

Vascular Surgeon

The surgeon for arteries and veins outside the heart and brain: aneurysms, blocked leg arteries, stroke-prevention neck surgery. Five years of direct-entry residency and some of the longest hours in medic...

TYPICAL PAY

\$460,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$300k to \$700k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

11 to 15 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospital operating rooms, hybrid imaging suites, vascular clinics, tr...

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. Vascular electives and reference letters decide the match.
- 4 Vascular surgery residency** 5 years, or 5 plus 2
Direct entry from medical school through CaRMS (the residency matching service). The older route still exists too: 5 years of general surgery, then a 2-year vascular fellowship. Open operations, wire-and-stent repairs through the groin, ultrasound and imaging.
- 5 Royal College exam and licence** End of residency
Pass the Royal College exam to become FRCSC (Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada). Register with your provincial College of Physicians and Surgeons. Some add a fellowship in complex aortic work.

Pros and cons

- + One of the highest paid jobs in Canada
- + You save lives and limbs in the most literal way
- + Both open surgery and high-tech imaging work
- About 13 years of training, most of it underpaid
- Among the heaviest call schedules in medicine
- Your patients are often very sick; some die despite everything

Good to know

A burst aneurysm is a race

An aortic aneurysm is a bulge in the body's main artery. When it bursts, most people do not survive, and the ones who do are the ones who reach a vascular surgeon fast. Screening catches many before t...

Many repairs need no big cut

A generation ago, fixing an aneurysm meant opening the abdomen. Now many are repaired through small punctures in the groin, threading a stent up the artery while watching on X-ray. Patients can go home i...

Optional boosts

Endovascular repair. Complex aortic surgery. Limb salvage. Vein clinic work.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Vascular surgeon, wages (updated Nov 2025)
Canadian Society for Vascular Surgery
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
CIHI: A profile of physicians in Canada, 2024 (payments)

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/vascular-surgeon>



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