

Pharmacy Technician

Overview

A pharmacy technician works with the pharmacist for preparation of drugs, provides customer service and answers to the customer in the store or over phone, manages the inventory, updates and follow-up patient files with medicine information, and manages insurance claims and other billings.

This job requires both clerical skills, customer service, and certain pharmaceutical knowledge and technical skills. A pharmacy technician needs understand doctor's prescription, calculate the dosages, preparation of compound drugs, communication between doctors, pharmacists, and patients often over phones, and explaining the medicinal products to the patients/customers. They basically mix and prepare ointments, creams. lotions, make pills/tablets or suspensions from powdered drug, and other medications under the supervision of pharmacists.

Difference between pharmacy technician and assistant:

Unlike assistants, pharmacy technicians have an authority of signing on new prescriptions and refills.

Pharmacy technicians need to be certified by respective provincial college of pharmacists (e.g., Alberta College of Pharmacists, Ontario College of Pharmacists, etc.) following exam. In contrast, pharmacy assistants do not need any certification, usually a certificate/diploma program is sufficient.

The length of the pharmacy assistant programs (~6 months) are shorter than pharmacy technician ones (~1 year)

NOC Code	Other medical technologists and technicians (except dental health) (3219)			
Alias Job Titles	Pharmacy technical assistant; Pharmacy technician			
Qualifications Required	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successful completion of a structured practical training program for pharmacy technicians, and 2. Successful completion of examinations approved by the council 			
Salary Range	Average hourly	Range hourly	Average yearly	Range yearly
	\$28.70	\$16.15 - \$37.38	\$55,965	\$31,486 - \$72,891

Years' Experience Required	350 hours or completion of a 2-month practicum
Job Demand	<p>Low</p> <p>Employment outlook is good to fair in most provinces. More information are available here.</p>
Growth Opportunity	Depending on the size and nature of the organization, experienced pharmacy technicians may advance to supervisory positions.
Training Options (if available)	Programs for pharmacy technicians are available at Bow Valley College , Robertson College , or NorQuest College
Personal Qualities	Communication skills; ability to work independently; flexibility; interpersonal skills
Notes/Other Information	<p>Pharmacy Technicians find employment in hospitals, community, retail, medical clinics, and long-term care pharmacy practice settings</p> <p>Most positions are part-time. Full-time opportunities are limited</p> <p>Pharmacists are the employers/managers of pharmacy technician/assistants at large. Sometimes, a pharmacist may prefer pharmacy assistants over pharmacy technicians due to not being comfortable with pharmacy technician checking prescriptions.</p>
Steps towards capacity building to become competitive for this job	<p>To become competent for getting a job as a pharmacy technician usually following steps need to be followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-register with the provincial college of pharmacists • Complete an approved pharmacy technician program from any college • Obtain a Structured Practical Training as your province suggest (e.g., Alberta, Ontario, etc.) • Clear the provincial Jurisprudence Exam (e.g., Alberta, Ontario, etc.)



References and resources

- Clear the [Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada qualifying exam](#) (part 1 and 2) for pharmacy technicians
- Apply for the certificate of registration as a pharmacy technician

- [Alberta Learning Information Service](#)
- [Job Bank Canada](#)
- [National Occupation Classification ESDC](#)
- [Neuvoo](#)
- [Indeed](#)