

The Road to *Podiatric Medicine*

Podiatric medicine is one of medicine's best-kept secrets: surgical training, real patient relationships, strong work-life balance, and the chance to literally save limbs. This is the path, stage by stage, from someone who walked it from Miami to Michigan.

Undergrad

Build the foundation (any major works, science helps)

- Complete pre-med prerequisites: biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, physics
- Shadow a DPM early; podiatry programs want to see you know the field
- Get research experience, any lab, any topic; it compounds later
- Find one mentor and actually keep in touch, one email per semester
- Serve your community; medicine is a service profession first

Apply

The application (AACPMAS + MCAT)

- Nine accredited colleges of podiatric medicine in the US; apply through AACPMAS
- Take the MCAT seriously, but know podiatry weighs the whole story
- Your personal statement should answer: why feet, why medicine, why you
- Ask your DPM shadowing mentor for a letter; it carries weight

4 years

Podiatric medical school (DPM degree)

- Years 1 and 2 mirror MD/DO coursework; years 3 and 4 are clinical
- Pass APMLE boards Part 1 and Part 2 on schedule
- Present a poster at a conference before you graduate
- Externships are month-long auditions: show up early, know your anatomy

3 years

Residency (PMSR/RRA)

- Every DPM completes a 3-year surgical residency, matched nationally
- Volume matters, but so does culture; ask residents how they are treated
- Compete: case competitions and quiz bowls build your name early
- Chief residency teaches leadership you will use forever

Optional

Fellowship and beyond

- Fellowships deepen a niche: wound care, reconstruction, research, sports
- Board certification (ABPM, ABFAS) opens academic and hospital doors
- Academic medicine, private practice, industry, or all three over a career
- Whatever you choose: lift as you climb, mentor the next student

“A career in medicine is measured by who you bring with you.” Reach out. Ask questions. The door is open.