



Meet Your Health Care Professional

Did you know that there are more than three million licensed and certified health care professionals who are not doctors of medicine (MDs) or doctors of osteopathy (DOs), who are well-prepared to provide the health care you need? Without the contributions of these professionals, many patients would not have access to important health care services and options, especially those in rural and medically underserved areas.

Take a moment to “meet” some of the health care professionals who can help you maintain your health and address problems you may have. Visit the links for further information.

Registered Nurses – With 3.1 million registered nurses (RNs) in the US, they represent the largest group of health care professionals. There are many RNs who are educated and licensed to provide specialized care. Through their extensive knowledge and experience, they advocate for and provide care for individuals, families and communities to maintain or restore health and wellness. RNs are essential providers within our health care system, and the services they offer are regulated at the state level. There are a number of professional membership organizations that can provide more information about the type of care provided by the RNs they represent:

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses	Nurses who provide care for patients who experience work related and environmental hazards.	www.aaohn.org
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care	Nurses who provide care for patients with HIV/AIDS.	www.nursesinaidscare.org
Association of periOperative Registered Nurses	Nurses who function as first assistant, scrub nurse or circulating nurse during surgery.	www.aorn.org

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses – Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) include certified registered nurse anesthetists, nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives and clinical nurse specialists. They have extensive knowledge and training in their fields, and complete graduate level education prior to obtaining license and certification in their field. Nurse practitioners and certified nurse-midwives help keep people healthy through preventive and primary care. Many also provide more specialized care as well, in diseases such as heart disease or cancer. Clinical nurse specialists help people manage many types of chronic mental and physical illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma. There are a number of organizations that can provide more information about APRNs:

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners	Nurse practitioners practicing in ambulatory, acute and long term care as primary and/or specialty care providers.	www.aanp.org
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists	Advanced practice nurses who are anesthesia specialists that provide anesthesia/analgesia services for surgery, labor and delivery, trauma stabilization, and acute and chronic pain management.	www.aana.com
American College of Nurse Practitioners	An advocacy organization that ensures nurse practitioners are able to provide accessible and high quality health care.	www.acnpweb.org
American College of Nurse-Midwives	Advanced practice nurses, certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives who provide independent management of women's health care, focusing particularly on common primary care issues, family planning and gynecologic needs of women, as well as pregnancy, childbirth, the postpartum period and care of the newborn.	www.midwife.org
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists	Clinical nurse specialists who improve patient outcomes and nursing care in a specialty area of care.	www.nacns.org
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health	Nurse practitioners who provide health care to women of all ages.	www.npwh.org
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners	Nurse practitioners who provide pediatric primary and acute care to children 0 to 21.	www.napnap.org
National Nursing Centers Consortium	An advocacy organization for nurse managed clinics.	www.nncc.us
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties	Professional organization promoting nurse practitioner education.	www.nonpf.com

For information about both RNs and APRNs, visit the websites below:

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Association of Colleges of Nursing	Organization for deans, faculty and students in baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs.	www.aacn.nche.edu
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses	Nurses who care for critically ill patients, often in Intensive Care Units (ICUs) and patients with complex medical conditions and needs.	www.aacn.org
American Nurses Association	A full-service, professional nursing organization representing and advancing the interests of the nation's 3.1 million registered nurses, and working to improve health care and access for all.	www.ana.org
American Psychiatric Nurses Association	Nurses who care for patients with psychiatric and mental health needs.	www.apna.org
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses	Nurses who help those with chronic illness or physical disability to work towards productive, independent lives.	www.rehabnurse.org
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses	Nurses who focus on women's health, reproductive health and caring for newborns.	www.awhonn.org
Emergency Nurses Association	Nurses who offer emergency care.	www.ena.org
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association	Nurses who prevent and relieve suffering, regardless of the stage of the disease.	www.hpna.org
National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses	Organization that offers specialty certification for hospice and palliative nurse care and administration.	www.nbchpn.org
National Council of State Boards of Nursing	Organization whose members are state nurse licensing boards.	www.ncsbn.org
National League for Nursing	Organization for nurse faculty and leaders in nursing education.	www.nln.org
Oncology Nursing Society	Nurses who provide care to patients with a diagnosis of cancer.	www.ons.org

Doctors of Chiropractic/Chiropractic Physicians – Chiropractic is a health care profession that focuses on disorders of the musculoskeletal system and the nervous system, and the effects of these disorders on general health. Chiropractic care is used most often to treat neuromusculoskeletal complaints, including but not limited to back pain, neck pain, pain in the joints of the arms or legs, and headaches. Doctors of Chiropractic – often referred to as chiropractors or chiropractic physicians – practice a drug-free, hands-on approach to health care that includes patient examination, diagnosis and

treatment. Doctors of Chiropractic have broad diagnostic skills and are also trained to recommend therapeutic and rehabilitative exercises, as well as to provide nutritional, dietary and lifestyle counseling. For further information, visit the links below.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Academy of Chiropractic Physicians	Providers who diagnose, treat and prevent musculoskeletal system disorders.	www.aacp.net
American Chiropractic Association	Providers who diagnose, treat and prevent musculoskeletal system disorders.	www.acatoday.org

Naturopathic Doctors – With an emphasis on a holistic approach to patient care, naturopathic doctors use diet, exercise, lifestyle changes and natural therapies to enhance the body’s ability to heal and fight disease. These health care professionals treat the whole person through modern medical science and traditional natural medical approaches. Visit the link below to learn more.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Association of Naturopathic Physicians	Providers who treat the whole person through modern medical science and traditional natural medical approaches.	www.naturopathic.org

