

# Medical Assistant Specialties

**Unit:** General Skills

**Problem Area:** Career Exploration

**Lesson:** Medical Assistant Specialties

- **Student Learning Objective.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objective:

**Identify medical assistant specialty areas, and describe unique roles and responsibilities in each area.**

- **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

Alexandra, Patricia Young, and Deborah B. Proctor. *Kinn's The Medical Assistant: An Applied Learning Approach*, 10th ed. Saunders Elsevier, 2005.

Bonewit-West, Kathy, Sue Hunt, and Edith J. Applegate. *Today's Medical Assistant—Clinical and Administrative Procedures*. Elsevier Health Sciences, 2008.

Booth, Kathryn A., et al. *Clinical Procedures for Medical Assisting*, 3rd ed. McGraw Hill, 2009.

Booth, Kathryn A., et al. *Medical Assisting—Administrative and Clinical Procedures*, 3rd ed. McGraw Hill, 2009.

Fordney, Marilyn T., Linda L. French, and Joan J. Follis. *Administrative Medical Assisting*. Delmar Cengage, 2007.

Keir, Lucille, et al. *Medical Assisting: Administrative and Clinical Competencies*. Delmar Cengage, 2007.

Klieger, Diane M. *Saunders Essentials of Medical Assisting*, 2nd ed. W.B. Saunders, 2009.



## ■ **Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities**

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

## ■ **Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ cardiology
- ▶ dermatology
- ▶ endocrinology
- ▶ gastroenterology
- ▶ geriatrics
- ▶ gynecology
- ▶ neurology
- ▶ obstetrics
- ▶ ophthalmology
- ▶ orthopedics
- ▶ otorhinolaryngology
- ▶ pediatrics
- ▶ proctology
- ▶ pulmonology
- ▶ urology

## ■ **Interest Approach.** Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

*Ask students about areas of medicine and healthcare that are of particular interest to them. Then ask which body systems fascinated them the most when they studied anatomy and physiology. Briefly explain that medical specialty areas often focus on care and treatment of disorders affecting particular body systems. Next, tell the students that medical assistants may be needed to work with physicians in each of these specialty areas, and they have unique roles and responsibilities in each area.*

# CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

**Objective 1:** Identify medical assistant specialty areas, and describe unique roles and responsibilities in each area.

**Anticipated Problem:** What are some medical specialty areas? What unique roles and responsibilities do medical assistants have in these areas?

- I. In addition to typical duties (e.g., taking medical and drug histories or checking heights, weights, vital signs, and routine lab tests), medical assistants may have unique responsibilities when assisting physicians in specialty areas.
  - A. **Cardiology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disorders of the heart. Medical assistants may have to:
    1. Perform 12-lead EKG
    2. Apply a Holter monitor
    3. Assist with treadmill stress tests
  - B. **Dermatology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the skin. Medical assistants may have to:
    1. Obtain wound cultures
    2. Assist with skin testing
  - C. **Endocrinology** is the branch of medicine dealing with glands, hormones, and disorders of the endocrine system. Medical assistants may have to:
    1. Educate the patient and his or her family in the care and treatment of disorders or diseases (e.g., diabetes)
    2. Assist with testing procedures
  - D. **Gastroenterology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the stomach, intestines, and associated organs. **Proctology** is the branch of medicine dealing with disorders of the colon, rectum, and anus. Medical assistants may have to:
    1. Prepare and position patients for examinations
    2. Collect specimens
  - E. **Geriatrics** is the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders affecting the elderly or aged. Medical assistants may have to:
    1. Assist with testing for conditions common to the elderly (i.e., hearing tests and bone density tests)
    2. Educate patients on care and treatment procedures
    3. Educate patients and their family members on advance directives

- F. **Gynecology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the female reproductive system. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Educate patients on breast self-examination
  2. Set up for and assist the physician during pelvic exams and Pap Smears
- G. **Neurology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the nervous system. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Prepare the patient for an EEG
  2. Educate the patient on neurological testing procedures
- H. **Obstetrics** is the branch of medicine dealing with the care of women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the period after delivery. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Prepare the patient for an ultrasound
  2. Educate the patient on family planning
- I. **Ophthalmology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the eye. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Conduct the Snellen test for visual acuity
  2. Give the Ishihara color vision test
  3. Administer eye medications
- J. **Orthopedics** is the branch of medicine dealing with the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disorders of the muscles, bones, and joints. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Assist with range of motion evaluations, muscle strength evaluations, and casting procedures
  2. Apply slings
  3. Educate patients on safe crutch-walking
- K. **Otorhinolaryngology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the ears, nose, and throat. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Irrigate ears
  2. Administer ear drops
  3. Assist with hearing tests
- L. **Pediatrics** is the branch of medicine dealing with the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disorders affecting infants and children. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Take head circumference measurements
  2. Document measurements on growth charts
  3. Conduct vision screenings

