Why Choose Pathology?

- Pathology is central to patient care. Nearly 70% of hospital decisions are based on pathology or laboratory results.
- Pathologists participate in direct patient care through fine needle aspirations, therapeutic apheresis, and pathology review.
- Pathologists are at the forefront of medical research and discovery, and are specialists in molecular studies, cytogenetics, and personalized medicine.
- Pathology as a career provides an excellent work-life balance.
- Pathology is a cerebral and challenging specialty that's constantly evolving.
- Pathology is a specialty that supports research and education.

88% of pathologists would choose pathology again

The average work week for a practicing pathologist **50** HOURS/WEEK

68% of practices plan to hire at least one pathologist in the next three years.

TOP **5** IN-DEMAND SPECIALTIES

- Breast pathology
- Cytopathology
- General AP/CP
- GI pathology
- Hematopathology

Are You Ready for Pathology?

Join the CAP for **FREE** as a Medical Student Member

COLLEGE of AMERICAN PATHOLOGISTS

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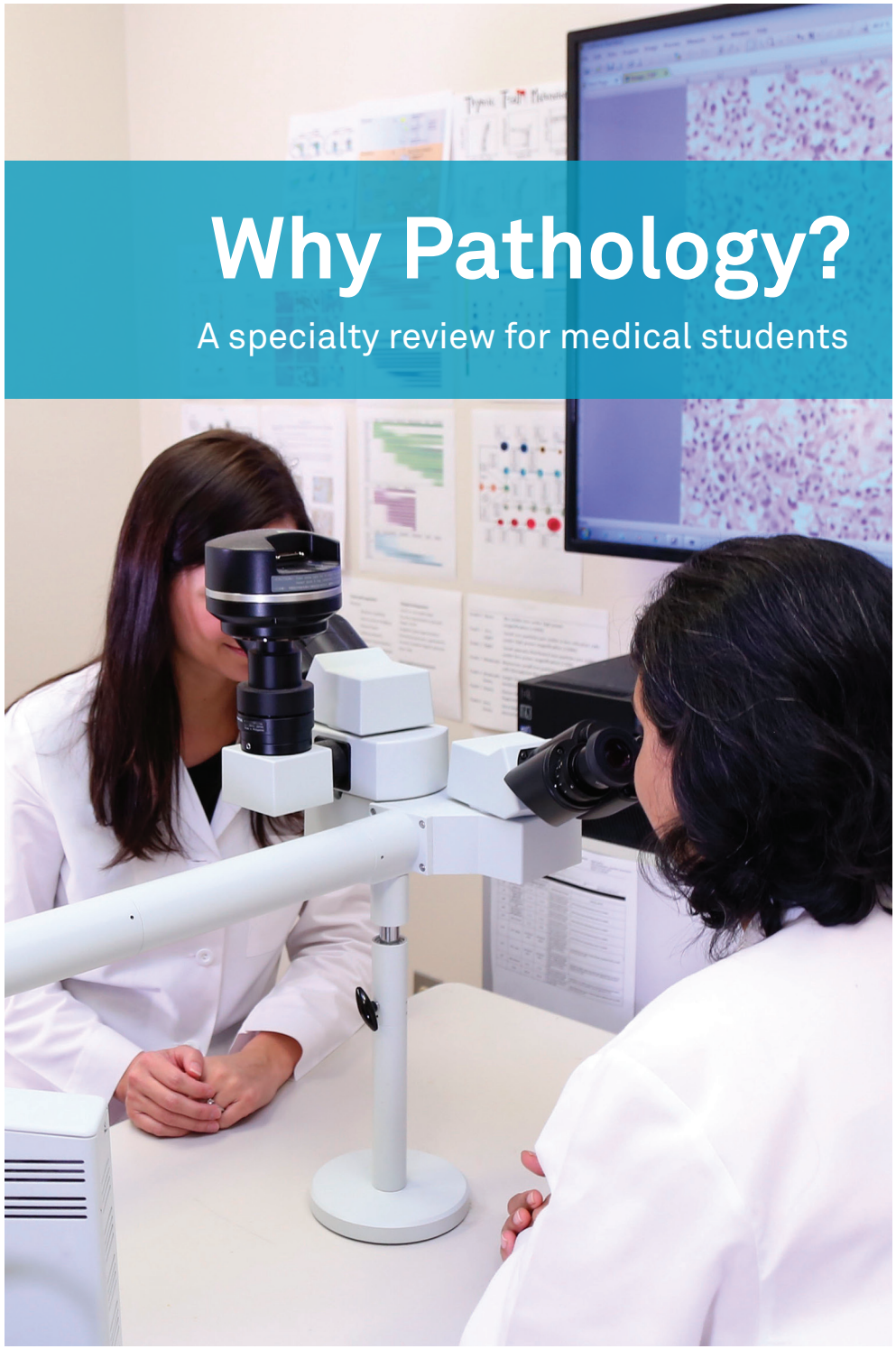
Why Pathology?

A specialty review for medical students



What Is a Pathologist?

A pathologist is a medical doctor who analyzes human tissue, cells, and body fluids to diagnose and treat diseases. Pathologists use microscopic examination and laboratory tests to gather information for accurate diagnosis and treatment.

Do Pathologists See Patients?

Pathologists do see patients, and direct patient care, when they perform consultations and on-site adequacies. They also perform indirect patient care by interpreting laboratory results and reviewing diagnostic slides.

What Is Anatomic Pathology?

Anatomic pathology (AP) focuses on the study of structural changes in tissues and organs. AP subspecialties include surgical pathology, cytopathology, and autopsy/forensic pathology. Residents in an AP rotation learn tissue grossing, histology interpretation, and autopsy techniques; they also study diseases on a cellular level.

What Is Clinical Pathology?

Clinical pathology (CP) covers most laboratory medicine, from routine tests like glucose and sodium levels to molecular tests for cancer markers and genome sequencing. During CP rotations, residents spend time learning quality control, proficiency testing, lab management, and testing methodology, as well as interpretation of results.

How Can I Get Exposure to Pathology?

Medical students interested in pursuing a pathology residency should try to do at least one rotation in pathology, as it's essential to understand the profession and its responsibilities. Often pathology isn't part of the core medical school curriculum, so students should seek out rotations and shadowing opportunities.

Pathology Residency

Medical students interested in a pathology residency should plan on a four-year AP/CP residency, or three years for either AP or CP only. Pathology residency requirements include:

- Conducting at least 30 autopsies
- Examining and assessing at least 2,000 surgical pathology specimens
- Performing at least 200 intra-operative consultations
- Examining at least 1,500 cytologic specimens
- Conducting a quality improvement project or laboratory inspection
- Participating in the growth of a rapidly evolving field through research and other scholarly activities

Pathology Subspecialties

One reason pathology is such an exciting field is because there are so many areas in which you can subspecialize. Following residency, many pathologists complete a fellowship in a specific pathology subspecialty. Most fellowships last one to two years.

Blood Banking/Transfusion Medicine

Bone & Soft Tissue Pathology

Breast Pathology

Cardiovascular Pathology

Clinical Chemistry

Cytopathology

Dermatopathology

Forensic Pathology

Gastrointestinal/Liver Pathology

Genitourinary Pathology

Gynecologic Pathology

Head & Neck Pathology

Hematopathology

Informatics

Microbiology

Molecular Pathology

Neuropathology

Pediatric Pathology

Pulmonary Pathology

Renal Pathology

Surgical Pathology