



TAYLOR TIDBITS

WHAT IS A NURSE PRACTITIONER?

There are more than 205,000 Nurse Practitioners license in the United States. All Nurse Practitioners are required to complete a masters or doctoral program. They have advanced clinical training above and beyond their initial professional registered nurse preparation. Nurse Practitioners also must maintain a national certification. They have prescriptive rights in all 50 states.

There are 82% of Nurse Practitioners that are educated in primary care. Approximately 84-85% of those see Medicare and Medicaid patients. They practice under the rules and regulations of the state in which they are licensed. Nurse Practitioners provide high quality care in both rural, urban and urgent care sites, private physician practices, nursing homes, schools, colleges and public health departments.

Nurse Practitioners in collaboration with their physicians and other health care professionals provide services such as ordering, performing and interpreting diagnostic tests like blood work and x-rays. They are also able to diagnose and treat both chronic and acute conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, infections and injuries. They can prescribe medications and other treatments and their goal is to manage patients overall care.

One of the major advantages to seeing an NP is that they focus on educating patients on disease prevention as well as positive health and lifestyle choices. Nurse Practitioners provide emphasis on the health and well-being of the whole person. They focus on health promotion, disease prevention, and health education and counseling. NPs are mentors, educators, researchers, and administrators. Their involvement in professional organizations at the local, state and national level helps to advance the role of the NP and ensure that professional standards are maintained.

With almost 916 million visits made to NPs every year, patients report an extremely high level of satisfaction with the care that they receive. Nurse Practitioners offer high quality, cost effective, patient centered health care. They provide help to provide a solution to the primary care shortage facing America today.

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