



Chiropractic Medicine (D.C.)

Career Description

- Chiropractors, also known as Doctors of Chiropractic Medicine, help patients maintain overall health by emphasizing the inherent power of the body to heal itself without the use of drugs or surgery.
- Chiropractors are holistic in their approach to health and stress many factors with patients including exercise, nutrition, and rest. They do not, however, prescribe medications or perform surgery.
- Chiropractic doctors diagnose and treat patients with health problems associated with the muscular, nervous, and skeletal systems.
- Chiropractors take detailed histories; conduct physical, neurological, and orthopedic examinations; order laboratory tests; and interpret X-rays and other diagnostic images.
- Besides employing hands-on adjustments of imbalances in the patient's skeletal system, chiropractors may use water, light, massage, ultrasound, acupuncture, acupressure, and heat therapy.

- Chiropractors may specialize in orthopedics, neurology, sports injuries, nutrition, rehabilitation, radiology, industrial consulting, family practice, or pediatrics by completing additional training and taking a specialty exam by that chiropractic association.

Becoming a Chiropractor

- To attend one of the accredited chiropractic programs in the United States, generally a bachelor's degree in any major is needed (must have completed at least 90 credit hours) along with prerequisite coursework (see below).
- Some state licensing boards require a completed bachelor's degree for licensure.
- Chiropractic school is a 3-4 year professional school program following an undergraduate degree; the degree earned will be a Doctor of Chiropractic (D.C.).
- Chiropractic students receive a minimum of 4200 hours of classroom, laboratory, and clinical experience during their training.

Common Prerequisite Courses (pre-reqs set by each chiropractic program but similar to this list)

Requirements	Recommended	Purdue Equivalents (specific courses may vary by major)
Life Sciences - Schools generally require 24 credit hours of life science including biology; general, organic & biochemistry; physics; exercise physiology; nutrition; biomechanics	Biology with labs	BIOL 11000-11100 or BIOL 13100 & BIOL 23100 & 23200 (lab) or BIOL 20300-20400
	Inorganic Chemistry with labs	CHM 11500-11600 or 12500-12600 or 12300-12400 or 12901
	Organic Chemistry with labs	CHM 25500-25600 or CHM 25700 (with lab and a biochem course) (often need 6 hours of organic and/or biochemistry)
	Biochemistry	BCHM 30700 or 56100 or CHM 33300 or 33900 or 53300 or MCMP 20800
	Physics with labs	PHYS 22000-22100 or at least 1 semester of physics and biomechanics, kinesiology, or exercise physiology
Social Science & Humanities	Psychology	PSY 12000
	Social Sciences & Humanities	At least 12 credit hours in addition to psychology and English requirements
	English Composition (6 credit hours)	ENGL 10600 or 10800, plus an upper level course
Recommended courses include		Business management, entrepreneurship, accounting, statistics, interpersonal communications, Spanish, & upper level biology courses such as microbiology, anatomy & physiology, genetics, & nutrition
Optional	Pre-Med Planning Seminar	BIOL 39600-0 credit 10 week class covering how to apply to medical school and other health professions programs

Job Outlook

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the job outlook for Chiropractors is expected to increase by 17% through 2024.
- Chiropractors emphasize healthy lifestyle so chiropractic care is appealing to many health-conscious people.
- Demand for care depends, at least in part, on the ability to pay. Thus coverage of services by health insurance is critical and many plans now cover such services though the extent of coverage varies.
- Approximately 58 percent of Chiropractors are self-employed in a solo practice.
- Others work in group practices, teach, conduct research, or work in hospitals and clinics.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics states the median salary was \$64,440 in 2015 but many Chiropractors in private practice make around \$90,000.

Preparation

- Observe a chiropractor to make sure this is the right field for you and that you truly understand what it means to be a Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine.
- Chiropractic schools will also want to see that you could handle a heavy course load while being active in extracurricular activities, providing community service, and gaining chiropractic experience.

Applying

- Application is made directly with the individual schools.
- Some schools, though not all, require an interview.
- Early application is recommended.

More Information

- [Association of Chiropractic Colleges](http://www.chirocolleges.org/) <http://www.chirocolleges.org/>
- [American Chiropractic Association](http://www.acatoday.org/) <http://www.acatoday.org/>
- [Council on Chiropractic Education](http://www.cce-usa.org/) <http://www.cce-usa.org/>

Programs

[Palmer College of Chiropractic](http://www.palmer.edu) Davenport, IA <http://www.palmer.edu>

[National University of Health Science](http://www.nuhs.edu/) Lombard, IL <http://www.nuhs.edu/>

Information for this career guide came from the above websites, [Explore Health Careers](http://www.explorehealthcareers.org) www.explorehealthcareers.org and the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/chiropractors.htm) <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/chiropractors.htm>