**What is a pharmacy technician?**

A pharmacy technician performs important tasks to assist a pharmacist and serve pharmacy customers on a daily basis. A pharmacy technician's specific duties include taking inventory and ordering pharmacy supplies and medications, preparing and packaging medications for distribution to patients, interacting with customers to provide information, and answering patient questions. In addition, they communicate with doctors and other medical professionals when receiving prescriptions, fill insurance claims, and work under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist to complete whatever tasks are needed to help the pharmacy run efficiently.

**What does a pharmacy technician do?**

Pharmacy assistants and technicians order and stock medications; prepare and package medications for distribution to patients; and provide information to patients. Pharmacy technicians may perform many of the same duties as a pharmacist; however, all of their work must be checked by a pharmacist before medication can be dispensed to a patient.

**Where can pharmacy technicians work?**

Pharmacy technicians work in pharmacies. A pharmacy can be found in hospitals or healthcare facilities, drug and grocery stores or may be independent.

**What are some of the things that Pharmacy Technicians can't do inside the pharmacy?**

Pharmacy technicians can't perform certain jobs without the direct supervision of a licensed pharmacist. They aren't allowed to make judgement calls related to drug substitutions, interpret of prescriptions, or give instructions for preparing prescriptions. In most areas, they also can't take a chart order or a new prescription over the phone. They also can't dispense medication unless the order for the prescription has been verified by a pharmacist.

**How do I become a pharmacy technician?**

Pharmacy technicians must have a high school diploma or equivalent and understand how to perform the essential pharmacy duties. Candidates can complete a certificate or postsecondary program to gain the knowledge and skills they need. Some can even gain the training they need on the job; however, most states regulate pharmacy technicians and require that they pass an exam or complete a formal training program. To work as a pharmacy technician in most states, you will need to either be licensed or have a professional certificate.

**How long does it take to become a pharmacy technician?**

Many pharmacy technician programs can be completed in one year or less. This does not include the time you spend in an externship program or preparing and sitting for state licensure.

**How do I go from pharmacy technician to pharmacist?**

There are a few different ways to become a pharmacist after you gain experience working as a pharmacy technician. First, you will need to earn a bachelor's degree by earning an associate degree and rolling the credits into a 4-year program or enrolling directly into a pre-pharmacy bachelor's program. Second, after earning your bachelor's degree, you will need to take the Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT). Your scores on this standardized test, along with previous contributions to the pharmacy industry (such as volunteer hours, membership in pharmacy organizations, and of course, working as a pharmacy technician), will be used to determine your acceptance to pharmacy school. Once accepted, you will attend school for another 4-5 years before taking and passing your state pharmacy board and law exams. Finally, your hard work will pay off, and you will be granted a license to practice as a pharmacist in your state.

**How much do Pharmacy Technicians make?**

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Pharmacy Technicians earn a median wage of $16.87 per hour, equating to an annual salary of $35,100. Top earners in this position can make nearly $50,430 per year.

**Is there a demand for Pharmacy Technicians?**

Yes, Pharmacy Technicians are currently in demand. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the jobs for Pharmacy Technicians with certification will increase by 12 percent over the next several years which is faster than average. Increased demand for prescription medications will be the primary driver of the growth in number of positions. The BLS also suggests that people with formal training or certification will be more sought after to fill open positions.

**What is a PTCB certification?**

The Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) administers the Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam (PTCE), which determines an individual's pharmacy technician knowledge. When you pass the exam, you become certified and may use the designation "CPhT". You will need to sit for the exam after this course; certification is not included.

**What if my state requires more than what's offered in this course?**

Most states still offer employment prior to certification. This often comes with the stipulation that certification is acquired within a period of time (usually a year). During this period, you'll work as an unlicensed personnel member, clerk, or aide. On-the-job training or externships are a great way to obtain the number of hours required (many states require a minimum number of hours worked before you can be registered or certified with the board). If your goal is to work in a hospital pharmacy, finding that job while you're still a student will help you reach your employment requirements, along with the educational clinical requirements.

**How will the Pharmacy Externship be established?**

ed2go has established a national contract with Walgreens and CVS for Pharmacy Technician externships. Externships are based on availability and cannot be guaranteed. Our Externship coordinator will work with you to set up a retail pharmacy externship. If you are interested in applying for an externship in a local pharmacy that is not a Walgreens or CVS, you may discuss these other options with your externship coordinator. If you're currently working in a pharmacy setting, that will qualify. With the increase in confidentiality and privacy regulations and liability issues in relation to health information, externships could become difficult to accomplish.

**Can I qualify in the externship course if I have a criminal record?**

Unfortunately, you will not qualify for the externship course if you have a criminal record. While you can still enroll in the course, to participate in externships, students must not have a criminal record. Background checks will be conducted prior to the student's admittance into the externship course.

**Can I register for a course if I am an international student?**

Yes, ed2go courses are completely online. However, keep in mind that not all certifying bodies or industry-specific certifications are recognized internationally. Please review your country's regulations prior to enrolling in courses that prepare for certification.

The Pharmacy Lab Kit with the Manual is only available for students who reside in the U.S./Canada; alternative options are available for international students. Please contact us for additional information before enrolling.

**Does this course prepare for a certification?**

Yes, this course does prepare you for a certification. You will be prepared to sit for the National Certification exam titled Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam (PTCE), offered by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB).

**What kind of support will I receive?**

The course instructor will be available by email to answer any questions and provide feedback on your performance. Occasionally, your course may be supported by a team of industry experts. You will also receive support from the student advising team.

**What if I don't have enough time to complete my course within the time frame provided?**

The time allotted for course completion has been calculated based on the number of course hours. However, if you are unable to complete the course, contact the student advising team to see what options you may have available to work out a suitable completion date. Please note that an extension fee may be charged.

**What happens when I complete the course?**

Upon successfully completing the course and fulfilling the financial obligation, you'll be awarded a certificate of completion. In addition, you will receive an exam voucher to sit for the National Certification Exam which is the Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam (PTCE), offered by Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB).

**Am I guaranteed a job?**

This course will provide you with the skills you need to obtain an entry-level position in most cases. Potential students should always do research on the job market in their area before registering.