

Medical assistants complete administrative and clinical tasks in the offices of physicians, podiatrists, chiropractors, and other health practitioners. Their duties vary with the location, specialty, and size of the practice.

## DUTIES

Medical assistants and Protection Technicians typically do the following:

- Take patient history and measure vital signs
- Help the physician with patient examinations
- Give patient injections as directed by the physician
- Schedule patient appointments
- Prepare blood for laboratory tests

Electronic health records (EHRs) are changing medical assistants' jobs. More and more physicians are adopting EHRs, moving all their patient information online. Assistants need to learn the EHR software that their office uses.

Medical assistants take and record patients' personal information. They must be able to keep that information confidential and discuss it only with other medical personnel who are involved in treating the patient. Medical assistants should not be confused with physician assistants, who examine, diagnose, and treat patients under a physician's supervision.

For more information, see the profile on [physician assistants](#).

In larger practices or hospitals, medical assistants may specialize in either administrative or clinical work.

- **Administrative medical assistants** often fill out insurance forms or code patients' medical information. Some assistants buy and store supplies and equipment for the office.
- **Clinical medical assistants** have different duties, depending on the state where they work. They may do basic laboratory tests, dispose of contaminated supplies, and sterilize medical instruments. They might have additional responsibilities, such as instructing patients about medication or special diets, preparing patients for x rays, removing stitches, drawing blood, or changing dressings. Some medical assistants specialize in a specific type of medical office.
- **Ophthalmic medical assistants and optometric assistants** help ophthalmologists and optometrists, respectively, provide eye care. They show patients how to insert, remove, and care for contact



## SALARY INFORMATION

Location	2018				
	10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
California	\$26,820	\$31,410	\$37,640	\$47,650	\$59,130

\*Pay period based on yearly amount.

EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

Increasing growth rate estimated to be

# 29%

# 12,720

estimated annual job openings

lenses. Ophthalmic medical assistants also may help an ophthalmologist in surgery.

- **Podiatric medical assistants** work closely with podiatrists (foot doctors). They may make castings of feet, expose and develop x rays, and help podiatrists in surgery.

## RELATED OCCUPATIONS

- Radiation Therapists
- Registered Nurses ☀️
- Nuclear Medicine Technologists
- Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics ☀️
- Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses ☀️
- Nursing Assistants ☀️
- Orderlies ☀️
- Dental Assistants ☀️

