

ST. NICHOLAS HOSPITAL HEALTHSOURCE

What is a Doctor of Osteopathy

A Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) is a physician with medical training emphasizing the interrelationship between the physical body and health. Doctors of Osteopathy practice at all levels of care – prescribing medicines, performing surgery – and practice in all fields of medicine.

The field of Osteopathy is not new. In fact, Andrew Taylor Still, MD developed it in 1874. Dr. Still believed the body has an inherent ability to heal itself and stressed preventive medicine for improved health. This “wellness” philosophy includes proper diet and activity, as well as the normal function of bones, muscles, and nerves—basically, the traditional wellness that all medicine advocates.

DOs and MDs (Medical Doctor) have parallel training. Both complete four years of medical school, take national boards, and complete additional training in hospitals after medical school. One of the main differences between DOs and MDs is that osteopaths have additional training in Osteopathic Manipulative Therapy (OMT). OMT is a hands-on manual medicine used to manipulate the muscles and bones in the body. As an example, a DO uses OMT to stretch a muscle or place pressure on joints to improve movement. Using manipulation, in combination with modern medicine, the DO treats a wide variety of physical ailments.



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