



Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

Getting Into Medical School

AAMC Resources and Services for Pre-Med Students



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About the Association of American Medical Colleges

Founded in 1876 and based in Washington, D.C., the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) is a not-for-profit association representing all 141 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, including 51 Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and 90 academic and scientific societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC represents 128,000 faculty members, 83,000 medical students, and 110,000 resident physicians.

Through its many programs and services, the AAMC strengthens the world's most advanced medical care by supporting the entire spectrum of education, research, and patient care activities conducted by our member institutions. The AAMC and our members are dedicated to the communities we serve and steadfast in our desire to earn and keep the public's trust for the role we play in improving the nation's health.

Welcome to the AAMC—Your Trusted Resource for Official Guidance and Information for Pre-Med Students!

You are about to embark on the most exciting journey of your education and training, and you'll be making some of the most important decisions of your career.

At the AAMC, we're here to help you navigate the journey—from pre-med through residency and beyond—with reliable, trusted resources and services.

We hope that you find this booklet helpful in answering many of your questions about embarking on a career in medicine. We encourage you to visit our website to take advantage of the many resources we've created for you, including webinars, podcasts, inspiring stories, tools, and tips.

Also, be sure to connect with AAMC Pre-Med on social media to get the latest information and join us in discussions about pre-med topics.

We wish you the very best of success in a rewarding and fulfilling career in medicine!

AAMC Staff

aamc.org/students



AAMC Pre-Med



@AAMCPreMed



Aspiring Docs

The AAMC's Aspiring Docs website provides resources and inspiration to help you get started on your path to medicine.



There's a lot of planning and preparation leading up to applying to medical school—so start exploring the great information on Aspiring Docs right away.

You'll find fact sheets with a wealth of information on:

- Partnering with your advisor
- Deciding if a career in medicine is right for you
- Getting lab experience, shadowing a doctor, and finding summer programs
- Preparing to take the MCAT® exam
- Applying to medical school or M.D./Ph.D. programs
- Paying for medical school and creating a budget
- Experiencing an anatomy lab, seeing a patient for the first time, and other experiences shared by current medical students
- And much more

Plus, you'll be able to explore all of your medical career options and read Q&A interviews with medical students, residents, and physicians—some of whom took a nontraditional or unique path to medicine. Current medical students and residents will inspire you through personal stories about their journey to medical school.

And, finally, be sure to follow medical student bloggers through their experiences in med school on [AspiringDocsDiaries.org](https://www.aspiringdocsdiaries.org).

[aamc.org/aspiringdocs](https://www.aamc.org/aspiringdocs)

Medical School Admission Requirements

One of the most important decisions you'll make is where to go to medical school. Rely on accurate data from a trusted source.

The AAMC's Medical School Admission Requirements resources provide the most comprehensive, up-to-date information and data.

Start with *The Official Guide to Medical School Admissions: How to Prepare for and Apply to Medical School* (print or e-book) to learn about preparing for medical school in your undergraduate years, how to choose a medical school that's right for you, and much more.

Then, when you're ready to start researching medical schools, tap into the Medical School Admission Requirements for U.S. and Canadian Medical Schools website. It's the only comprehensive resource with accurate data that comes directly from the MCAT® program, AMCAS program, and medical school admission offices. With your one-year subscription, you'll be able to browse, search, sort, and compare individual M.D. and B.S./M.D. programs, and you'll always have the most current information.

aamc.org/msar

Summer Medical and Dental Education Program

The Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP) is a FREE (full tuition, housing, and meals) six-week academic enrichment summer program for qualified undergraduate freshmen and sophomores from:



- Racial and ethnic groups that historically have been underrepresented in medicine and dentistry—African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian
- Rural areas, economically disadvantaged areas, or groups that historically have received substandard health care (regardless of racial or ethnic background)

The summer program is hosted at 12 participating institutions across the country with 80 students at each site. SMDEP offers students a variety of academic and career experiences that will support their dental and medical school preparation:

- Academic enrichment in the basic sciences and quantitative topics
- Learning skills development—including study skills and methods of individual and group learning
- Clinical exposure through small-group clinical rotations and full-group clinician seminars. This is limited to 5 percent of program time for all sites
- Career development, including the exploration of medical and dental careers, other health professions, and an individualized education plan to identify other appropriate enrichment activities

All housing costs and most meals are covered by the program. Scholars are provided with a \$600 stipend, which typically is distributed midway and at the end of the program. Some program sites offer travel assistance awards. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provides a needs-based scholarship for travel to and from the program site.

