

What is the Difference between Allopathic and Osteopathic Medicine?

Are you considering a career in medicine? If the answer is yes, you may be asked if you prefer allopathic or osteopathic medicine. So what is the difference?

To put it simply there are two basic types of medical training: Allopathic and Osteopathic. Traditional medical schools offering graduates an MD degree, these are Allopathic schools. Medical schools offering a DO degree are Osteopathic.

The curriculums of both schools are relatively the same and the degrees are equivalent in the eyes of a state board, hospital, or residency program. In fact DO doctors are just as medically qualified as MDs and both are considered medical physicians. Both schools require an undergraduate degree and basic science coursework before applying for entrance into the program. They are both typically four years and prepare you to work as a fully licensed physician in a medical specialty.

The major difference in the two programs is that Osteopathic medicine focuses on a more holistic approach and believes in treating the patient as a whole including mind, body, and spirit. They have a concentrated effort on primary care and emphasize preventive care to their patients.

The truth is, Allopathic and Osteopathic programs have more similarities than differences. The only disadvantage you will find in selecting a DO is that very few people are familiar with Osteopathic medicine and therefore they don't generally realize it is the equivalent of an MD.