

Q: Is Caltech a good school for premed students?

A: Caltech students are well prepared for medical school application, and have been successfully matriculating to competitive medical schools each year. Between 2000 and 2009, the medical schools most frequently chosen by Caltech students were the following:

- USC Keck School of Medicine
- UC San Diego School of Medicine
- UCLA School of Medicine
- Harvard Medical School
- Stanford University School of Medicine
- Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine
- Mount Sinai School of Medicine
- University of Illinois, Chicago, College of Medicine
- University of Texas, Southwestern School of Medicine
- Washington University (St. Louis) School of Medicine
- Yale University School of Medicine

Q: How well does Caltech prepare students for medical school?

A: Through its core curriculum, Caltech provides an excellent education in the basic sciences, social sciences and humanities for all undergraduate students regardless of their major. This rigorous training prepares students extremely well for the academic requirements set by medical schools. Caltech also provides ample opportunities for students to engage in scientific research both on and off campus, clinical and volunteer activities, sports, performing arts, and leadership experiences. In addition, each student receives individualized support through unlimited counseling and strategy sessions. As a group, premed students attend numerous topic-specific workshops which include, interviewing techniques, writing seminars, MCAT preparation, clinical, research, and volunteer activities. Caltech is an ideal environment that encourages active collaboration among peers. Of those who actively participate in these premed services and programs, most matriculate successfully.

Q: What are medical schools looking for in an applicant?

A: Although every school's admissions policies differ, there are several things that most medical schools look for in an applicant.

- Strong MCAT scores
- High GPA (Caltech applicants range between 3.0 and 4.0)
- Excellent letters of recommendation that address both academic and personal qualities
- In-depth exposure to clinical environment
- Strong commitment to community service
- Personal characteristics such as intellectual curiosity, emotional maturity, honesty, integrity, analytical and critical thinking skills, sensitivity to others, and excellent communication skills

Q: How well do Caltech premed students perform on MCAT?

A: Caltech students are very well prepared for this standardized test. Our students consistently score in the top quartile in all four sections of the MCAT, and most score above the 90th percentile in both physical and biological sciences, and do very well in the verbal reasoning sections.

Q: Do Caltech students have an opportunity to acquire clinical experience?

A: Caltech premed students have access to four outstanding clinical programs. At the Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena, each summer up to 20 Caltech premed students enroll in an intensive six-week rotation program during which the students have the opportunity to experience various medical practices such as neurosurgery, emergency medicine, pediatrics, pathology, cardiology, and radiology. Each participant documents over 200 hours of clinical experience each summer through this program.

Caltech also partners with the Children's Hospital Los Angeles for three weeks each summer, to provide individualized clinical and research opportunities. Each student is matched with mentors depending on his or her interest. Medical specialties include: immunology, cardiology, oncology, emergency medicine, general surgery, neurosurgery, plastic surgery, general pediatrics, prenatal and pediatric intensive care.

Students may also do clinical rotations for four weeks at the City of Hope, a leading cancer research and care institute a short distance from the Caltech campus. Students have ample opportunity to engage in cancer research through an optional six-week research program immediately following the clinical program.

At UCLA Medical Center, three to four Caltech students rotate in the internal medicine division for three weeks.

Within the Caltech campus, the Health Advocate program provides clinical, volunteer, and leadership experiences for participants through a year-long structured and extensive training program so that they are prepared to provide emergency support to their peers when necessary.

Q: Do Caltech students have ample opportunity to acquire volunteer experience?

A: Caltech students have plenty of opportunities to engage in volunteer activities through the Caltech Y, which offers various programs that serve the needs of the community. Premed students are able to choose programs that easily fit into their schedule. For more information, please contact the Caltech Y at (626) 395-6163 or visit <http://www.caltechy.org/>.

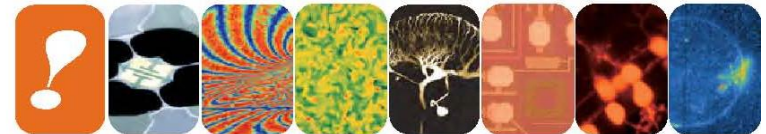
Q: What services are offered to students interested in applying to medical school?

- Individual counseling and strategy sessions
- Information on clinical and co-curricular activities
- Preparation of AMCAS (American Medical College Application Service) application and secondary applications
- Writing workshop series for developing a personal statement
- Preparation for MCAT
- Interviewing techniques
- Individualized, private mock interviews
- Networking opportunities with alumni Dissemination of information and news from medical organizations
- Other topic-specific workshops include: MD/PhD programs, alternative medical careers, volunteer and research opportunities, introductory seminar for freshmen, special seminars for sophomores, and Applying to Medical School workshop for upper-classmen and alumni
- Library resources: journals, books, reference materials

An ever-increasing number of Caltech students are pursuing medical careers. The Caltech Pre-Med Association (CPMA) was established in order to build a supportive community for pre-med students to help each other through their Caltech years. Through volunteer activities and social events, premed students come together as friends. Students are also encouraged to actively engage in campus life through student organizations and clubs, and because of its small size, Caltech is an ideal environment to acquire leadership experiences.

Angela Wood
Assistant Director & Premedical Advisor

Caltech Career Development Center
Center for Student Services
414 S. Holliston Avenue, 3rd floor (MC 359-86)
Pasadena, CA 91125
(626) 395-6361 phone | (626) 793-9853 fax
Email: auwood@caltech.edu
<http://www.career.caltech.edu>



Planning a Career In Medicine



**FAQs for Prospective
Caltech Students**