

Typical Medical Assistant Duties



Medical assisting provides some of the most flexible career opportunities in health care. Build your career in the front office, completing a variety of administrative tasks. Or make your career on the clinical side, carrying out **medical assistant duties** that range from taking vital signs to explaining medical procedures to patients.

Read on to learn the top five medical assistant duties you can expect to perform in this highly rewarding profession.

1. Build Relationships with Patients

Being a good listener falls among the most vital medical assistant duties. Whether they see a patient once a year or several times a month, medical assistants offer an understanding ear for patients going through routine doctor's exams or struggling with chronic disease. They know when to talk, when to listen and how to match a patient's mood or personality in their responses.

Because of the versatile nature of medical assistant duties, patients may encounter medical assistants at a number of points during their visit to a medical office, from scheduling to the exam room to the billing department. As such, medical assistants have many opportunities to build relationships with patients, which can positively influence a medical office's reputation.

2. Update Patient Medical Records

Typically, medical assistant duties involve keeping patient medical records current, from recording a patient's current weight and blood pressure to writing down a patient's answers from a pre-exam interview. Medical assistants might also be responsible for filing patient medical records and adding written

accounts from physicians or nurses based on the exam and any lab tests that were conducted.

3. Prepare Exam Rooms

On the clinical side of medical assistant duties, preparing exam rooms is a top priority. More than changing the paper on the exam room table, preparing exam rooms for patients requires a number of steps from disposing of contaminated supplies to sterilizing medical tools. Medical assistants might also restock medical tools and equipment, arrange exam room instruments and set up lab trays necessary for a patient's exam.

4. Manage Laboratory Tests and X-Rays

Medical assistant duties often involve arranging for laboratory services. Depending on their certification and employer, some medical assistants might collect and prepare lab specimens and perform basic lab tests. Further, many play a role in patient x-rays, as coordinators with the medical imaging team, in assisting patients in preparing for x-rays, or, in some cases, as the ones who expose and develop the x-rays.

5. Perform Routine Medical Tasks

Drawing blood, delivering injections, administering medications, removing sutures, changing dressings—clinical medical assistant duties can involve any or all of these tasks. In addition, physicians may task medical assistants with explaining medical procedures to patients and instructing patients on dietary issues, medications and other areas relevant to their specific health condition.

Medical Assistants Create Smooth Operations

Whether they greet patients at the front desk or comfort them during a painful test, medical assistants play a crucial role in making medical experiences go as smoothly as possible for patients.