Veterinarians in government contribute significantly to human health through rabies or tuberculosis, and forward the samples to laboratories. Although a lot of veterinarians practice in small animal and pet clinics, one doctor of animal health who has trained at a university for at least six years is necessary if you’re interested in a career in veterinary medicine. Veterinarians are far more than a profession – they are a group of people who work together to improve the health and well-being of animals and people. The single largest employment group in veterinary medicine is private practice. In the United States, the majority of veterinarians work in private practice settings.

Becoming a Veterinarian

To become employed as a veterinarian, a training is helpful to take optional courses offered by veterinary colleges related to the veterinary school. It is also recommended that they have some experience in a variety of practices.

Training and Education

Veterinarians who wish to practice in large animal practice need to be well versed in a variety of practices. In addition to their education, they must have experience in research and teaching.

Private Practice

Veterinarians in private practice usually spend at least 11,000 hours in learning about animal health care. They may practice in a variety of settings, including clinics, hospitals, and research institutions. Some veterinarians also work as consultants to animal owners, providing diagnostic services and developing new therapies and medicines. Veterinarians may attend meetings, lectures, and professional development events.

Large Animal Practices

Large animal practices involve working with large animals such as horses, cattle, and sheep. These animals may have complex medical needs that require a highly skilled veterinarian.

Veterinarians conducting research in veterinary medicine are very helpful in gaining insight into the profession, and references from these specialists are also recommended as well as a strong background in mathematics.

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Professional Associations

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association is the national body representing and serving the interests of veterinarians in Canada. The Association is committed to excellence within the veterinary profession and to the well being of animals. The CVMA focuses on three main priorities: a successful career, a balanced life; leadership on national issues; and animal welfare advocacy.

The CVMA offers continuing education to veterinarians through its annual convention.

The CVMA’s National Examining Board (NEB) offers competency examinations to both Canadian and foreign veterinary students.

In addition, the Association publishes two journals – The peer-reviewed Canadian Veterinary Journal and the Canadian Journal of Veterinary Research, Canada’s only national veterinary research publication.

For further information, visit the CVMA online at www.canadianveterinarians.net

Animal Health Technician (AHT)/Veterinary Technician (VT)

Animal health technicians/veterinary technicians are highly trained professionals who work as an integral part of the veterinary medical team to provide humane, top quality animal health care. An AHT/VT works under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. Some of the important tasks carried out by licensed AHT/VTs include:

- assisting in surgical procedures
- sterile preparation of the surgical patient
- administering and monitoring various anesthetics under veterinary supervision
- emergency, intensive and chronic nursing care
- performing diagnostic laboratory procedures such as hematology, clinical chemistry, urinalysis and bacteriology
- administering medications and treatment as prescribed by the attending veterinarian
- exposing and developing radiographs (X-rays)
- clinical pathology – assisting with post mortems, preparing cytology and histology samples, etc.
- dental cleaning
- nutritional program implementation and counselling
- restraining and handling animals
- maintaining animal husbandry, professional nursing care including providing close, careful observation of hospitalized patients, and assisting with practice pain control programs
- public education / client relations
- business management / administration
- veterinary records

Training for a career as an AHT/VT generally takes two to three years depending on the training institution’s program design and provincial requirements. Courses of study involve the basic sciences as well as applied technical courses.

Graduates may find employment in private veterinary practices, zoos, wildlife rehabilitation, government and research, as well as in industry.

For more information on becoming an AHT/VT, or to obtain a list of Canadian colleges accredited by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) visit the Canadian Association of Animal Health Technologists and Technicians (CAAHTT) online at www.caahtt-acttsa.ca

Licensure of Veterinarians

To practice veterinary medicine in Canada, you must first obtain a license. The licensure of veterinary medicine is a provincial responsibility. Provincial veterinary licensing bodies establish and maintain standards of practice for veterinarians and discipline those who are guilty of professional misconduct. Veterinary licensing bodies also regulate the practice of veterinary medicine to protect the public interest.

Veterinary Colleges in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Website Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Veterinary College</td>
<td>Guelph, ON</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ovc.uoguelph.ca">www.ovc.uoguelph.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculté de médecine vétérinaire</td>
<td>Saint-Hyacinthe, QC</td>
<td><a href="http://www.medvet.umontreal.ca">www.medvet.umontreal.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Calgary</td>
<td>Calgary, AB</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/vet">www.ucalgary.ca/vet</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Veterinary College</td>
<td>Charlottetown, PE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.upei.ca/avc">www.upei.ca/avc</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Saskatchewan</td>
<td>Saskatoon, SK</td>
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To obtain a complete outline of admission requirements, scholarship and bursary information for the Canadian veterinary colleges, please contact the respective admissions offices care of the addresses provided above.

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A Career in Veterinary Medicine

To obtain more information about the CVMA, visit www.canadianveterinarians.net

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