

## CAREER CORNER

## Health Careers

### Public Health Specialist

Public health specialists help educate communities and organizations on how to reduce communicable diseases, occupational diseases, and foodborne illnesses. They also run wellness programs. Other responsibilities of a public health specialist include speaking to groups about disease prevention, monitoring disease trends, and attending professional meetings and conferences.

Most public health specialists need a master's degree to stay competitive in the field. By taking classes in biology, statistics, and economics, you can start acquiring the background and skills necessary for this career.



### Dietitian and Nutritionist

Dietitians and nutritionists promote healthful eating habits and suggest dietary changes in order to prevent and treat illness. They supervise the preparation of meals and coordinate programs to educate people about nutrition. Dietitians and nutritionists need at least a bachelor's degree. Some states require additional licenses or certifications. A variety of classes, including nutrition, biology, and biochemistry, will help you prepare for this field.

### Nurse

Nurses help treat ill or injured patients in a wide variety of settings. Although many nurses work in hospitals, many others work in clinics, private homes, and branches of the U.S. military. In the United States and many other countries, there is a rapidly growing demand for qualified nurses. More and more men are joining the nursing profession.

To legally practice nursing, an individual must become a registered nurse (RN). This process includes earning a two- or four-year college degree and then passing a licensing exam. To help prepare for a career in nursing, take classes in biology, psychology, algebra, and anatomy.



## CAREER SPOTLIGHT

### Allergist

**Pratibha Vakharia** always knew that she was destined to be a doctor. In high school, she took biology and other science classes. During her medical training, Dr. Vakharia worked with children who had allergies and asthma—an experience that led her to open a private practice as an allergist.

**Q. What are the things you love about your job?**

**A.** I get to treat patients of all ages. I treat everything from food allergies to drug reactions to insect stings. I love the process of finding the culprit behind an allergic reaction.

**Q. What surprised you the most about being an allergist?**

**A.** Many days, I'm treating things other than the allergy. An allergist develops a bond with the patients

where they can discuss other concerns, like stress or family issues.

**Q. What are some advantages of being an allergist?**

**A.** The field has a lot of variety and flexibility compared to surgical branches. It is easier to set up a balance between family and professional life.



### Activity

## Beyond the Classroom

**Writing Communicate with Health Professionals.** Visit or call a health professional in your school or community. This professional could be a school nurse, a family doctor, an employee of your local health department, or another expert. Ask this person to describe the top three concerns about the health of teens in your area. Ask for specific details and examples. Based on what you learn, create a brochure, poster, or blog to share

this information with your classmates. Feel free to do your own research on these health concerns, and add your findings to your report.

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