If you aren't eligible for SMDEP, there are many other opportunities to gain experience, including pipeline and outreach programs and summer enrichment programs. Talk with your advisor, and go to aamc.org/aspiringdocs for more information.

smdep.org

 www.facebook.com/smdepalumni

SMDEP is a national program funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with direction and technical assistance provided by the Association of American Medical Colleges and the American Dental Education Association.

Medical Minority Applicant Registry

The Medical Minority Applicant Registry (MedMAR) is used by U.S. medical schools to identify U.S. applicants who self-identify as members of a racial or ethnic group historically underrepresented in medicine, or who are economically disadvantaged.



When you register for the MCAT exam, you'll get a chance to participate in the Medical Minority Applicant Registry. The registry was created to enhance admissions opportunities for U.S. students who are members of a racial or ethnic group historically underrepresented in medicine, or who are economically disadvantaged. The registry provides basic biographical information and MCAT exam scores to minority and admissions offices at AAMC-member medical schools, which may choose to send information to students.

aamc.org/medmar

Fee Assistance Program

The AAMC Fee Assistance Program assists those who, without financial assistance, would be unable to take the MCAT exam, and apply to medical schools that use the AMCAS application.

Fee Assistance Program benefits include reduced registration fees for the MCAT exam, a free copy of *The Official Guide to the MCAT Exam*, complimentary access to the Medical School Admission Requirements website, waiver of AMCAS fees, and more.

Be sure to check the Fee Assistance Program eligibility requirements before you pay MCAT registration fees, submit your AMCAS application, or purchase any AAMC products because fee assistance benefits are not retroactive.

aamc.org/fap

Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®)

The AAMC develops and administers the MCAT exam—a standardized test that has been used as part of the medical school admissions process for more than 85 years.

The New MCAT Exam: A Better Test for Tomorrow's Doctors

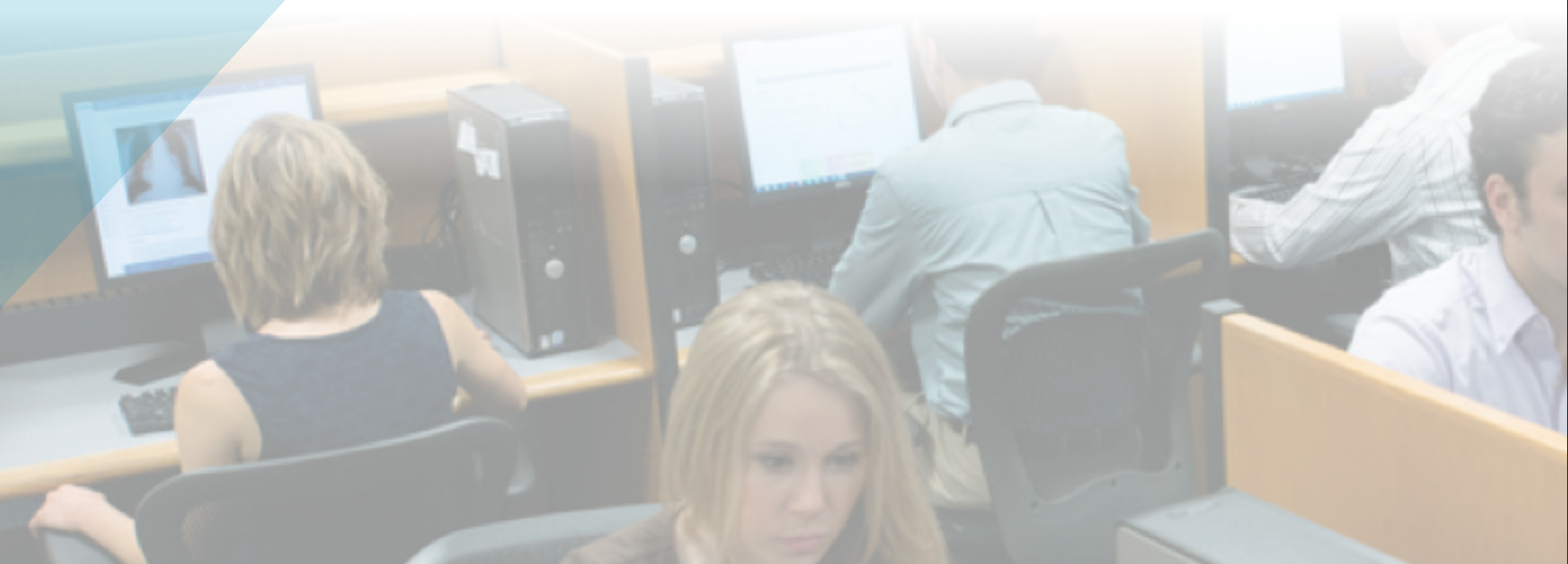
The new MCAT exam is designed to help better prepare tomorrow's doctors for the rapid changes in science and medical education. It reinforces the diversity of interests and preparation that medical school admissions committees are looking for in applicants.

