

EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST

Entry Level: Bachelor's Degree

Exercise physiologists are health professionals who use exercise to delay, prevent and/or alleviate disease.¹ They develop fitness and exercise programs that help patients recover from chronic diseases and improve cardiovascular function, body composition, and flexibility.²

JOB REQUIREMENTS

What is the exact job title?

- Exercise Physiologist
- Exercise Therapist

How do I become one?

- Obtain a Bachelor's degree in Exercise Science, Exercise Physiology, Kinesiology, or a related field.¹
- (Optional) Complete a Master's program – which helps you prepare for the board certification exam and allows you to gain more specific knowledge on your chosen field.¹
- (Optional) Complete an internship.¹
- Become Board Certified. In 2017, there were about 60 programs in exercise physiology, exercise science, and kinesiology accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs. See this site for more information: <https://www.caahep.org/default.aspx>.²

What qualities do I need?

- Compassion: Because exercise physiologists work with patients who may be in considerable pain or discomfort, they must be sympathetic while working with patients.²
- Decision-making skills: Exercise physiologists must make informed clinical decisions because those decisions could affect the health or livelihood of patients.²
- Detail oriented: Exercise physiologists must record detailed, accurate information about their patients' conditions and about any progress the patients make. For example, they must ensure that patients are completing the appropriate stress tests or practicing the correct fitness regimen.²
- Interpersonal skills: Exercise physiologists must have strong interpersonal skills and manage difficult situations. They must communicate clearly with others, including physicians, patients, and patients' families.²

TYPICAL WORK DAY

What do they do?

- Exercise physiologists evaluating a patient's health and designing exercise programs targeted to that patient's fitness level and health concerns. More than a physical trainer, you will use exercise as medicine to treat illnesses like heart disease, diabetes, cancer, arthritis and emphysema. You will need to monitor important health indicators and adjust exercise programs as needed. Exercise physiologists also ensure patient safety in clinical trials and will often work with physicians to provide the best overall care possible.¹

¹https://learn.org/articles/Exercise_Physiology_5_Steps_to_Becoming_an_Exercise_Physiologist.html

²<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/exercise-physiologists.htm#tab-1>

³https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Exercise_Physiologist/Hourly_Rate

Where do they normally work?

- Half of Exercise Physiologists are self-employed workers (53%), others work in hospitals, offices of physical, occupational and speech therapists, and audiologists, offices of physicians or in government.²

What hours do they work?

- Most exercise physiologists work full time.²

BENEFITS

What is a typical salary in this field?

- BLS: In May 2018, mean salary was \$23.69/hour or \$49,270/year.²
- Payscale: \$20.16/hour or \$45,514/year.³

Does this job come with any benefits? (vision, dental, 401k, PTO, etc.)

- Medical: 76%³
- Vision: 57%³
- Dental: 68%³
- None: 21%³

GROWTH

What is the projected job growth?

- Between 2018-2028, job growth is expected to be 10%. Because this is a small occupation in terms of employment, competition for available positions is expected to remain high.²

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