

What is a D.O.?

There are only two kinds of physicians qualified to be licensed for the unlimited practice of medicine in all 50 states: those holding the M.D. degree, and those who have earned the D.O. doctor of osteopathic medicine, degree.

How are D.O.'s and M.D.'s 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 (three to six years)
- 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
- Both practice in fully accredited and licensed hospitals and medical centers

How are D.O.'s and M.D.'s different?

- D.O.'s receive more training in the muscular/skeletal system than M.D.'s typically do.
- D.O.'s focus on a "whole person" approach and preventive health care.
- D.O.'s help their 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.