

Medical Assistant Job Description



What is a medical assistant?

Medical assistants perform the administrative and clinical tasks that keep the offices of licensed health practitioners running smoothly.

A *medical assistant job description* includes administrative and clinical tasks for health care professionals such as physicians, podiatrists, chiropractors, and others. Medical assistants must work under a physician's direct supervision when performing clinical duties delegated by the physician. They should not be confused with physician assistants. Administrative tasks can include updating and filing patient's medical records, filling out insurance forms, and arranging for hospital admissions and laboratory services.

Medical assistant duties may include taking medical histories and vital signs, explaining treatment procedures, and preparing patients for examinations. Administrative tasks can include updating and filing patient's medical records, filling out insurance forms, and arranging for hospital admissions and laboratory services. *Medical assistants* may also collect and prepare laboratory specimens and sometimes perform basic laboratory tests.

Medical assistants work in well-lighted, clean environments. They constantly interact with other people and may have to handle several responsibilities at once. Most full-time medical assistants work a regular 40-hour week. However, medical assistants may work part time, evenings, or weekends. Medical assistants have traditionally held jobs almost exclusively in ambulatory care centers, urgent care facilities, and clinics, but this is now changing. Medical assistants now find employment in both private and public hospitals, as well as inpatient and outpatient facilities.

About 62 percent worked in offices of physicians; 13 percent worked in public and private hospitals, including inpatient and outpatient facilities; and 11 percent worked in offices of other health practitioners, such as chiropractors and optometrists. Most of the remainder worked in other healthcare industries, such as outpatient care centers and nursing and residential care facilities.

Information on this page summarized from:

- (1) Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2014-15 Edition*, Medical Assistants, <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-assistants.htm>
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