

What is a Nurse Practitioner?

A nurse practitioner (NP) is a licensed, autonomous clinician who focuses on managing people's health conditions and preventing diseases. All NP's have advanced clinical training beyond their initial professional registered nurse preparation and have either a master's degree or doctorate degree. Work experience as a nurse gives them a special approach in providing care, while their advanced studies as NP provide them the capability to carry on similar tasks as physicians.

What Can a Nurse Practitioner Do?

- Physical exam, treatment, and procedures
- Order and interpret laboratory & diagnostic tests
- Health risk evaluation
- Coordination of health care services
- Health education

Can a Nurse Practitioner Prescribe Medications?

Yes, they can prescribe medications; how they can prescribe medications is regulated by the state.

Nurse Practitioner Specialties

There are numerous specialties for nurse practitioners; the most popular specializations are listed below:

- Primary Care, Internal Medicine
- Acute Care
- Adult-Gerontology
- Family Medicine
- Women's Health
- Emergency Medicine

Educational Qualifications

To be recognized as an expert health care provider, a nurse practitioner must undergo rigorous national certification, periodic peer reviews, and clinical outcome evaluations.

A Nurse Practitioner's Unique Perspective

A nurse practitioner brings a unique perspective to a medical practice in that they place an importance on not just the care, but also the cure. They place a focus on the patient and provide health promotion and health education for their patients. This unique approach to healthcare guides patients in making smarter lifestyle choices, thus helping the patient to reduce their overall medical costs.