PROS AND CONS OF BEING A PHARMACIST

Advantages and Disadvantages of Becoming a Pharmacist

Are you exploring careers? Are you considering becoming a pharmacist? Are you gifted in science and do you want to work in the medical field? There are many pros and cons of working as a pharmacist. Here are a few of the advantages and disadvantages of becoming a pharmacist.

Con: It requires a lot of repetitive work.

If you can't stand doing similar tasks over and over, this might not be the career choice for you. It does require repetitive work. While the tasks do vary somewhat, each day is fairly similar. Unlike some jobs where each day is a new adventure, you can pretty much expect to do similar tasks every day as a pharmacist.

However, if you do want some variety, you can change positions throughout your career. For example, you could work five years at a supermarket pharmacy, then a few years at a hospital pharmacy (which has a different atmosphere), and then teach a few years at a pharmacy school, then work for a pharmaceutical company and so forth. You can also switch shifts a little, if that is what you would prefer.

However, it is crucial for pre-pharmacy students to know that it does involve a lot of redundancy. For example, you might have days where you dispense mostly cold and flu medicine, anti-depressants and birth control.

Pro: You'll earn a great salary.

Perhaps the biggest advantage of becoming a pharmacist is that you'll receive a great salary. According to payscale.com, the salary for pharmacists is between $81,000 and over $113,000 a year. That is significantly higher than most careers including nurses, teachers and social workers. You might even start out earning more than your high school principal.

Con: You might have to work weekends and/or evenings.

If you work for a grocery store pharmacy, you might have to work some weekends, and possibly nights. However, there are many pharmacy jobs that only require daytime shifts. You could even own your own pharmacy and set your own hours.

Pro: You will have great job security.

As long as there are people, there will always be a need for pharmacists. A career in pharmacy offers excellent job security. While there is a small chance you could get laid off (for example, if the chain supermarket closes some stores) you shouldn't have much problem finding another job. Pharmacists are in demand, and the demand is expected to increase. There are even many remote areas that offer an excellent sign-on bonus for pharmacists.

Con: You'll have to stand on your feet for long hours.

Pharmacists do have to stand on their feet a lot. While there are times you can sit down, or on a stool, it is a job that does require standing often. A great pair of comfortable shoes can help with this issue. Plus, you might be healthier in the long run.
**Pro: You’ll work in a safe environment.**

For the most part, pharmacists work in clean and safe environments. Because pharmacists usually work behind glass, you don’t have risk of catching diseases that nurses and doctors have. Also, on the job injuries for pharmacists are very rare.

**Con: You have to complete four years of post-graduate school and training.**

Another con of becoming a pharmacist is that it does require a lot of education. After completing a bachelor’s degree; you’ll need to attend four years of pharmacy school. The last two years usually require a lot of clinical work. Unless you have a wealthy benefactor, you’ll probably have to take out a lot of student loans. Some pharmacists will have over $100,000 in student loan debt when they graduate.

**Pro: It is not as stressful as most medical jobs.**

While being a pharmacist is a somewhat stressful job, it is less stressful that other medical professions. For example, it is usually less stressful than a career as an obstetrician or surgeon.

**Con: Pharmacists have to deal with rude customers.**

Occasionally pharmacists will have to interact with upset and rude customers. However, this usually doesn't happen very frequently. In fact, many pharmacists will not even see patients whom they are dispensing the medicine to.