

Internal Medicine Doctor

The hospital doctor for adults with complicated problems, and the gateway to a dozen specialties. Four to five years of residency.

TYPICAL PAY

\$350,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$250k to \$450k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

10 to 13 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospital wards, intensive care, outpatient clinics, rural hospitals

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. Internal medicine is the biggest block.
- 4 Core internal medicine residency** 3 years
Matched through CaRMS (the residency matching service). Wards, the ICU (intensive care unit), emergency consults and clinics. In year 3 you choose: stay general, or apply to a subspecialty.
- 5 General internal medicine years, then certification** 1 to 2 years
One to two more years of broad training. Pass the Royal College exam to become FRCPC (Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada), then register with your provincial College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Pros and cons

- + You are the doctor other doctors ask for help
- + Keeps every subspecialty open for 3 years
- + Needed in every hospital, in every province
- Ward call is heavy: admissions at 3 a.m. for years
- Patients are old, sick and complicated, and many do not get better
- Paperwork and discharge planning eat hours

Optional boosts

Cardiology, gastroenterology, respirology. Nephrology, endocrinology, rheumatology. Hematology, medical oncology, infectious diseases. Critical care, geriatrics, palliative care.

Good to know

Osler was from Ontario

Sir William Osler, born in Bond Head, Ontario in 1849 and trained at McGill, is called the father of modern medicine. He invented the idea of teaching medicine at the bedside instead of in lecture halls.

The doctor's doctor

When a doctor gets sick with something complicated, they often ask an internist. The specialty exists to sort out patients whose problems do not fit one organ.

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/internal-medicine-doctor>



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