



What is a D.O.?

A D.O., or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, is a fully licensed physician and surgeon. Osteopathic physicians are found in every medical specialty in the nation and are trained in the same modern diagnostic and therapeutic tools that allopathic (M.D.) physicians use.

D.O.s also are trained to incorporate a holistic “body-mind-spirit” approach to healthcare and receive advanced training in manual medicine – also called osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT). OMT is used as an additional tool by D.O.s in the treatment of many disorders that affect the musculoskeletal system.

D.O.s partner with their patients to maintain health and prevent disease. Many of the primary care doctors in the United States are osteopathic physicians, and many fill the healthcare needs of under-served and rural areas.

Osteopathic medicine was founded in 1874 by Andrew Taylor Still, M.D., D.O. Dr. Still was dissatisfied with his contemporary medical practices and procedures, believing that medications and treatments of the time were ineffective.

After losing three children to spinal meningitis, Dr. Still studied the human body and attributes of good health in order to better understand disease and the body’s ability to fight illness. His resulting philosophy of medicine and health focused on the body’s innate ability to heal itself and prevent disease.

He also identified the musculoskeletal system as the key element of good health. Dr. Still believed a physician could use his hands to manipulate a patient’s musculoskeletal system into balance, allowing the body to heal itself and function more efficiently.

D.O.s today continue to promote overall wellness of their patients by taking into consideration the patient’s lifestyle and other factors that could influence overall health. In addition to prescribing medical treatment as necessary, D.O.s also help educate their patients to make healthier choices and take more responsibility for their personal wellness.

In addition to today’s medical treatments and technologies, D.O.s bring something extra to their medical practices. They are trained to be generalists first and specialists second. Thus, the majority of D.O.s – about 65 percent – practice in primary care. D.O.s also are trained to treat patients as a whole person, rather than treating just a collection of symptoms or an illness.

For additional information on the D.O. difference, visit:

The American Osteopathic Association
<http://www.osteopathic.org>

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
<http://www.aacom.org>

The American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
<http://www.acofp.org>

For more information about the UNT Health Science Center at Fort Worth,
contact the media office at 817-735-2446.

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University of North Texas Health Science Center

The University of North Texas Health Science Center comprises the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, the School of Public Health, and the School of Health Professions. Key research areas include aging and Alzheimer's disease, cancer and physical medicine. This year, the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine was named a top 50 medical school in primary care by *U.S. News & World Report* for the seventh consecutive year. "Fort Worth's medical school and more" contributes \$500 million to the Tarrant County and Texas economies annually. For more information, go to <http://www.hsc.unt.edu/>