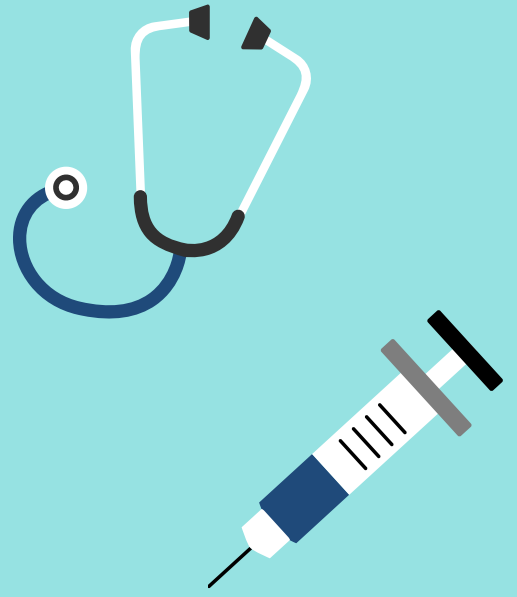
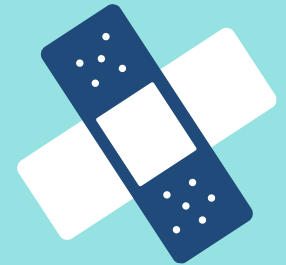


# HOW DO I BECOME A NURSE?



Helping people establish and maintain healthy lifestyles, providing compassionate care and saving lives...is that your passion? Then a career in nursing may be your calling! How do you get there? There are numerous levels of nursing, including:



## 1 CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT (CNA)

A CNA provides basic care services for patients, such as bathing, grooming, and feeding. As the name implies, CNAs also assist nurses with a variety of tasks, including checking vital signs, helping with medical equipment, and reporting on a patient's condition. Certified nursing assistants provide needed social and emotional support to patients, as well.

## 2 LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE (LPN)

A step up from a CNA, a Licensed Practical Nurse provides care for patients under the direction of physicians and registered nurses. They perform routine tasks such as giving injections, taking vital signs, performing diagnostic tests, dressing wounds, and administering medication.

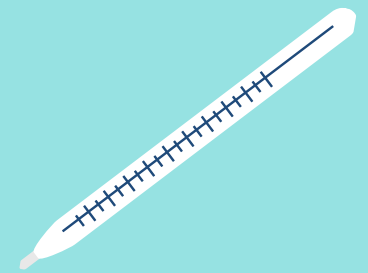


## 3 REGISTERED NURSE (RN)

The duties of a registered nurse vary widely depending on the environment or department in which s/he works, as well as the level of education or area of specialization. Most commonly, RNs are direct caretakers of patients and manage their daily activities, medications, medical assessments, care plans, charting, and scheduled procedures. RNs work closely with fellow healthcare staff and physicians to coordinate and provide care.



An associate degree in nursing (ADN) is the minimum requirement to become a registered nurse; however, a number of states and employers require a bachelor's degree (BSN). Depending on which degree you pursue, it will take 2-4 years to become an RN. Many who first earn their associate degree go on to earn their bachelor's degree in nursing. This is expected by many hospitals as a requirement to achieve and maintain what is called "magnet status."



Nurses who have completed their degree and clinical hours must pass the NCLEX-RN exam to become licensed. The exam can usually be taken about six weeks before graduation; however, each state nursing board has its own standards and may have additional requirements for becoming licensed. Licenses typically must be renewed every 1-4 years and require continuing education hours.



Beyond the BSN, nurses may choose to pursue a Master of Science in Nursing, and/or choose to pursue other nursing specialties. Achieving a MSN degree opens doors to becoming a Nurse Educator, Nurse Leader, etc.

## 4 ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSE (APRN)

For those wishing to advance their nursing career, becoming an advanced practice registered nurse will allow for such job opportunities as clinical nurse specialist (CNS), clinical nurse leader (CNL), nurse practitioner (NP), certified nurse midwife (CNM), or certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA).



## 5 DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP)

For those aspiring to become a Doctor of Nursing Practice, a 3-4-year post-graduate program will be required, along with completion of a capstone DNP project.