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**Education Today / Career Tomorrow**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY MANATEE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AND NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION

**Medical Assistant**

Medical assistants perform administrative and clinical tasks to keep the offices of physicians, podiatrists, chiropractors, and other health practitioners running smoothly.

In small practices, medical assistants do many different kinds of tasks, handling both administrative and clinical duties and reporting directly to an office manager, physician, or other health practitioner. Those in large practices specialize in a particular area, under

the supervision of department administrators.

Medical assistants update and file patients' medical records, fill out insurance forms, and arrange for hospital admissions and laboratory services. They also perform tasks less specific to medical settings, such as answering telephones, greeting patients, handling correspondence, scheduling appointments, and handling billing and bookkeeping.

For clinical medical assistants, duties include tasks such as taking medical histories and recording vital signs, explaining treatment procedures to patients, preparing patients for examinations, and assisting physicians during examinations.

Medical assistants collect and prepare laboratory specimens, dispose of contaminated supplies, and sterilize medical instruments.

Source:  
*The Occupational Outlook Handbook*

**Job Outlook**

Employment is projected to grow much faster than average, ranking medical assistants among the fastest growing occupations over the 2006-16 decade. Job opportunities should be excellent, particularly for those with formal training or experience, and certification.

As the health care industry expands because of technological advances in medicine and the growth and aging of the population, there will be an increased need for all health care workers.

**Money Matters**

**Career:** Medical Assistant

**Job Description:** Assists in examination and treatment of patients under the direction of a physician. Interviews patients, measures vital signs, and records information on patients' charts. May be required to draw and collect blood samples from patients and prepare specimens for laboratory analysis. Prepares treatment rooms for examination of patients.

**Salary:** \$23,500-\$32,600

For more information on how to start your career as a Medical Assistant, please contact:

Career Counselor Ronai Krugh  
 (941) 752-8100 ext. 242  
 krughr@manateeschools.net

**Education Needed**

Postsecondary medical assisting programs are offered in technical high schools, postsecondary vocational and technical schools, and community and junior colleges.

Courses cover anatomy, physiology, and medical terminology, as well as typing, transcription, recordkeeping, accounting, and insurance processing. Students learn laboratory techniques, clinical and diagnostic procedures, pharmaceutical principles, the administration of medications, and first aid. They study office practices, patient relations, medical law, and ethics. Programs often include an internship that provides practical experience in physicians' offices, hospitals, or other health care facilities.

Recommended high school courses include mathematics, health, biology, typing, bookkeeping, computers, and office skills. Volunteer experience in the health care field also is helpful. Medical assistants who are trained on the job usually spend their first few months attending training sessions.

Medical assistants deal with the public; therefore, they must be neat and well groomed and have a courteous, pleasant manner and they must be able to put patients at ease and explain physicians' instructions. They must respect the confidential nature of medical information.

*It's a Matter of Perspective*

"Medical Assisting is one of the top four fastest growing jobs in the Manatee/Sarasota area. Medical Assistants are in great demand because they are trained to do so many things in the office; it is a diversified career. The key aspect of our program is that the students gain hands-on experience. They practice live skills before they move on to an externship. Because of this, our students are held in very high regard." - Mary Caranfa

"I have always been interested in the medical field, but I wanted to advance my skills. I recently moved to Florida and I decided to attend MTI to become a Medical Assistant. The entire experience has been extremely interesting. I love dealing with patients and the instructors here are wonderful. After graduation, my goal is to become a Medical Assistant in an Internal Medicine office." - Julie Perdomo

**Teacher****Student**

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Main Campus  
 5603 34th Street West  
 (941) 751-7900



East Campus  
 5520 Lakewood Ranch Blvd.  
 (941) 752-8100



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 Provided by Newspaper in Education Christine Fritch,  
 (941) 748-0411 ext. 5464. E-mail: cfritch@bradenton.com  
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