

If you don't get into medical school

This page looks at what you can do if you're not successful in getting into medical school. Your options include taking a related degree or reapplying.

Getting into medical school is extremely competitive, so although you may be disappointed not to get a place, you won't be alone. You can also learn from the experience.



Take some time to think about why you weren't successful.

- didn't you get any offers after your initial UCAS application? If so, could you have spent more time on your personal statement? Could you have gained more experience? Were your predicted grades high enough?
- were you unsuccessful at the interview stage [1]? If so, could you have improved your interview technique? Were there specific questions that threw you?
- did you not do well enough in the admissions test [2]? If so, could you have practised more tests?
- did you miss out on the grades needed for your conditional offers? If so, were there special circumstances? Do you think you could do better if you resit?

Think about what your next steps should be. Seek advice from your teachers, careers advisers or the National Careers Service [3].

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Reapplying

If you didn't get the grades required but still feel that medicine is the career for you, you could resit some or all of your exams. It is essential to check your chosen medical school's policy on this. Some do not accept people who retake their exams and others ask for higher grades from people who retake them.

If you do resit some exams, you could combine this with a relevant part-time job [4] or voluntary work [5] so that you have more experience [6] to offer. When you reapply, make sure that your personal statement is even stronger. Taking an extra year will give you time to really decide whether medicine is right for you.

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Alternatives to medicine

In case you're not successful at getting into medical school, it's good to have an alternative plan, even at the application stage. Remember that you can use your fifth choice for any other degree that may interest you. There's a lot of choice and other courses can lead to very fulfilling careers.

Just a few examples of alternative courses you could consider are:

- one of the sciences, a specialist aspect of science or a joint degree
- a course in an allied health profession [7] eg physiotherapy [8], occupational therapy [9] or podiatry [10]
- nursing [11]
- pharmacy [12]
- dentistry [13]
- psychology, possibly with a view to working in the psychological therapies [14]
- healthcare science [15]

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Graduate entry to medical school

After you've graduated from a different degree, if you're still decided on a career in medicine, you could apply as a graduate. There are a number of routes for graduates, including four-year accelerated programmes.

See our information on the range of medical courses [16].

Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/applying-medical-school/if-you-don%E2%80%99t-get-medical-school>

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-be-doctor/applying-medical-school/interviews-medical-school> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-be-doctor/applying-medical-school/admissions-tests-medical>
- [3] <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-be-doctor/applying-medical-school/gaining-experience-medical/paid-work>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-be-doctor/applying-medical-school/gaining-experience-medical/volunteering> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-be-doctor/applying-medical-school/gaining-experience-medical>
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/physiotherapist>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/occupational-therapist>
- [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/chiroprapistpodiatrist>
- [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing> [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pharmacy> [13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/dentist>
- [14] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/psychological-therapies>
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- [16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-medicine/applying-medical-school/medical-school-courses>