

## **Sample Medical School Interview Questions**

\* These are to get you thinking and reflecting about possible questions and answers – your interview may have very different questions.

1. What is the most important issue in healthcare to you right now? Discuss why you chose the issue and what needs to be done. Follow up question: Why don't you think X is most important? It affects 1000s of people!
2. What was your first experience that made you think about medicine?
3. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with an emergency. How did you react and what happened?
4. What does 'integrity' mean to you?
5. You are working with a man in a nursing home with a dementing illness who was asking to be vaccinated for the flu like the rest his peers. He'd been deemed incompetent and his wife, who is his executive decision-maker, tells us he does not want him to be vaccinated as she feels vaccinations are dangerous. Working with the geriatrician, what would you do?
6. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a conflict.
7. Tell me about yourself.
8. Dr. Blair recommends homeopathic medicines to his patients. There is no scientific evidence or widely accepted theory to suggest that homeopathic medicines work, and Dr. Blair doesn't believe them to. He recommends homeopathic medicine to people with mild and non-specific symptoms such as fatigue, headaches, and muscle aches, because he believes that it will do no harm, but will give them reassurance. Consider the ethical problems that Dr. Blair's behaviour might pose.
9. It has been said that the average intern has killed 1.5 patients. Would you be able to live with yourself and how would you handle this?
10. What would be your biggest fear in practicing medicine?
11. What would you do if medicine (as a career) was a complete impossibility?
12. What is the most negative thing about practicing medicine, in your mind?
13. What was the greatest challenge in your life so far? Follow up with: what was your greatest failure?
14. If we were to talk to your professors, what would they say about you?
15. What kind of medicine would you like to practice?
16. An 80 year old terminally ill man calls you up to tell you that he is going to take a lethal dose of painkillers. He has called you to tell you that you have been a great doctor and many thanks. How do you handle the situation?
17. We use a PBL (problem-based learning) approach here. Describe to me how you have achieved independent learning goals in the past?
18. What are the benefits to working in a team? Follow up: what are the disadvantages to working in a team? What are some challenges you faced and how did you deal with them?
19. What role do social determinants of health play in the practice of medicine?
20. Tell me about a time when you needed to advocate for someone or something.
21. When was the last time you showed sensitivity to the needs of others?

22. Adaptability and the ability to cope with stress are critical in the practice of medicine. Tell me about a time when you showed this ability.
23. You are shift supervisor at a fast food restaurant. The owner of the franchise has called you over. He is very upset as he has received 3 complaints in the last 30 minutes about the meat in the hamburgers being poorly cooked. There are two people (one male, one female both 15 years old) who have been cooking the meat for the past two hours. The female is the owner's daughter. How would you handle the situation?
24. Your best friend and partner are undergoing in vitro fertilization to have a baby. The technique allows for the selection of certain characteristics for the child by identifying them in the embryo before implantation. Your friend asks for advice on the characteristics they should select. How would you respond to your friend?
25. If the Prime Minister of Canada were to ask your advice on one change that could be applied to the healthcare system in Canada that would improve it enormously and have the greatest positive effect, what would it be?
26. A student is working in a clinic, where the office staff double-book aboriginal patients. The student asks their reasoning and the receptionist replies that "These people never show up for their appointments." How would you deal with this situation?
27. The Canadian Pediatric Association has recommended that circumcisions 'not be routinely performed'. They base this recommendation on their determination that 'the benefits have not been shown to clearly outweigh the risks and costs'. Doctors have no obligation to refer for, or provide, a circumcision, but many do, even when they are clearly not medically necessary. Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) no longer pays for unnecessary circumcisions. Discuss the ethical problems that exist in this case.

Resources to prepare for interviews:

- So, You Want to be a Doctor, eh? by Dr. Anne Berndt
- The Black Book on Canadian Medical Schools by Dr. Brett L. Ferdinand
- Doing Right by Philip C. Hébert
- The Medical School Interview by Dr. Jeremiah Fleenor
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario: Communications and Cultural Competence Program case scenarios: [www.img-ccc.ca/about.html](http://www.img-ccc.ca/about.html)
- McMaster Manual for Interviewers - <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/mdprog/interviews.html>
- YouTube videos - may not be accurate of your actual experience