

Table 85. Doctors of medicine in primary care, by specialty: United States and outlying U.S. areas, selected years 1949–2015

[Data are based on reporting by physicians]

Specialty	1949 ¹	1960 ¹	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2014	2015
Number of doctors of medicine									
Total doctors of medicine ²	201,277	260,484	334,028	467,679	615,421	813,770	985,375	1,066,524	1,085,783
Active doctors of medicine ³	191,577	247,257	310,845	414,916	547,310	692,368	794,862	864,719	870,900
General primary care specialists	113,222	125,359	134,354	170,705	213,514	274,653	304,687	322,693	324,106
General practice/family medicine	95,980	88,023	57,948	60,049	70,480	86,312	94,746	99,137	99,586
Internal medicine	12,453	26,209	39,924	58,462	76,295	101,353	113,591	122,470	123,332
Obstetrics and gynecology	---	---	18,532	24,612	30,220	35,922	38,520	40,209	40,243
Pediatrics	4,789	11,127	17,950	27,582	36,519	51,066	57,830	60,877	60,945
Primary care subspecialists	---	---	3,161	16,642	30,911	52,294	76,122	92,353	94,273
Family medicine	---	---	---	---	---	483	1,445	2,137	2,274
Internal medicine	---	---	1,948	13,069	22,054	34,831	50,730	60,653	61,843
Obstetrics and gynecology	---	---	344	1,693	3,477	4,319	4,277	4,067	3,944
Pediatrics	---	---	869	1,880	5,380	12,661	19,670	25,496	26,212
Percent of active doctors of medicine									
General primary care specialists	59.1	50.7	43.2	41.1	39.0	39.7	38.3	37.3	37.2
General practice/family medicine	50.1	35.6	18.6	14.5	12.9	12.5	11.9	11.5	11.4
Internal medicine	6.5	10.6	12.8	14.1	13.9	14.6	14.3	14.2	14.2
Obstetrics and gynecology	---	---	6.0	5.9	5.5	5.2	4.8	4.6	4.6
Pediatrics	2.5	4.5	5.8	6.6	6.7	7.4	7.3	7.0	7.0
Primary care subspecialists	---	---	1.0	4.0	5.6	7.6	9.6	10.7	10.8
Family medicine	---	---	---	---	---	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3
Internal medicine	---	---	0.6	3.1	4.0	5.0	6.4	7.0	7.1
Obstetrics and gynecology	---	---	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
Pediatrics	---	---	0.3	0.5	1.0	1.8	2.5	2.9	3.0

--- Data not available.

¹Estimated by the Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration. Active doctors of medicine (MDs) include those with address unknown and primary specialty not classified.

²Data on federal and nonfederal MDs engaged in office- or hospital-based patient care and other professional activities.

³Starting with 1970 data, MDs who are inactive, have unknown address, or primary specialty not classified are excluded. See Appendix II, Physician.

NOTES: See Appendix II, Physician specialty. Data are as of December 31 except for 1990–1994 data, which are as of January 1, and 1949 data, which are as of midyear. Outlying areas include Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Pacific islands.

SOURCE: Health Manpower Source Book: Medical Specialists, USDHEW, 1962; American Medical Association (AMA). Distribution of physicians in the United States, 1970; Physician characteristics and distribution in the U.S., 1981, 1992, 2002–2003, and 2012 editions, Department of Physician Practice and Communications Information, Division of Survey and Data Resources, AMA and unpublished data for 2014 and 2015 (copyright 1971, 1982, 1992, 2003, 2012, 2016, and 2017: used with permission of AMA.). See Appendix I, American Medical Association (AMA) Physician Masterfile.