

PHARMACY TECHNICIAN



Summary of profession

Pharmacy Technicians work under the supervision of pharmacists to perform technical and clerical duties in the systematic operation of the pharmacy.

Working hours, patterns and environment

Pharmacy technicians work in hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, mail order pharmacies and pharmaceutical companies. Many also work in large retail settings where they may greet and assist customers.

Education and Skills

Achievement of 'O' levels opens the way to a pharmacy technology program. These teach the knowledge and skills needed to prepare, distribute, label and package drugs and to keep records. Formalized educational programs range from an eight-month certificate program to a two-year associate degree, which is usually obtained through a community college. Since pharmacy technicians deal with controlled substances, they must submit to a background check.

Job and Growth Opportunities

Pharmacy technicians have opportunities to advance into supervisory positions. It may take several years to be promoted into higher level management positions, but they do exist.