Career Reflection

We were surprised to see that the average salary of an orthopedic surgeon ranges between $351,886-$578,956. We were also surprised that 4.3 percent of orthopedic surgeons are female. We thought this was astonishing because we didn’t think that there would be such an extremely low ratio. Some cons of being an orthopedic surgeon are the amount of medical school you have to go through, the field is very hard to get into, and the work schedule hours are irregular. However, some pros are the amount you get paid, orthopedic surgery is a stress reliever and it helps you manage stress by hammering bones, and you have contact with the patient. Someone could go and learn by shadowing a surgeon himself in a hospital. We all think orthopedic surgery could be a good career path, but it’s hard to go into.

References


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Career Project: Orthopedic Surgeon

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P.1
Background Information

An orthopedic surgeon is someone who focuses on the surgery of the musculoskeletal system (bones, joints, muscles, ligaments, tendons, and nerves). They usually work in hospitals because they perform surgery. These surgeons perform different surgeries, such as arthroscopy (with a camera), fusion (where they attach a metal rod to the bone), joint replacement (when a prosthetic bone or joint replaces the actual bone or joint), etc. Orthopedic surgeons fall into the therapeutic career pathway because they have interactions with the patients to treat them. We chose this health care career because we wanted to know more information about the details of orthopedic surgery and to see if orthopedic surgery could be a possible career path for us.

Job Responsibilities

Orthopedic surgeons work long, irregular hours. About one-third of all full-time surgeons work 60 hours or more a week. The hours depend on what you specialize in. Orthopedic surgeons treat both chronic and acute pain and injuries. Chronic conditions typically are ongoing problems that create persistent pain over time, such as in the case of arthritis and lower back pain. Some chronic conditions orthopedic surgeons treat originate at birth. Acute conditions are

Licenses and Certifications

Orthopedic surgeons must pass the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination to legally practice. This exam is usually while students are still involved in their residencies. After completing their residencies, orthopedic surgeons must also pass an exam by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery, a division of the American Board of Medical Specialties, in order to be certified in their area of surgery. Recertification is required every 7-10 years.

Required Education

To become an orthopedic surgeon, you must complete a 4 year bachelor’s degree program in either biology, pre-medicine, or a related field; afterwards you must also continue another 4 years of medical school. Followed by 4-5 years in residency at a hospital. You are required to have a medical degree. Some places you can get appropriate training is at UCSF (University of California San Francisco), Stanford, and UC Davis School of Medicine. Medical school tuition per year is $40,000.

Employment Stats

The average salary of an orthopedic surgeon ranges between $351,886-$578,956.

- There are approximately 25,500 orthopedic surgeons practicing in the United States, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgery.

- Orthopedics is currently dominated by males, it has the lowest percentage of women in a surgical specialty, with only 4.3 percent of board-certified orthopedic surgeons being female and 95.7 percent male.

- Orthopedics perform about 29 procedures per month and full-time workers perform 32 per month.

- New Hampshire, Vermont, Montana, Wyoming, and South Dakota, have the most Orthopedic surgeons in the U.S.
more likely to require prompt action by an orthopedic surgeon. These include injuries such as broken bones, pulled muscles, torn ligaments and ruptured disks.