

What is a D.O.?

A doctor of osteopathic medicine (D.O.) is a fully trained and licensed doctor who has attended and graduated from a U.S. osteopathic medical school.

How is a D.O. and an M.D. the same?

Their educational requirements are the same:

- both have a four year undergraduate degree;
- both have completed four years of basic medical education ;
- both have completed a residency program for their specialty;
- both have the same specialties (for example family practice, ob/gyn, internal medicine, orthopedic surgery, psychiatry, etc.);
- both are fully licensed to diagnose illness, perform surgery and prescribe medicine; and
- both may practice in fully accredited and licensed hospitals and medical centers.

How is a D.O. and an M.D. different?

- A D.O. receives more training during medical school in the muscular/skeletal system than an M.D. typically receives.
- A D.O. focuses on a “whole person” approach and preventive health care.
- A D.O. helps patients develop attitudes and lifestyles that do not just fight illness, but prevent it by giving special attention to how the body's nerves, muscles, bones and organs work together to influence health.
- Some D.O.s specialize in osteopathic manipulative treatment, using their hands to diagnose injury and illness, and encourage the body's natural ability to heal itself.