

- A gastroenterologist is a specialist physician with dedicated training in the management of diseases and disorders of the GI tract.
- To practice as a gastroenterologist requires 4 years of undergraduate school, 4 years of medical school, a 3-year internal medicine residency, and additional specialized training in the form of a 2- to 3-year GI fellowship.
- GI doctors are exposed to many specialization options during their fellowship, and may decide to work in an academic setting, focus in hepatology, perform certain advanced therapeutic procedures, or specialize in treating IBD. Subspecialization typically requires an extra year of fellowship.
- Gastroenterologists treat an array of GI conditions, including colorectal cancer, hepatitis, irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel disease, nutritional deficiencies, obesity, cirrhosis, diverticulitis, GERD, peptic ulcer, pancreatitis, gallbladder disease, and gastrointestinal infections.
- Gastroenterologists may spend 2 to 3 days per week consulting with patients in private practice and 1 to 2 days per week at their endoscopy center performing routine colonoscopies and EGDs. These specialists may also visit inpatients at the hospital as well as perform procedures at the hospital on an outpatient basis. GI doctors may also provide on call services after hours and on weekends for emergency cases.
- The most common procedures performed by GI doctors include colonoscopy and EGD.
- Making calls at the hospital outpatient endoscopy center offers a good opportunity to see providers, particularly to meet with physicians who have no-access clinics. Clinic or office calls can be made over breakfast, lunch, or in between patients. When making calls at the endoscopy center, keep in mind that it may be difficult to access physicians here as they are busy performing procedures.
- Many GI providers are members of the ACG. Many IBD providers are actively involved in the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation (CCF). Identify your closest chapters and inquire about local events. Make opportunities to engage with providers at charity events such as walks or 5Ks, and at conferences and professional luncheons or dinners.
- GI providers may also be members of the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy or the American Gastroenterological Association.