



# TOP DOCTORS

Our ninth annual guide to the Valley's best physicians, featuring 272 doctors in 36 specialties. These are the doctors the doctors recommend.

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Finding the right physician isn't easy. We know how it works — unless you have a recommendation from a friend or relative, you're usually limited to the names in the Yellow Pages or the list of doctors on your health plan. It can be frustrating, especially with something as important as a doctor-patient relationship.

Ultimately, finding the right chemistry takes time, but you have to start somewhere, and that's where our ninth annual Top Doctors issue can help. "Top Docs" is based on the peer-review system, so the opinions come from the medical community — that is, doctors rate the doctors. Naturally, you should use this information in conjunction with other important sources, including medical boards, word-of-mouth, etc.

This year, we randomly surveyed 5,000 Valley doctors (M.D.s and D.O.s), who were asked to name the top physicians in 36 specialties. In the end, 272 doctors made the list — the top vote-getters in each specialty have been listed alphabetically.

Of course, there are hundreds of wonderful doctors who aren't on our list — men and women working quietly in small practices, or newcomers who haven't yet received widespread recognition. For the lucky patients of those physicians, our list isn't necessary, but if you're still searching for the right doctor, we hope our survey comes in handy.





## WHAT EXACTLY IS A D.O.?

**T**hey use their hands to examine the structure of your body and identify a cure for your illness, and they might prescribe yoga or another form of modern holistic medicine for the diagnosis. This is the work of an osteopathic physician, or D.O.

Like M.D.s, D.O.s are fully educated in the profession. Where they differ is in their approach. Both types of doctors can be qualified to perform surgery or prescribe medications, but D.O.s combine osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM) — a hands-on approach to structural diagnosis and manipulative therapy of the musculoskeletal system — with other traditional medical procedures.

The practice of osteopathic medicine has been around for more than a century, but osteopathic physicians are often thought of as breaking new ground. Approximately 1,400 licensed osteopathic physicians practice in Arizona, and more than half practice in primary care: family practice, pediatrics and internal medicine.

Several professional sports teams, including the Phoenix Suns, Phoenix Coyotes and Arizona Rattlers, use D.O.s as team doctors. Here's a comparative look at D.O.s and M.D.s:

### SIMILARITIES

- Both complete a four-year undergraduate degree with specific science courses.
- Both take the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) to enter either a medical school or an osteopathic medical school.
- Both complete a four-year basic medical education program and a post-graduate training program.
- Both must pass national medical board examinations and meet state licensure requirements to practice.

### DIFFERENCES

- D.O.s emphasize the "whole-person," reviewing the musculoskeletal system, nutrition and environmental factors for maintaining good health.
- D.O.s use osteopathic manipulative medicine in their treatments.
- A higher percentage of D.O.s work in rural and underserved areas.

— Brianna Niemann

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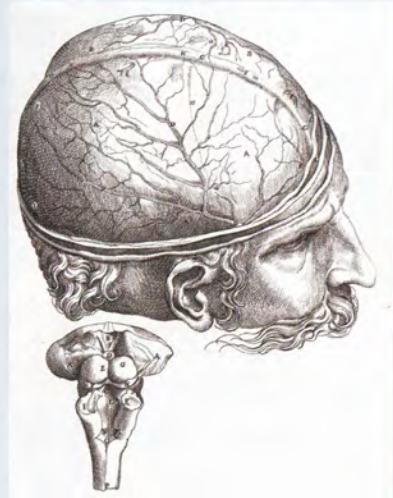
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