

# Medical Occupations: A Quick Guide

In the UK most medical care is free. You register with a local **general practice doctor** or **GP**. GPs have knowledge of a broad range of illnesses. They treat patients of all ages.

You must see your GP first unless there is a medical emergency. For urgent treatment, go directly to the **Accident & Emergency (A & E)** department of your local hospital.

## Typical responsibilities of a GP include:

- patient consultations at home and within the surgery
- physical examinations
- diagnosis and treatment of illnesses/ailments
- minor surgery
- health education
- practice management and administration
- liaising with other healthcare professionals and/or hospitals

If you need to see a medical specialist, you will need a **referral** from a GP. There are usually **waiting lists**, though obviously urgent cases are given priority. You can also pay for faster treatment for **elective** or non urgent conditions.

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## Medical Specialists - often based in hospitals

**Allergist:** treats allergies

**Anaesthesiologist/anaesthetist:**  
provides pain prevention during surgery

**Cardiologist:** heart specialist

**Dentist:** mouth, teeth gums etc.

**Dermatologist:** skin specialist

**Gynaecologist:** treats female reproductive system, fertility etc.

**Midwife:** helps women deliver babies

**Neurologist:** brain specialist

**Occupational therapist -**

rehabilitation

**Oncologist:** cancer specialist

**Ophthalmologist:** deals with eye diseases.

**Paediatrician:** treats babies and children.

**Physiotherapist:** specialises in the body's movement

**Psychiatrist:** mental health specialist

**Radiologist:** specialises in imaging tests (x-ray, etc.)

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## Quick Check - True or False?

1. You don't need to pay to see a doctor in the UK
2. GPs are medical specialists.
3. You go on a waiting list to see a GP.
4. You cannot pay for any medical treatment in the UK.
5. Specialists only work in hospitals.
6. A paediatrician normally works with young hospital patients.

## Vocabulary

A pregnant woman is taken to hospital for an emergency caesarean operation. Which **specialists** might deal with the mother and child?