



Medical Assistants

Course Overview: Focuses on careers in planning, managing, and providing therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development.

Career Goal (O*NET Code): (31-9092) - Medical assistants perform administrative and clinical tasks to keep the offices of physicians, podiatrists, chiropractors, and other health practitioners running smoothly. Medical assistants perform many administrative duties, including answering telephones, greeting patients, updating and filing patients' medical records, filling out insurance forms, handling correspondence, scheduling appointments, arranging for hospital admission and laboratory services, and handling billing and bookkeeping.

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

School: _____

SUGGESTED COURSEWORK

EXTENDED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Middle School	8th	HS Courses:	(Local districts may list high school credit courses here)		<p>Curricular Experiences: *** Health Occupations Students of America</p> <p>Career Learning Experiences: Career Preparation Internship Job Shadowing Clinical Rotations Certifications Clinical Volunteer Work (local hospitals & medical facilities)</p> <p>Service Learning Experiences: Boy/Girl Scouts Campus Service Organizations Community Service Volunteer Medical Mission Trips Peer Mentoring / Peer Tutoring Special Olympics</p>	<p>Extracurricular Experiences:*** Language Immersion Programs National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine School Newspaper Student Council UIL Academic Competitions Yearbook</p>			
	High School	9th	Courses*:	English I Algebra I or Geometry Biology			World Geography Foreign Language I Physical Education or Athletics	<p>Career-Related Electives: Principles of Health Science</p>	
Courses:			English II Geometry or Algebra II Chemistry	World History Foreign Language II Elective					
10th		Career-Related Electives:	Medical Terminology and Pathophysiology						
		Core Courses:	English III Algebra II or Pre-Calculus Physics	United States History Foreign Language III ** Professional Communications or Speech			<p>Career-Related Electives: Health Science</p>		
11th		Core Courses:	English IV Pre-Calculus or Calculus 4th Science	Government/Economics Elective Elective					
		12th	Career-Related Electives:	Practicum in Health Science					
Postsecondary	<p>How to Become a Medical Assistant Medical assistants typically have a high school diploma or equivalent. Some medical assistants graduate from formal education programs, and employers may prefer such training. All programs have classroom and laboratory portions that include lessons in anatomy and medical terminology.</p>						<p>Carrer Options (Sample of reported job titles)</p>		<p>Professional Associations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Association of Medical Assistants American Medical Technologists National Center for Competency Testing National Healthcareer Association Institute for Credentialing Excellence American Optometric Association American Society of Podiatric Medical Assistants Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs Accrediting Bureau of Health Education School
	<p>Texas Southmost College South Texas College Texas State Technical College</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Assistant Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) Doctor's Assistant Medical Office Assistant Optometric Assistant, Clinical Assistant Ophthalmic Technician Optometric Technician Outpatient Surgery Assistant 		
	<p>Medical Assistant Technology (CERT) Medical Assistant (CERT) Medical Assistant Technology (AAS) Medical Assistant (AAS)</p>								
	<p>The University of Texas at Brownsville The University of Texas - Pan American</p>								

COLLEGE CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES -- High School

Students should take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual credit, Advanced Technical Credit (ATC), or locally articulated courses (Tech Prep), if possible. List those courses that count for college credit on your campus.

* Students must meet local & state high school graduation requirements. ** Required course for the Distinguished Graduation Plan (in addition to other measures). *** Based on campus availability. Students may select other elective courses for personal enrichment purposes.

This plan of study serves as a guide, along with other career planning materials, for pursuing a career path and is based on the most recent information as of 2009. All plans meet high school graduation requirements as well as college entrance requirements.



Medical Assistants

TEA Industry Cluster	Health Science
SOC Code	31-9092
Identified by	TWC LMCI; Tech Prep Occupations
Projected Growth (2018)	35%
BISD Magnet School Available	Yes

Source: Demand Occupations by Cluster, updated *June 27, 2012*

Description

What Medical Assistants Do

Medical assistants often take medical histories and record vital signs of patients.

Medical assistants complete administrative and clinical tasks in the offices of physicians, podiatrists, chiropractors, and other health practitioners. Their duties vary with the location, specialty, and size of the practice.

Duties

Medical assistants typically do the following:

- Take patient history and measure vital signs
- Help the physician with patient examinations
- Give patient injections as directed by the physician
- Schedule patient appointments
- Prepare blood for laboratory tests

Electronic health records (EHRs) are changing medical assistants' jobs. More and more physicians are adopting EHRs, moving all their patient information online. Assistants need to learn the EHR software that their office uses.

Medical assistants take and record patients' personal information. They must be able to keep that information confidential and discuss it only with other medical personnel who are involved in treating the patient.

Medical assistants should not be confused with physician assistants, who examine, diagnose, and treat patients under a physician's supervision. For more information, see the profile on [physician assistants](#).

In larger practices or hospitals, medical assistants may specialize in either administrative or clinical work.

Administrative medical assistants often fill out insurance forms or code patients' medical information. Some assistants buy and store supplies and equipment for the office.

Clinical medical assistants have different duties, depending on the state where they work. They may do basic laboratory tests, dispose of contaminated supplies, and sterilize medical instruments. They might have additional responsibilities, such as instructing patients about medication or special diets, preparing patients for x rays, removing stitches, drawing blood, or changing dressings.

Some medical assistants specialize in a specific type of medical office.

Ophthalmic medical assistants and optometric assistants help ophthalmologists and optometrists, respectively, provide eye care. They show patients how to insert, remove, and care for contact lenses. Ophthalmic medical assistants also may help an ophthalmologist in surgery.