Shifting the focus from testing what you know to testing how you apply what you learn, the MCAT exam asks you to use your knowledge of the natural, behavioral, and social sciences to solve problems that emphasize the value that medical schools place on analysis, evaluation, and reasoning skills.

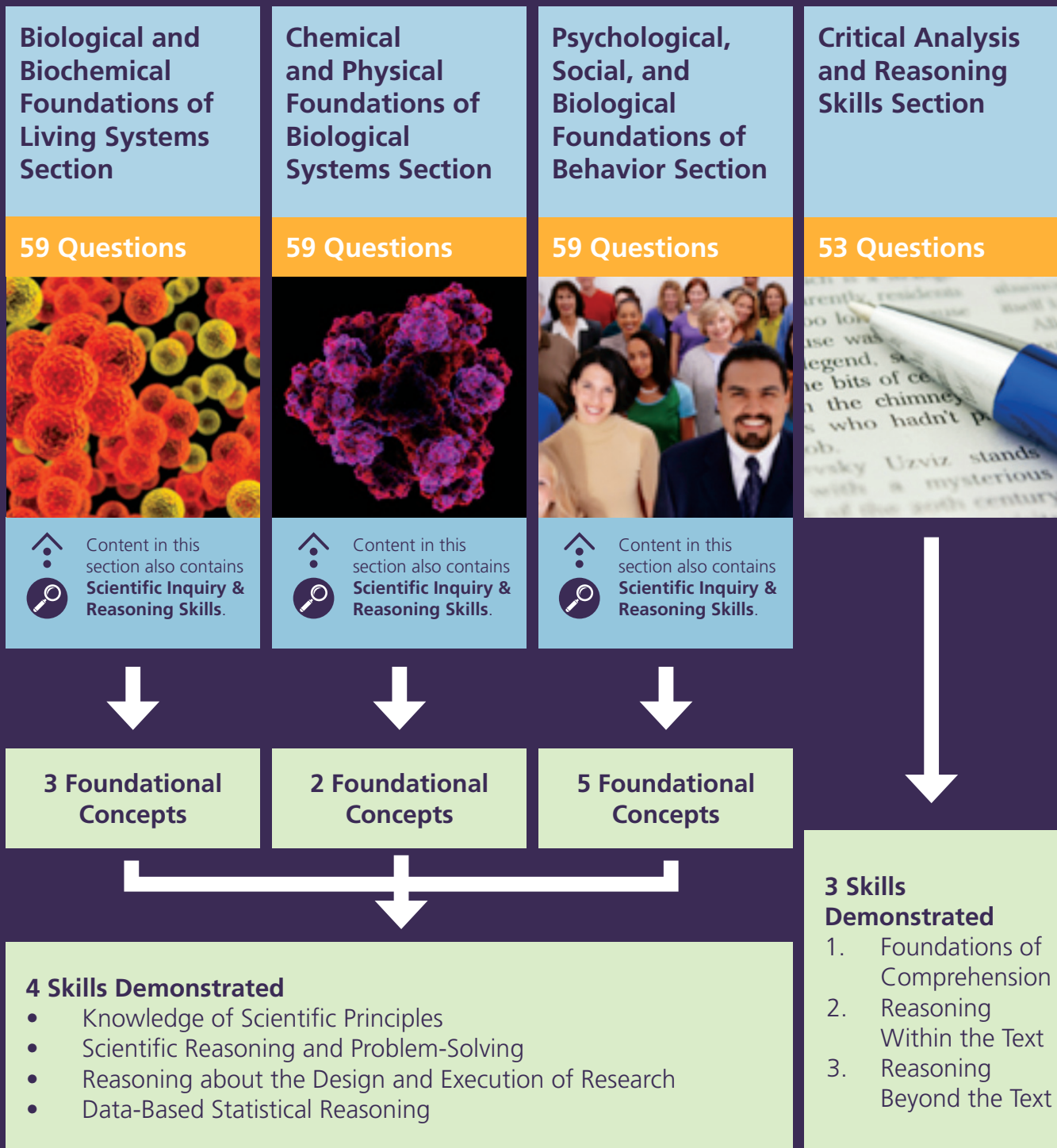
You'll find a variety of resources to help you prepare for the new exam, including MCAT practice products written by the developers of the exam, video and review questions in the Khan Academy MCAT collection, study resources in the Pre-health Collection within MedEdPORTAL'S iCollaborative, and more.