- M. **Pulmonology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the respiratory system. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Administer TB skin tests
  2. Give Spirometric tests
  3. Take throat and sputum cultures
- N. **Urology** is the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the urinary tract and the urogenital system. Medical assistants may have to:
1. Catheterize patients for procedures or for specimen collection
  2. Educate male patients on testicular self-exams
  3. Collect specimens

**Teaching Strategy:** *Introduce terms related to the medical specialties, and have students look up definitions online. Have students brainstorm about the unique duties and responsibilities of the medical assistant in each specialty area. Alternately, give students index cards. Direct them to write each medical term on one side of an index card and to define the terms on the other side. Have students add an image, picture, or visual representation of each term to facilitate learning and recall of the terms. Use VM–A as a handout or transparency. Assign LS–A. Use VM–B to provide students with an example of how their index cards should look after completing LS–A.*

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at the ends of chapters in the textbook may also be used in the review/summary.
- **Application.** Use the included visual masters and lab sheet to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

## ■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

### **Part One: Matching**

1. i
2. j
3. g
4. a
5. e

6. h
7. c
8. f
9. b
10. d

### **Part Two: True/False**

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. T
6. T

### **Part Three: Short Answer**

1. Answers should include any two of the following: perform a 12-lead EKG; apply a Holter monitor; and assist with treadmill stress tests.
2. Answers should include any two of the following: a Snellen test for visual acuity; an Ishihara color vision test; or the administration of eye medications.
3. Answers should include any two of the following: administer TB skin tests; perform spirometric tests; or take throat and sputum cultures.

# Medical Assistant Specialties

## ► Part One: Matching

**Instructions:** Match the term with the correct definition.

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| a. proctology          | f. gynecology       |
| b. ophthalmology       | g. geriatrics       |
| c. orthopedics         | h. gastroenterology |
| d. otorhinolaryngology | i. pulmonology      |
| e. endocrinology       | j. obstetrics       |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the respiratory system
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The branch of medicine dealing with the care of women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the period after delivery
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders affecting the elderly or aged
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The branch of medicine dealing with disorders of the colon, rectum, and anus
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The branch of medicine dealing with glands, hormones, and disorders of the endocrine system
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The branch of medicine dealing with the stomach, intestines, and associated organs
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The branch of medicine dealing with the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disorders of the muscles, bones, and joints
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the female reproductive system
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the eye
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the ears, nose, and throat









# MEDICAL SPECIALTY AREAS

- ◆ **Cardiology**—a branch of medicine dealing with diseases and disorders of the heart
- ◆ **Dermatology**—a branch of medicine dealing with the skin
- ◆ **Endocrinology**—a branch of medicine dealing with glands, hormones, and disorders of the endocrine system
- ◆ **Gastroenterology**—a branch of medicine dealing with the stomach, intestines, and associated organs
- ◆ **Geriatrics**—a branch of medicine dealing with diseases and disorders affecting the elderly
- ◆ **Gynecology**—a branch of medicine dealing with the female reproductive system



- ◆ **Pulmonology**—a branch of medicine dealing with the respiratory system
- ◆ **Obstetrics**—a branch of medicine dealing with the care of women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the period after delivery
- ◆ **Ophthalmology**—a branch of medicine dealing with diseases and disorders of the eye
- ◆ **Orthopedics**—a branch of medicine dealing with diseases and disorders of muscles, bones, and joints
- ◆ **Otorhinolaryngology**—a branch of medicine dealing with diseases and disorders of the ears, nose, and throat
- ◆ **Neurology**—a branch of medicine dealing with the diseases and disorders of the nervous system
- ◆ **Pediatrics**—a branch of medicine dealing with diseases and disorders affecting infants and children
- ◆ **Proctology**—a branch of medicine dealing with disorders of the colon, rectum, and anus
- ◆ **Urology**—a branch of medicine dealing with diseases and disorders of the urinary tract and the urogenital system

# SAMPLE INDEX CARD

## Side 1

cardiology

## Side 2

The branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the heart



# Specialty Areas

## Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to reinforce the learning of medical terms associated with medical specialty areas.

## Objectives

1. Define terms related to medical specialty areas.
2. Associate a visual image with each medical term to facilitate learning and improve recall of the term and its definition.

## Materials

- ◆ an index card for each medical term
- ◆ computer access to clip art
- ◆ scissors
- ◆ tape or glue
- ◆ colored pencils
- ◆ VM-B

## Procedure

1. Write each medical term on one side of an index card.
2. On the other side of the index card, write a definition or explanation of the term.
3. Add a visual representation of the term. This can be a hand-drawn image or picture, a pasted clip art image or photo, or any other kind of visual representation of the term that will facilitate your learning and recall. (See VM-B for an example of a completed index card.)
4. Study the terms and their definitions.

