

# These medical specialties have the biggest gender imbalances

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Gender has proven to be a factor related to which medical specialties residents pursue following their graduation from medical school.

The latest data—gathered by the AMA and the Association of American Medical Colleges as part of their annual National Graduate Medical Education (GME) Census—offers some insight on which medical specialties are most popular among male and female physicians entering residency.

Gender balance is one of the factors that students may consider when choosing a specialty. FREIDA™—an AMA tool that offers searchable, sortable data on 11,000-plus residency and fellowship programs accredited by the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education—can help you gather the information you need to find the right match.

Additional AMA resources to aid you with your medical specialty choice include the FREIDA Specialty Guide and the AMA “Shadow Me” Specialty Series, which speaks to real physicians for specialty-specific insight.

## Female-dominated specialties

On the whole, when adding in specialties, subspecialties and combined specialties, women account for 45.6% of active GME trainees in the U.S. That number is a slight uptick from data collected in the prior year’s census.

Specialty choice trends among women remained relative consistent with prior-year data. Among specialties with at least 50 active residents, women make up a larger percentage of residents in:

- Obstetrics and gynecology—83.4%.
- Allergy and immunology—73.5%.

- Pediatrics—72.1%.
- Medical genetics and genomics—66.7%.
- Hospice and palliative medicine—66.3%.
- Dermatology—60.8%.

Among the top specialty choices for female residents, only dermatology, with an annual average compensation of \$419,000 ranks in the top 10 highest-paying specialties, according to an online survey of 2019 physician compensation conducted by *Medscape*.

## Male-dominated specialties

Male physicians accounted for the majority of physicians in this year’s census. The list of specialties in which men make up the most significant portion of the working resident physicians was heavily populated by surgical specialties. Popular specialties in which men made up a significant portion of the resident workforce include:

- Orthopedic surgery—84.6%.
- Neurological surgery—82.5%.
- Interventional radiology (integrated)—80.8%.
- Thoracic surgery—78.2%.
- Pain medicine—75.3%.
- Radiology—73.2%.

## Specialties with most gender balance

Four specialties featured a near equal mix of men and women among the population of current medical residents: sleep medicine, preventive medicine, pathology (anatomic and clinical), and psychiatry.