

## Med Students It's Time for the MCAT

The Medical College Admission Test covers a broad range of science, verbal and writing components. Most medical schools take into consideration your college transcript and your MCAT score. This particular test is a good indication as to whether you would possess a solid foundation on which to build a successful medical career.

The MCAT is a test that lasts for 5.5 hours and consists of four sections: verbal reasoning, biological sciences, physical sciences and a writing sample. The verbal reasoning section consists of 40 questions and lasts for 60 minutes. The physical sciences section has a total of 52 questions and lasts for 70 minutes. The section for biological sciences consists of 52 questions and also takes 70 minutes to complete. The writing sample consists of 2 thirty-minute essays and lasts for 60 minutes.

How are the sections of the MCAT scored? Each section of the test has a numerical number assigned to it from 1 to 15. The highest score you can obtain is 15. The essays are scored a little differently. They have a letter assigned as a score from J to T, and T is the highest score you can obtain on your essay. Scores are received by first-class mail approximately sixty days after you take the test.

The physical sciences part of the Medical College Admission Test covers general chemistry and physics. The biological sciences part of the test covers organic chemistry and biology, with the heaviest part of the test being on the subject of biology.

The parts of the MCAT dealing with the sciences consist mostly of a series of passages, and each passage will have several questions of problems. The applicant will find that usually these passages involve unfamiliar situations. It seems that when pre-med students hear about this exam, they often become fearful.

How does one go about preparing for the MCAT? The answer in itself is quite simple. You must prepare for it by thinking and doing chemistry, physics and biology. Your concentration should be on the ideas underlying the knowledge. The whole purpose of this test is to measure your reasoning power, not the amount of knowledge you have. This test also measures your problem solving skills. In your studies, focus on how you would approach new problems by studying their solutions. This will help you solve future MCAT problems.

You should always keep an open mind and try to visualize that you read when you take the science sections of this test. If you try to memorize equations and facts, you will find that you will be frustrated when you take the MCAT. You should always approach science by looking for new themes, concepts and a new world view. You will find this approach very beneficial when it comes to taking this test.

The reading comprehension part of the MCAT is sixty minutes in length and is comprised of several passages each having about 500 words and containing several questions. The subject matter can be just about anything although some of the most common themes are history, science, politics and culture. Most people who take this test find that the passages seem difficult due to the fact that the material is dry and unfamiliar. Remember, it is your reading comprehension that is being tested and not your knowledge of a certain subject.

## About the Author

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