To learn more about the MCAT exam, including what's on the exam, test preparation, and scoring, visit aamc.org/mcat.

aamc.org/mcat



What's on the MCAT Exam?



Get all the details at aamc.org/mcat2015exam

A Pre-Med Student's Steps to Medical School



This infographic represents a basic timeline and steps toward medical school. Your advisor and AAMC resources can help guide you on your individual timeline and steps.



American Medical College Application Service® (AMCAS®)

Did you know that each pre-med student applies to an average of 15 medical schools?

The best part, however, is that when you use the AAMC's centralized application service, you only need to submit one primary application, regardless of the number of medical schools to which you apply.

AMCAS is available to individuals applying to first-year entering classes at participating U.S. medical schools. If you are applying to an M.D. or a combined M.D. program (e.g., M.D.-Ph.D.), you most likely will use the AMCAS service to complete and submit your application materials. If you are an advanced-standing or transfer applicant, you should contact the medical school directly for assistance.

AMCAS collects and delivers your verified application information, letters of evaluation, and MCAT exam scores to each school you choose. Each participating school is then responsible for making its own individual admissions decisions.

Most medical schools also administer a secondary application and host in-person interviews, which you may be invited to complete. Visit medical school websites for more information about their application and review processes.

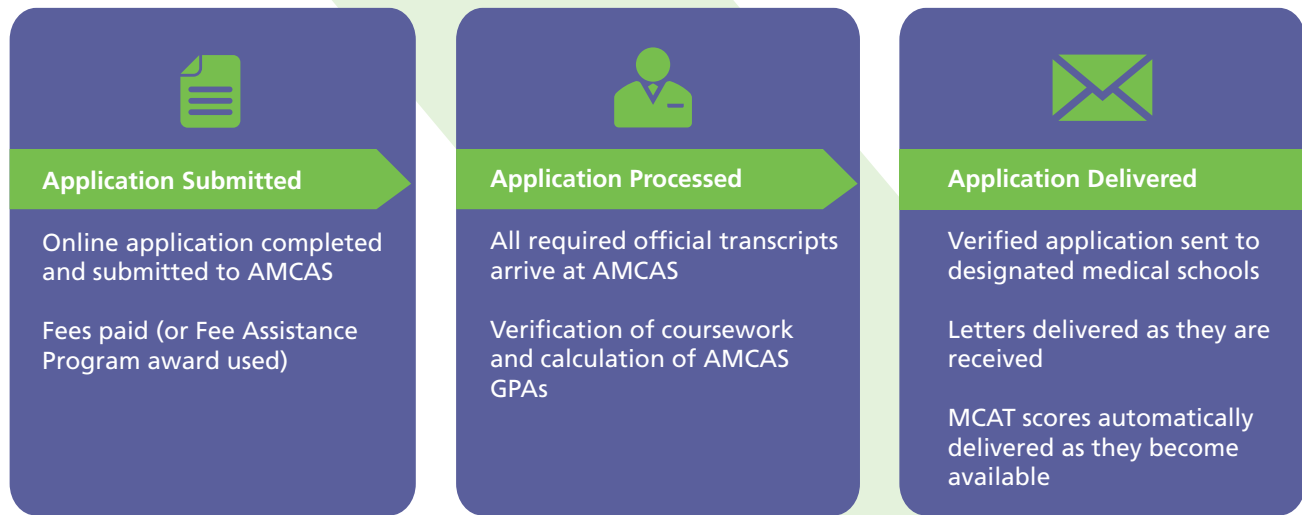
Contacting AMCAS

AMCAS representatives are available to answer your questions and assist you in completing your application from Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. (ET).

202.828.0600 | amcas@aamc.org

aamc.org/amcas

How Does AMCAS Work?



Preparing for AMCAS

- The AMCAS application opens in May of each year for applicants who plan to begin medical school in the following year. When you are ready to begin the application, you should start by visiting the AMCAS website (aamc.org/amcas). The documents and video tutorials available in the Resources section are updated for each application cycle with the most current information.
- AMCAS does not advise applicants on making decisions related to their application, so we encourage you to work with your school's advising office and to review the Medical School Admission Requirements.
- Using the online application, you will enter information about yourself and your background. You will have your official transcripts sent directly to AMCAS, where AMCAS staff will verify your coursework and normalize your GPA based on your school's grading scale. Along with your letters of evaluation, AMCAS then sends your verified application data to the medical schools to which you have chosen to apply.
