathic Association
©2001 American Osteopathic Association