

Family Doctor

The longest path on this site, and one of the highest paid. Ten years, then a job for life.

TYPICAL PAY

\$240,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$150k to \$400k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

9 to 11 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

**Clinics, family health teams,
hospitals, rural practice**

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 to get into a pre-med undergrad.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 3 to 4 years
Any major works, but most take life sciences. Keep a GPA (grade point average) above 3.8, do research and volunteer. Write the MCAT (medical school admission test).
- 3 Medical school (MD, doctor of medicine)** 3 to 4 years
19 schools in Canada, the newest opening in 2026. Acceptance rates are 5 to 15%. Two years of classes, then two years of clinical rotations. McMaster and Calgary run 3-year programs.
- 4 Family medicine residency** 2 years
Matched through CaRMS (the national residency matching service). Paid, supervised practice in clinics and hospitals.
- 5 Licensing and certification** During and after residency
Pass the MCCQE Part 1 (the national medical exam) and the CCFP exam (family medicine certification), then register with your provincial College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Pros and cons

- + High income and near-total job security
- + Deep, long-term relationships with patients
- + Enormous flexibility in how and where you practise
- A decade of school and six figures of debt
- Admission is brutally competitive
- Unpaid administrative work is a growing burden

Good to know

Millions of Canadians have no family doctor

About 5.9 million adults in Canada have no regular family doctor, nurse practitioner or primary care team, according to the 2025 OurCare survey. Every province is trying to recruit, which is why the job security...

The MCAT (medical school admission test) is 7.5 hours long

Four sections covering biology, chemistry, physics, psychology and critical reasoning. Most people study for 3 to 6 months.

Optional boosts

Emergency medicine (CCFP-EM). Sports medicine, palliative care, addiction medicine. Obstetrics. Hospitalist work.

Where these numbers come from

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

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

Job Bank: Family physicians, wages (updated Nov 2025)

MCC (Medical Council of Canada): exam fees

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/family-doctor>



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