

Neurologist

The brain and nerve doctor who does not operate. Strokes, seizures, migraines, multiple sclerosis. Five years of residency and a shortage everywhere.

TYPICAL PAY

\$290,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$220k to \$420k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

11 to 13 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospitals, stroke units, outpatient clinics, academic centres

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. Neuroscience is popular but not required. Keep a GPA (grade point average) above 3.8, 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 including neurology.
- 4 Neurology residency** 5 years
Matched through CaRMS (the residency matching service). One year of internal medicine, then stroke, epilepsy, movement disorders, nerve and muscle disease, and the neuro ICU (intensive care unit).
- 5 Certification and licence** End of residency
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

- + Endless intellectual puzzles, the exam is a detective story
- + Stroke treatment has become one of the great success stories of medicine
- + Strong research and teaching options
- Many diseases can be managed but not cured
- Stroke call is intense and unpredictable
- Waitlists to see you can run 6 to 12 months

Optional boosts

Stroke neurology. Epilepsy. Movement disorders. Neuromuscular.

Good to know

The brain was mapped in Montreal

Wilder Penfield founded the Montreal Neurological Institute in 1934 and mapped the human brain by stimulating it in awake patients during surgery. His body map of the brain is still in every textbook.

Canada leads the world in MS (multiple sclerosis)

Canada has one of the highest rates of MS (multiple sclerosis) anywhere, with about 90,000 people living with it. Nobody is sure why, though low sunlight and vitamin D are suspects.

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/neurologist>



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