

Cardiologist

The heart doctor. Six years of residency after medical school, among the longest paths in medicine, and among the best paid.

TYPICAL PAY

\$550,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$350k to \$750k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

12 to 14 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospitals, cardiac catheterization labs, heart clinics, echo labs

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Top marks in biology, chemistry, math and English. You need a very high average for a science undergrad.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 3 to 4 years
 Any major works. Keep a GPA (grade point average) above 3.8, volunteer, do research. Write the MCAT (medical school admission test).
- 3 Medical school, the MD (doctor of medicine)** 3 to 4 years
 Acceptance rates are 5% to 15%. Classes, then clinical rotations.
- 4 Internal medicine residency** 3 years
 Matched through CaRMS (the residency matching service). Hospital wards, the ICU (intensive care unit) and clinics. In year 3 you apply to the subspecialty match.
- 5 Cardiology residency, then certification** 3 years
 Heart clinics, the catheterization lab, echo and rhythm labs. Pass the Royal College exams to become FRCPC (Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada) and register with your provincial College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Pros and cons

- + Among the highest incomes in Canadian medicine
- + Heart attacks are fixable, results are immediate and visible
- + Strong research and teaching options
- Fourteen years of training is longer than almost any other job
- Heart attack call is brutal and never stops
- High stakes: mistakes in the catheterization lab can be fatal

Good to know

The pacemaker is a Canadian invention

In 1950, Canadian engineer John Hopps built the first external cardiac pacemaker at the University of Toronto, working with heart surgeon Wilfred Bigelow. Millions of people now live with a descendant of it...

Second biggest killer in Canada

Heart disease is the second leading cause of death in Canada after cancer. Deaths from heart attacks have fallen sharply since the 1980s thanks to stents, clot-busting drugs and statins.

Optional boosts

Interventional cardiology. Electrophysiology. Advanced heart failure and transplant. Echocardiography or cardiac imaging.

Where these numbers come from

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

CIHI: A profile of physicians in Canada, 2024 (payments)

CIHI: National Physician Database, payments by specialty, 2023 to 2024 (data tables)

CaRMS: the residency match

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/cardiologist>



Scan for the full clicker