



## HOW MANY PATHOLOGISTS ARE THERE?

There are approximately 13,000 to 14,000 board certified pathologists in the United States who practice their specialty in community, university, and government hospitals and clinics, in independent laboratories, or in private offices, clinics, and other health care facilities. Some pathologists devote their careers to research in pathology, developing new tests and new instruments to better diagnose diseases.

Pathologists often teach their specialty in medical school pathology programs to educate all physicians, future pathologists, and other students in the medical laboratory professions - medical technologists, cytotechnologists, histotechnologists/histologic technicians, and medical laboratory technicians. After completing four years of medical school, pathologists need four to five years of residency training to be eligible to take board certification examinations. Many pathologists also undertake additional training in a subspecialty of pathology.

The medical laboratory is one of the "first stops" in preventive medicine, which puts pathology among the most cost effective health care services. Since Americans are living longer than previous generations, forecasters predict that preventive medicine will become even more important, for it provides the best chance of containing spending on the nation's health care. This means the laboratory and medical testing will be in greater demand to rule out incorrect diagnoses, to detect diseases early - in many cases before any symptoms arise - and to insure that a chosen treatment is working. Pathologists are pledged to foster wise use of pathology laboratory services and to be the patient's advocate for high quality, cost-effective laboratory testing. In this way, pathologists help their patients to be healthier and more productive throughout their longer lives.