Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic

Overview

People's lives often depend on the quick reaction and competent care of emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics. Paramedics have additional advanced training to perform more difficult pre-hospital medical procedures. Incidents as varied as automobile accidents, heart attacks, drownings, childbirth, and gunshot wounds all require immediate medical attention. EMTs and paramedics provide this vital attention as they care for and transport the sick or injured to a medical facility.

Working Conditions

EMTs and paramedics work both indoors and outdoors, in all types of weather. They are required to do considerable kneeling, bending, and heavy lifting. These workers risk noise-induced hearing loss from sirens and back injuries from lifting patients. In addition, EMTs and paramedics may be exposed to diseases such as Hepatitis-B and AIDS, as well as violence from drug overdose victims or mentally unstable patients. The work is not only physically strenuous, but also stressful, involving life-or-death situations and suffering patients. Nonetheless, many people find the work exciting and challenging and enjoy the opportunity to help others.

Typically EMTs and paramedics earn an average salary of $24,000 to $30,000 per year.

To meet an EMT/Paramedic (http://science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/Interviews/Darryl+Lowery) and find out what it's like to work in this field, see the NIH "Lifeworks" (http://science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks.nsf/feature/index.htm) Website.

Academic Requirements

Formal training and certification is needed to become an EMT or paramedic. Training is offered at progressive levels: First Responder; EMT-Basic; EMT-Intermediate; and Paramedic.

The First Responder represents the first level of skills required to work in the emergency medical system. The most advanced level of training is Paramedic. At this level, the caregiver receives additional training in body function and more advanced skills. The Paramedic Technology program usually lasts up to 2 years and results in an associate degree in applied science.

For a list of accredited EMT/paramedic programs, see the Commission on Accreditation of Education Programs for the EMS Professions (http://www.coaemsp.org/accreditedprograms.htm) Website.

Professional Associations

National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (http://www.naemt.org/)
National Association of EMS Educators (http://www.naemse.org/)
Commission on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (http://www.naemt.org/)

www.explorehealthcareers.org
Funding Opportunities
Search for funding opportunities in this field (http://explorehealthcareers.org)

Enrichment Programs
Search for enrichment programs in this field (http://explorehealthcareers.org)

Source
www.bls.gov

Learn more about this field:
Allied Health Professions (http://www.explorehealthcareers.org/en/Field.1.aspx)

Average Salary: $24,030
Years in school: 2 *
Job outlook: Excellent
* after high school graduation

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