

# Dose of Knowledge



## CAREER PROFILE

### Pharmacy Technician<sup>1,2</sup>

#### Who are they?

Pharmacy technicians are healthcare workers who provide various services in retail, long-term care facilities, or hospital pharmacy settings.

In most states, technicians can compound or mix some medications and call physicians for prescription refill authorizations.

They work under the supervision of pharmacists, who must review prescriptions before they are given to patients. They implement the distribution of prescription medications and manage requirements for patient safety, pharmacy workflow, and inventory.

Pharmacy technicians working in hospitals and other medical facilities prepare a greater variety of medications, such as intravenous medications. They may make rounds in the hospital, giving medications to patients.

Pharmacy technicians take important steps to ensure all medication needs are met, while providing full compliance with all Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. They always maintain patient confidentiality while demonstrating the highest professional and ethical standards.

#### What do they do?

Pharmacy technicians typically:

- collect information needed to fill a prescription from customers or health professionals.
- measure amounts of medication for prescriptions.
- package and label prescriptions.
- organize inventory and alert pharmacists to any shortages of medications or supplies.
- accept payment for prescriptions and process insurance claims.
- enter customer or patient information, including any prescriptions taken, into a computer system.
- arrange for people who have questions about medications or health matters to speak with pharmacists.

Technicians may also need to operate automated dispensing equipment when filling prescription orders.

#### How do I become a pharmacy technician?

Pharmacy technicians usually need a high school diploma or equivalent, but previous experience in a pharmacy, retail, medical, or customer service setting is occasionally accepted. They typically learn their duties through on-the-job training.

Other pharmacy technicians enter the occupation after completing postsecondary education programs in pharmacy technology. Most programs award a certificate after one year or less, although some programs last longer and lead to an associate's degree.

## Job Outlook

- Employment of pharmacy technicians is projected to grow 6% from 2022 to 2032.
- About 44,900 openings are projected each year, on average.

## Salary Range

- The typical pay range for this role is: \$16–\$27 per hour.
- The median annual wage for pharmacy technicians was \$40,300 in May 2023.
- The lowest 10% earned less than \$32,720, and the highest 10% earned more than \$57,130.

## Education/Training

A high school diploma or equivalent is preferred.

There are special programs, usually offered by vocational schools or community colleges, that supply education and licensing options for pharmacy technicians.

These courses cover a variety of subjects, such as arithmetic used in pharmacies, recordkeeping, ways of dispensing medications, and pharmacy law and ethics.

Technicians also learn the names, uses, and doses of various medications. Most programs also include clinical experience opportunities, in which students gain hands-on experience in a pharmacy.

1 <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/pharmacy-technicians.htm>

2 <https://jobs.cvshealth.com>