Psychologists – Practicing psychologists are experts in behavioral health with the professional training and clinical skills to help people learn to cope more effectively with life issues and mental health problems. Psychologists receive an average of seven years of extensive education and training, hold doctoral degrees (either a PhD, PsyD or EdD), and are licensed to provide a number of services, including evaluations and psychotherapy. Psychologists are also trained to administer and interpret tests and assessments that can help diagnose a condition or tell more about the way a person thinks, feels, and behaves. Psychologists recognize that the mind and body are linked and many work in primary care settings often serving as members of multidisciplinary treatment teams to address the psychological aspects of physical illnesses and injuries, and taking the lead when a patient has a primary mental health or substance abuse diagnosis. Learn more through the website below.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Psychological Association	Experts in behavioral health with the professional training and clinical skills to help people learn to cope more effectively with life issues and mental health problems.	http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/about-psychologists.aspx

Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists – Patients with hearing or balance problems should consider consulting with an audiologist, a health care professional who identifies, diagnoses, treats and monitors hearing disorders. This includes the prevention of hearing loss and the rehabilitation of persons with hearing and balance disorders. Audiologists complete a post-graduate doctoral degree in audiology, and fulfill certification requirements at the national and state-level.

Working with the full range of human communication and its disorders, speech-language pathologists are highly skilled professionals who evaluate, diagnose and treat speech, language, and swallowing disorders in individuals of all ages, from infants through the elderly in a variety of settings including the client’s home, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, skilled nursing facilities, schools and early childhood centers.

For more information or to find a speech-language pathologist who can make a difference in your life, contact ASHA through the link below.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association	Providers who identify, diagnose, treat and monitor speech, language and hearing disorders.	www.asha.org

Physical Therapists – Physical therapists can help improve or restore mobility and function in people of all ages, including newborns, children, and elderly individuals. They provide care for people in a variety of settings -- including hospitals, private practices, outpatient clinics, home health agencies, schools, sports and fitness facilities, work settings, and nursing homes. Physical therapist can help people with arthritis, back pain, knee pain, osteoporosis, overuse injuries, shoulder pain, stroke, sprains, strains, fractures, and more. Patients who are looking for a possible alternative to surgery and/or pain medication should consider seeking the advice of a physical therapist. For more information about physical therapists, go to www.moveforwardpt.com. For information on the American Physical Therapy Association, visit the link below.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Physical Therapy Association	Providers who diagnose and treat problems with movement and function.	www.apta.org

Occupational Therapists – Occupational therapy helps people of all ages live life to its fullest by promoting health, by preventing problems and providing guidance for a healthy, productive life despite limitations caused by illness, injury, disability or other conditions. By looking at the whole picture—a client's psychological, physical, emotional and social make-up--by modifying environments, and by developing individual strategies, OT enables people to achieve their goals, focus on what matters most to them, and maintain or rebuild their independence. These health care professionals must pass a national examination and are often regulated at the state level. You can learn more information through the following link.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Occupational Therapy Association	Providers that enable people of all ages to live life to its fullest by helping them promote health, prevent—or live better with—injury, illness or disability by utilizing science-driven, evidence-based therapy strategies.	www.aota.org

Marriage and Family Therapists – Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs) are one of the five core mental health disciplines recognized by the Health Resources and Services Administration. MFTs are licensed to diagnose and/or treat mental and emotional disorders within the context of family systems, and do so primarily with individuals, but also serve couples and family units. They are required to obtain a minimum of a master's degree (with over 30% holding doctorates), plus must have at least two years of post-graduate clinical supervised experience. Unique to the profession, MFTs are the *only* mental health professionals required to receive specific training in family therapy and family systems. You can learn more through the link below.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy	Providers who diagnose and/or treat mental and emotional disorders within the context of family systems, and do so primarily with individuals, but also serve couples and family units.	www.aamft.org

Acupuncturists and Doctors of Oriental Medicine – Doctors of oriental medicine practice acupuncture and herbal medicine, and provide full primary care. Acupuncturists relieve pain, promote healing and improve well-being through stimulation of specific points on the body. These health care professionals are focused on overall health and wellness, and you can learn more through the below website.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American Association of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine	Providers who practice acupuncture and herbal medicine, and provide full primary care.	www.aaaonline.org

Doctors of Podiatric Medicine – Doctors of podiatric medicine graduate from accredited U.S. podiatric medical schools. Members of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS) have completed surgical residency programs of up to four years, and all Fellows of the College are certified by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery, the surgical board of foot and ankle surgeons recognized by the Joint Committee on the Recognition of Specialty Boards. Many have additional fellowship training in various aspects of foot, ankle, and lower extremity surgery. All ACFAS members are dedicated to surgical excellence in the treatment of foot, ankle, and lower extremity disorders. Learn more through the website below.

Organization Name	Description	Website
American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons	Professionals educated in the art and science of foot, ankle, and related lower extremity surgery. They seek to advance and improve the standards of education and surgical skill for podiatric surgeons.	www.acfas.org

Additional Resources – Visit the following links for further information about health care professional education and safe and accessible care.

Organization Name	Description	Website
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions	Organization committed to critical issues affecting allied health education.	www.asahp.org
Integrated Health Policy Consortium	Organization that works to ensure access to safe and integrated health care.	www.ihpc.info