



# Reasons Medical Students Drop Out

Medical students drop out of medical school for any number of reasons. Behind each medical student who makes this difficult decision is a name, a face, and a personal story.



## 1 - Changes in life circumstances

Think about the last ten years of your life. Is anything the same today as it was ten years ago? Or even five years ago? Entering medical school doesn't stop life from happening, so you have to make adjustments along the way. Sometimes events in your life can negatively impact your ability to stay in medical school. Finances, the death or severe illness of a family member, or even falling in love are all things that can pull you away from staying in school.

## 2 - Academic capacity

Academic capacity does not necessarily refer to someone's academic or intellectual ability. It can mean anything from insufficient academic preparedness in high school and college to an inability to retain sufficient amounts of difficult and complicated material.

By passing [MCAT] medical schools know you have the capability needed to become a successful medical student. But this admissions test is not foolproof, nor does it measure your stamina to deal with stress, long periods of study and the other pressures of medical school.




## 3 - Working part-time to pay tuition fees

When entering medical school, you may have no financial concerns. But over time a previously worry-free financial condition may change into one fraught with anxiety. Worries about money and paying for tuition can impact your focus on classes and clinical work. Money concerns can create sleepless nights, poor nutrition, and even depression.



## 4 - Absenteeism and leave of absence

There is little doubt that failure to attend classes, lectures and scheduled labs will result in more time studying and less comprehension about the content. The further behind a student gets, the more overwhelmed a student becomes until catching up feels hopeless. That's when dropping out may occur.



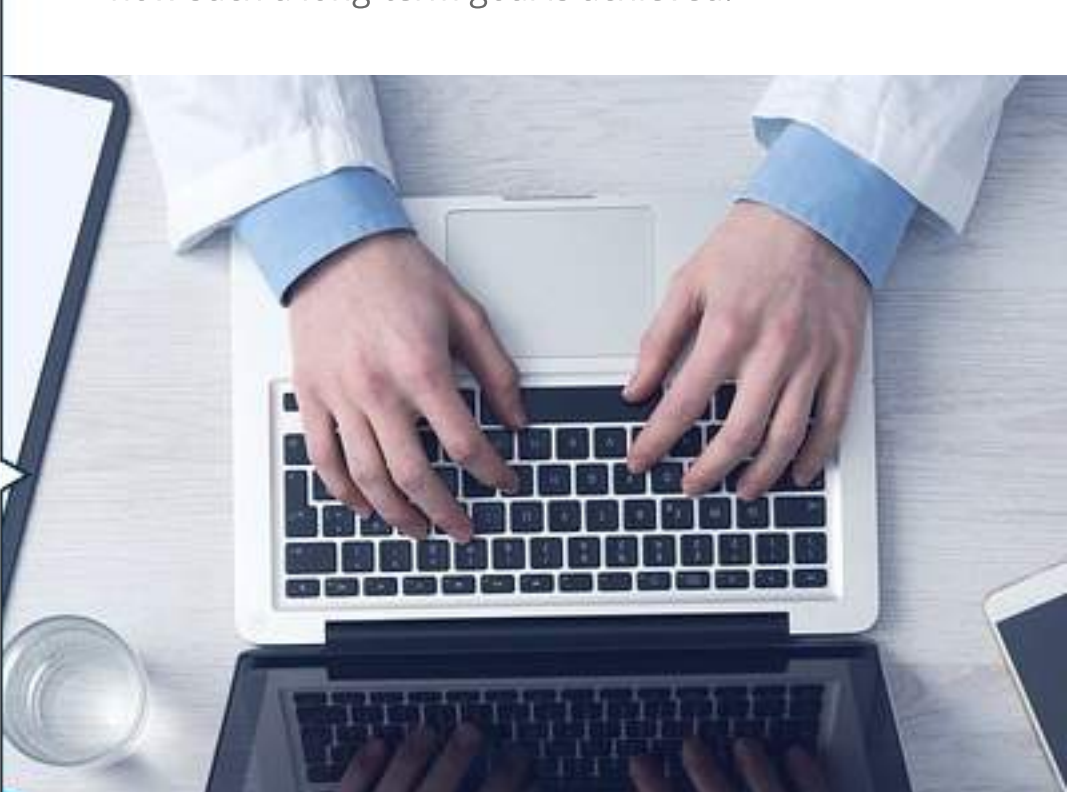
## 5 - False perception of their medical specialty before enrolling

Favorite medical television shows, pressure from friends or family to enter what is perceived as a lucrative profession, or even inspiration from books and articles can spur you to go into medicine. You may also imagine yourself being a surgeon or oncologist because you like a specific character on television who performs that kind of work. While all these subtleties can lead you to making good choices about a medical career, they can also lead you into making those decisions without knowing how such a long-term goal is achieved.




## 6 - Lack of discipline and self-organization

When graduating from high school, you may have a general idea that college is a place to have fun and make lifelong memories. While this is true, you need to be aware that in medical school you are often pushed to your limit. To do well as a medical school student, you need to dedicate plenty of time, focus, and energy to study.



## 7 - Behavioral related reasons: drug addiction, alcoholism, illegal activities, conviction

As unlikely as it seems, there is one final group of reasons that contribute to dropping out of medical school - chemical dependency, engaging in illegal activities to gain financing for studies, and potential legal issues, which may include one or more bouts with the criminal justice system.



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