

Vascular Surgeon

Repair the arteries and veins that keep people alive. Among the longest training and highest pay in medicine.

TYPICAL PAY

\$414,010

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$78k to \$556k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

13 to 15 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospital operating rooms, vascular labs, clinics, catheterization suites

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Top grades in biology, chemistry, physics and math, aimed at a competitive pre-medical undergraduate place.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
Any major, plus the pre-medical science courses. High GPA, research, clinical hours, and the MCAT (Medical College Admission Test).
- 3 Medical school** 4 years
Two years of science then two of clinical rotations. Get into an operating room early and find a vascular mentor.
- 4 Residency, one of two routes** 5 to 7 years
Either an integrated vascular surgery residency of five years straight out of medical school, or five years of general surgery followed by a two year vascular fellowship.
- 5 Board certification** 1 to 3 years after training
The American Board of Surgery runs a vascular surgery qualifying examination and then a certifying examination. You have no more than seven academic years after training to finish both.

Pros and cons

- + Some of the highest pay in American medicine
- + You save limbs and lives in a way patients can see
- + Both open surgery and catheter work, so the job keeps changing
- Thirteen to fifteen years of training before you are finished
- Heavy night and weekend call, permanently
- Radiation exposure in the catheter suite and a lead apron all day

Optional boosts

Endovascular skills. Aortic surgery. Limb salvage and wound care. Academic practice.

Good to know

The specialty reinvented itself in one generation

Most aneurysm repairs used to mean opening the abdomen. Today a large share are done through a small puncture in the groin, and surgeons trained before that shift had to learn it mid-career.

The federal survey will not print the number

Wage surveys stop publishing above \$239,200 a year, so several surgical specialties show a blank where the median should be. That is why estimates for this job come from private physician surveys inste...

Where these numbers come from

O*NET OnLine: Surgeons, All Other (29-1249.00)
American Board of Surgery: getting certified in vascular surgery
Society for Vascular Surgery
Doximity: 2024 physician compensation report

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/vascular-surgeon>



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