- For regular applications, your official transcripts must be received by AMCAS within 14 calendar days after the application deadline.
- You can submit your AMCAS application before your official transcripts and letters of evaluation reach AMCAS.
- June-September is the peak application submission period, which means your application may take about six weeks, after all materials are received, to be processed.
- After your application is submitted, you may check its verification status using our automated system or on Twitter @amcasinfo.

View FAQs, video tutorials, download an instruction manual, and more at

aamc.org/amcas

Financial Information, Resources, Services, and Tools (FIRST)

Most medical students borrow at least a portion of the money they need to finance their education, and there are many options to repay.

Financial Information, Resources, Services, and Tools (FIRST) is the AAMC's financial aid and debt management program—and it's packed with FREE materials to help you make wise financial decisions. You will find:

- A library of financial aid fact sheets to help you with budgeting, understanding credit cards, debt management, and more
- Videos that provide answers to many financial aid-related questions
- The Medloans® Organizer and Calculator—a tool specifically designed for medical students at AAMC-member medical schools
- Free access to SALT™, a program that provides practical information and interactive lessons on money management, budgeting, credit, and more.

With FIRST, you will find the information you need to make educated borrowing decisions and develop sound debt management skills.

aamc.org/first



You CAN Afford Medical School

You want to be a doctor or physician scientist—that's a good career choice, both socially and financially. You probably know that medical school is expensive, but what you may not know is once you are admitted to medical school there are options for financing your education. The key is to find the solution that best meets your goals.

Things to Think About

There are many different ways you might choose to pay for your education, but student loans are a reality for most students. The keys to successful repayment are careful planning and budgeting, learning how to effectively manage your debt, and educating yourself on the various repayment options.

Have a Plan

One of your first stops on the road to creating a sound financial plan is AAMC's **FIRST** website. It contains extensive information on the cost of applying to medical school, various types of loans, repayment information, and other related topics. But even with these resources, the process may be a bit overwhelming at times. Your next step is identifying a financial aid advisor to assist you.

