

- Podiatric physicians (or podiatrists) prevent, diagnose, and treat foot and ankle disorders, diseases, and injuries.
- Podiatrists are often the first to diagnose several systemic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease and are integral to the treatment of those diseases.
- Podiatrists use physical exams, x-rays, and laboratory tests to diagnose conditions; prescribe medications; order physical therapy; set fractures; and perform surgery.
- By helping patients with gait, balance, and pain issues, DPMs are often able to make walking much more efficient and comfortable for their patients.
- Podiatric physicians work in many settings including private and group practices, hospitals, extended care facilities, public health, Veterans Affairs hospitals, and the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Although most practice general care, some podiatrists specialize in sports medicine, pediatrics, dermatology, radiology, geriatrics, surgery, and diabetic foot care.
- When you consider that 26 bones make up the foot and think about how much time we are on our feet, it is no surprise that a medical specialty has developed to treat foot and lower leg problems.

Education & Licensure

- Requirements are the same as those for medical school and preparation for the MCAT is necessary.
- After completing the bachelor's degree, students attend a podiatric medical program for 4 years followed by a comprehensive 3 year podiatric medicine and surgery residency.
- A board exam is required for licensure.

Preparation

- Shadowing experience with podiatric physicians is strongly encouraged to ensure this is the right field for you and that you have an accurate understanding of the field.
- Podiatry schools are competitive largely because there are so few of them.
- Research experience is a plus.
- Leadership skills, extra-curricular and community activities, and demonstration of empathy are also needed.
- Prerequisite courses are fairly standard between programs. See chart below for information on requirements.
- All required courses must have a minimum grade of C.

Common Prerequisite Courses (required courses determined by each podiatric school but similar to this list)

Requirements	Purdue Equivalents (specific courses may vary by major)
General Biology with lab	BIOL 11000-11100 or BIOL 13100 & BIOL 23100 & 23200 (lab) or BIOL 23000 & upper level biology (including 2 hours of lab)
<i>Anatomy & Physiology (recommended for the MCAT)</i>	BIOL 20300-20400 (BIOL 30100-30200)
General Chemistry with lab	CHM 11500-11600 or CHM 12500-12600 or CHM 12300-12400 or CHM 13600 or CHM 12901 (CHM 11500 credit exam recommended along with CHM 12901)
Organic Chemistry with lab	CHM 25500-25600 or CHM 26100-26200 or CHM 26505-26605 or MCMP 20400-20500
Biochemistry	BCHM 30700 or BCHM 56100 or CHM 33900 or CHM 43300 or MCMP 20800 (CHM 33300, CHM 53300)
Physics with lab	PHYS 22000-22100 or PHYS 23300-23400 or PHYS 17200-27200 or PHYS 17200 & 24100* (may need 1 hr lab such as PHYS 25200) or ENGR 16100-16200*
English (if required usually need 2 semesters)	ENGL 10600 or ENGL 10800 or SCLA 10100*; plus another English course with strong writing component (either writing or literature)
Psychology (1 semester)	PSY 12000
Sociology (1 semester)	SOC 10000 or higher level sociology course (Anthropology is also acceptable)
Statistics (recommended)	A course in statistics is recommended
Pre-Med Planning Seminar (optional)	BIOL 39600 is a 0 credit 10 week class covering how to apply to medical school and other health professions programs

*Ask individual podiatry schools if they will accept these courses toward their requirements. ~~Courses~~ no longer offered.

Student Organization: Caduceus Club, American Medical Student Association

Program Information

- American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine [Accredited Podiatric Program list](https://www.aacpm.org/colleges/) <https://www.aacpm.org/colleges/>

Applying

- Application is made through a centralized application service, the AACPMAS.
- Take a national admission test. The MCAT (the Medical School Admissions Test) is the most commonly required. A few programs will accept the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) or the DAT (Dental Aptitude Test).
- Competitive applicants will have:
 - Strong academic performance including a grade point average of about a 3.3
 - Scores on the MCAT, GRE, or DAT that mirror national average or above
 - Leadership, teamwork, and communication skills
 - Undergraduate research experience
 - Volunteer and shadowing/observation experiences
 - Strong, positive letters of recommendation (mostly from science faculty and a podiatrist)
- Early application is recommended. The application opens the end of July and application is ideal by early September of the senior year (assuming a 4 year graduation timeline).

Fee Assistance

- Visit specific school websites to learn if fee assistance is available.
- [MCAT Fee Assistance](https://students-residents.aamc.org/fee-assistance-program/fee-assistance-program-fap) through the AAMC <https://students-residents.aamc.org/fee-assistance-program/fee-assistance-program-fap>
- [GRE Fee Reduction Program](https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/fees/reductions/) https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/fees/reductions/
- [Fee Waiver for the DAT](https://www.ada.org/education/testing/exams/dental-admission-test-dat) <https://www.ada.org/education/testing/exams/dental-admission-test-dat>

Employment Outlook

- According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/podiatrists.htm), median salaries for podiatrists in 2021 was \$145,840 (though industry statistics show a higher salary). <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/podiatrists.htm>
- Due to our increasingly active society and our growing elderly population, more people will be turning to podiatrists for care.
- New legislation for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs classifies podiatry as podiatric surgery which places these professionals at the same pay level as physicians.

Diversity Matters

The podiatry profession needs professionals who look just like you, and who share your life experiences. Race or ethnicity, LGBTQ+ identity, disability, age, geographic region, socioeconomic status, social and cultural identity, and nationality all add to a richer experience for all students in the podiatric school classroom, contribute to the podiatric profession, and ultimately lead to better outcomes for patients.

Programs in the Region

- [Des Moines University College of Podiatric Medicine](https://www.dmu.edu/cpms) Des Moines, IA <https://www.dmu.edu/cpms>
- [Scholl/Rosalind Franklin College of Podiatric Medicine](https://rosalindfranklin.edu/academics/dr-william-m-scholl-college-of-podiatric-medicine/) North Chicago, IL <https://rosalindfranklin.edu/academics/dr-william-m-scholl-college-of-podiatric-medicine/>
- [Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine](https://www.kent.edu/cpm) Independence, OH <https://www.kent.edu/cpm>

More Information

- [ExplorePodMed](https://aacpm.org/discover-podiatric-medicine/) <https://aacpm.org/discover-podiatric-medicine/>
- [Step Into Podiatry](https://www.stepintopodiatry.com/find-a-mentor/) <https://www.stepintopodiatry.com/find-a-mentor/>
- [American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine](https://aacpm.org/) (AAPM) <https://aacpm.org/>
- [American Podiatric Medical Association](https://www.apma.org/) <https://www.apma.org/>
- [AACPMAS](https://aacpmas.liasoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login) (application service) <https://aacpmas.liasoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>

Other Careers to Consider

Physician · Dentist · Optometrist · Chiropractor · Orthotics/Prosthetics · Physical Therapist

Preparing for your Giant Leap

purdue.edu/preprofessional