

Professions in Interventional Radiology

Interventional Radiologist

Interventional radiology (IR) is a medical specialty that performs minimally invasive treatments using radiologic imaging for procedure guidance. Interventional radiology treatments have become the primary method of care for a variety of conditions, offering less risk, less pain and less recovery time, compared to open surgery.

Interventional radiologists are board-certified, fellowship trained physicians who specialize in minimally invasive, targeted treatments.

Interventional radiologists must graduate from an accredited medical school, pass a licensing examination, and complete at least five years of graduate medical education (residency). In addition, interventional radiologists are fellowship trained for at least one year in performing minimally invasive procedures using imaging. This specialized training is certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and takes place in accredited training programs. Interventional radiologists are certified by the American Board of Radiology (ABR) in both Diagnostic Radiology and Vascular and Interventional Radiology. Interventional radiologists have had extensive training and must show expertise in radiation safety, radiation physics, the biological effects of radiation and injury prevention. They must offer the most comprehensive knowledge of the least invasive treatments available coupled with diagnostic and clinical experience.

Interventional radiologists use x-rays, CT, MRI or other imaging guidance to navigate small instruments, like catheters and needles, through blood vessels and organs to treat a variety of diseases. Examples of treatments administered by interventional radiologists include angioplasty, stenting, thrombolysis, embolization, radiofrequency ablation, and biopsies. These minimally invasive treatments can cure or alleviate symptoms of vascular disease, stroke, uterine fibroids, or cancer. They are also experts at reading x-rays, ultrasounds, CTs, MRIs, and other forms of medical imaging.

Further information about a career as an interventional radiologist can be found on the Society of Interventional Radiology website (www.sirweb.org).



Cardiovascular-Interventional Technologist

As a member of the radiology team the cardiovascular-interventional technologist works alongside interventional radiologists and nurses. The technologist assists the interventional radiologist with diagnostic angiographic procedures as well as complex vascular and nonvascular interventional and therapeutic procedures. Cardiovascular-interventional technologists must have a combination of technical, radiologic and clinical skills.

Cardiovascular-interventional technologists perform many duties during an interventional procedure. The technologist is responsible for obtaining all equipment needed for a procedure, positioning and imaging patients, resolving equipment issues, and demonstrating knowledge of human anatomy, radiation safety, interventional supplies and equipment operation.

Cardiovascular-interventional technologists must complete an accredited two-year certificate, associate degree and four-year baccalaureate program in radiologic technology accredited by the Joint Review Committee of Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT). Cardiovascular-interventional technologists must be certified by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) and complete an additional advanced-level cardiovascular-interventional technology examination. In order to maintain ARRT certification and stay abreast of advances in cardiovascular technology (CV), cardiovascular-interventional technologists must complete 24 hours of Continuing Education (CE) courses every two years.

Further information about a career as a cardiovascular-interventional technologist can be found on the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) website (www.asrt.org).

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