Get Good Advice

The importance of getting sound, accurate, and timely advice cannot be overstated. Whether it's your pre-health advisor, a current medical student or resident, or the admissions or financial aid officer where you are applying, there are people who can help you navigate this often complex process. Look at each school's financial aid office website to see what information is available. Bring your financial aid questions with you when you visit and on interviews, and stop by the financial aid office.

Learn About Repayment Options

There are various repayment plans available to repay your medical school loans. You have options when it comes to selecting the plan that works best for your financial situation. Another opportunity for repayment can be found with service repayment programs. These programs can help you repay your loans while practicing in a medically underserved area, or through public or military service. For more information, review the financial aid fact sheets at www.aamc.org/first/factsheets.

Final Thoughts

Stay true to your passion. Explore your options. Find a good advisor/mentor. If you can, enter medical school with little or no credit card debt and be aware of the status of your undergraduate loans. The less debt you begin school with, the less debt you will have at the end. Do what you can to not put application and interviewing costs (fees, travel, hotels, etc.) on credit cards. Frankly, there will be no room in your medical school budget to pay off that debt. Lastly, remember the financial aid office; they will be essential to you throughout medical school. They are there to help, so make sure you get the help you need.

aamc.org/first

My Path to Medical School

College Year 1		
✓		Date
	Talk with academic advisor about selecting fall semester courses	
	Appointment with a pre-health advisor	
	Add pre-health meetings to my calendar and get on email lists	
	Find opportunities to volunteer, shadow a doc, etc.	
	Explore options for careers in medicine on Aspiring Docs website	
	Apply to summer enrichment programs (if eligible)	
	Explore premedical coursework requirements and application policies in MSAR Online	
	Learn about financial aid and financing strategies through FIRST for Medical Education's website.	
Summer		
	Volunteer/work in medical field; internship, research, leadership	
	Participate in summer enrichment programs	
	Take summer courses as necessary or desired	
College Year 2		
	Check in with pre-health advisor	
	Add pre-health meetings to my calendar and double-check that I'm getting emails	
	Volunteer/work in medically related activities	
	Develop relationships with faculty, advisors, and mentors on campus (important for getting letters of recommendation later)	
	Apply for summer research/enrichment programs (if eligible)	
Summer		
	Volunteer/work in medical field; internship, research, leadership	
	Participate in summer enrichment programs	
	Take summer courses as necessary or desired	
	Check out the AMCAS website resources and review the process of applying (aamc.org/amcas)	
	Look at the process of applying and preparing for the MCAT® exam (aamc.org/mcat)	
	Look at the Fee Assistance Program (aamc.org/fap) eligibility requirements	
College Year 3		
	Pursue leadership opportunities in pre-health organizations on campus	
	Consider which faculty, advisors, and mentors to approach for letters of recommendation	
	Continue with volunteer/work in meaningful clinical experiences, and possibly take on a more substantial role	
	Meet with pre-health advisor to: Strategize my medical school application timeline, whether I want to take a gap year; discuss letters of recommendation; review medical education options; and discuss my schedule for completing premedical and other required coursework	
	Register for a spring date for the MCAT exam (if not taking a gap year)	
	Explore premedical coursework requirements and application policies in MSAR Online	
	Learn about financial aid and financing strategies through FIRST for Medical Education's web site.	
Summer		
	Continue with volunteer/work in meaningful clinical experiences, research, and leadership experiences	
	Complete AMCAS application; work on secondary applications	
	Request letters of recommendation from faculty, advisors, mentors	
College Year 4		
	Continue with volunteer/work in meaningful clinical/research experiences	
	Consult with pre-health advisor on application status, medical education options, etc	
	Complete supplementary application materials for schools I've applied to	
	Prepare for interviews and campus visits at medical schools	
	Receive acceptances and make a decision on which medical school to choose	
	Notify the medical schools I will not be attending by the deadline date given	
	Complete FAFSA and financial aid forms	
Summer		
	Purchase books and equipment, and make my living arrangements	
	Attend orientation programs and matriculate into medical school	



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