Podiatric medical assistants work closely with podiatrists (foot doctors). They may make castings of feet, expose and develop x rays, and help podiatrists in surgery.

Training Opportunities Linked to Those Jobs (Degree Types and Colleges/Universities)

How to Become a Medical Assistant

Assistants may update a patient's medical file, fill out insurance forms, and answer telephone calls in a practitioner's office.

In most states, there are no formal educational requirements for becoming a medical assistant. Most have at least a high school diploma. Many assistants learn through on-the-job training.

Education

High school students interested in a career as a medical assistant should take courses in biology, chemistry, and anatomy.

Medical assistants typically have a high school diploma or equivalent. There are no formal educational requirements for becoming a medical assistant in most states. However, some medical assistants graduate from formal education programs, and employers may prefer such training. Programs are available from community colleges, vocational schools, technical schools, or universities and take about 1 year to complete. These programs usually lead to a certificate or diploma. Some community and junior colleges offer 2-year programs that lead to an associate's degree. All programs have classroom and laboratory portions that include lessons in anatomy and medical terminology.

Some states may require assistants to graduate from an accredited program or pass an exam or both to do advanced tasks, such as taking x rays and giving injections.

Training

Through on-the-job training, a physician or another medical assistant in the office may teach the new assistant medical terminology, the names of the instruments, how to do daily tasks, how to interact with patients, and other tasks that help keep the office running smoothly. An assistant also learns how to code both paper and electronic health records and how to record patient information. It can take several months for an assistant to complete training, depending on the facility.

Certification

Medical assistants are not required to be certified. However, employers prefer to hire certified assistants.

Several organizations offer certification. Some require the assistant to pass an exam, and others require graduation from an accredited program. In most cases, an applicant must be at least 18 years old before applying for certification.

The National Commission for Certifying Agencies, part of the [Institute for Credentialing Excellence](#), accredits four certifications for medical assistants:

- Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) from the [American Association of Medical Assistants](#) (AAMA)
- Registered Medical Assistant (RMA) from the [American Medical Technologists](#)

- National Certified Medical Assistant (NCMA) from the [National Center for Competency Testing](#)
- Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) from the [National Healthcareer Association](#)

To be eligible for the CMA Certification Examination, an assistant must have completed a postsecondary medical assisting program accredited by either the [Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs \(CAAHEP\)](#) or the [Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools \(ABHES\)](#) and passed the certification exam. For the other three certifications, no formal education is required to take the certification exam.

Important Qualities

Analytical skills. Medical assistants must be able to understand and follow medical charts and diagnoses. They may be required to code a patient’s medical records for billing purposes.

Detail oriented. Medical assistants must be precise when taking vital signs or recording patient information. Physicians and insurance companies rely on accurate records.

Interpersonal skills. Medical assistants need to be able to discuss patient information with other medical personnel, such as a physician. They often interact with patients who may be in pain or in distress, so they need to be able to act in a calm and professional manner.

Technical skills. Medical assistants should be able to use basic clinical instruments so they can take a patient’s vital signs, such as heart rate or blood pressure.

Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College	The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American
Medical Coding and Billing (CERT)	Medical Assistant Technology (CERT)	Medical Assistant (CERT)		
Medical Office Management (AAS)	Medical Assistant Technology (AAS)	Medical Assistant (AAS)		

Local Employers

Employer	City	Employer	City
Abc Pediatrics	Brownsville	Children's Clinic-Harlingen	Harlingen
Anesthesia Consultants	Brownsville	Clark Orthopedics	Harlingen
Arthritis & Osteoporosis Ctr	Brownsville	Coastal Bend Physical Therapy	Harlingen
Asthma Center	Brownsville	Department-State Health Svc	Harlingen
Bienestar Counseling Ctr	Brownsville	E C 99 Cents Plus Inc	Harlingen

Career Options (Specific Job Types)

Sample of reported job titles:

- Medical Assistant
- Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)
- Doctor's Assistant
- Medical Office Assistant
- Optometric Assistant
- Clinical Assistant
- Ophthalmic Technician
- Optometric Technician
- Outpatient Surgery Assistant

Salary Ranges

Wages for Medical Assistants

Location	Pay Period	2011				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$10.04	\$11.86	\$13.99	\$16.87	\$19.62
	Yearly	\$20,900	\$24,700	\$29,100	\$35,100	\$40,800
Texas	Hourly	\$8.99	\$10.66	\$12.97	\$15.57	\$18.11
	Yearly	\$18,700	\$22,200	\$27,000	\$32,400	\$37,700
Brownsville-Harlingen, TX MSA	Hourly	\$7.89	\$8.74	\$10.07	\$11.39	\$14.41
	Yearly	\$16,400	\$18,200	\$20,900	\$23,700	\$30,000
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX MSA	Hourly	\$7.75	\$8.37	\$9.47	\$11.84	\$13.83
	Yearly	\$16,100	\$17,400	\$19,700	\$24,600	\$28,800

Professional Associations Linked to the Careers

For more information about becoming a medical assistant, including information on certification, visit

- [American Association of Medical Assistants](#)
- [American Medical Technologists](#)
- [National Center for Competency Testing](#)
- [National Healthcareer Association](#)
- [Institute for Credentialing Excellence](#)
- [American Optometric Association](#)
- [American Society of Podiatric Medical Assistants](#)
- [Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology](#)

For lists of accredited educational programs in medical assisting, visit

- [Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs](#)
- [Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools](#)

Sources

The information provided in this document was collected from the following sources:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)
- O*NET OnLine (<http://www.onetonline.org/>)
- Texas CARES (<http://www.texascaresonline.com/>)
- CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org/>)