



BRITISH  
PHARMACOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY

# Could a career in pharmacology be for you?

**If you have a passion for science and want to make a difference in medicine and health, a career in pharmacology could be for you. Pharmacologists can be clinical doctors but you do not have to train as a doctor to be able to make this important impact on people's health.**

Pharmacology improves the lives of millions of people across the world. And we need it now more than ever. As new diseases emerge and medicines like antibiotics stop working, the need for pharmacologists is becoming even more vital in the search for new better and safer treatments.

Pharmacologists make a difference to the lives of people every day by carrying out essential research to understand how medicines work. Without them, we would not know about the safety of medicines that people take every day, and we would not be able to develop new treatments to save lives.

## What is pharmacology?

Pharmacology is the science of drugs and their effects on living systems. You can find pharmacology everywhere, from when you visit the dentist to when you take any type of medicine. Pharmacology is responsible for painkillers, caffeine drinks, antibiotics and so much more!



# What does a pharmacologist do?

Pharmacologists are scientists who study how new medicines work. There is a wide range of roles you can do in pharmacology; you can discover new medicines, improve our understanding of how they work, help ensure that medicines are safe, or advise on how they are used in hospitals. Pharmacologists can work in research labs, in hospitals, as teachers and in a huge variety of different roles.

Without pharmacologists we would not be able to:

- **Discover new medicines to help fight diseases**
- **Improve their effectiveness and reduce unwanted side effects**
- **Understand why people have different responses to medicines, and why some work better for some people than others**
- **Understand why some drugs cause addiction**

## What skills will I need to be a pharmacologist?

Pharmacology brings together chemistry, physiology (the study of the body) and pathology (the study of disease). Pharmacologists work closely with scientists in other subjects such as neuroscience, molecular and cell biology, immunology and cancer biology. Although many pharmacology jobs require an undergraduate degree, there are pharmacology roles that do not require a degree. Training as a pharmacologist also equips you with a wide range of transferable skills for many different career paths.

If you are considering your options, visit [bps.ac.uk/careers](https://bps.ac.uk/careers) to find out how rewarding a career as a pharmacologist can be, and the skills you will need to get there.

