



# How DOs Compare to MDs from a Marketer's Perspective

And why your brand should advertise to them

Earlier this year, BulletinHealthcare announced an expansion of our partnership with the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the largest professional society for osteopathic physicians. Now, in addition to publishing AOA's daily email news briefing [Morning Brief](#), BulletinHealthcare manages advertising for its digital channels, including [JAOA.org](#), [TheDO.osteopathic.org](#), and related subscriber communications.

Folks in healthcare know that doctors of osteopathic medicine are fully credentialed physicians who take a whole-person approach to medicine that focuses on prevention, helping promote the body's natural tendency toward health, and self-healing. They differ from doctors of medicine in a handful of ways, including their licensing exams, and the osteopathic manipulative treatment all osteopathic physicians learn in medical school. But from a healthcare marketer's perspective, just how different are doctors of medicine (MDs) from doctors of osteopathic medicine (DOs)?

To figure it out, we turned to data provided by CMS and performed a side-by-side comparison of MDs and DOs. According to the NPI database, the two groups have more similarities than differences.

## What the Data Show

MDs and DOs share 11 of 15 top medical specialties.

### Top Medical Specialties of DOs (by size)

Family Medicine  
Internal Medicine  
Emergency Medicine  
OB/GYN  
Student  
Psychiatry  
Ortho Surgery  
Surgery  
IM – Cardio Disease  
Hospitalist  
Phys Med & Rehab  
Neurology  
General Practice  
IM – Gastro  
Dermatology

### Top Medical Specialties of MDs (by size)

Internal Medicine  
Family Medicine  
Psychiatry  
Emergency Medicine  
OBGYN  
IM – Cardio Disease  
Surgery  
Ophthalmology  
Specialist  
Student  
Ortho Surgery  
IM – Gastro  
Neurology  
Urology  
IM – Pulmonary Disease

## Takeaway

To hit as much of your viable audience as possible, conduct outreach to specialists that fall under both taxonomies.

## What the Data Show

MDs and DOs share 14 of the 15 most-commonly written drug prescriptions.

### Top Drugs Prescribed by DOs (by size)

HYDROCODONE/ACETAMINOPHEN  
HYDROCODONE-ACETAMINOPHEN  
LISINOPRIL  
OMEPRAZOLE  
GABAPENTIN  
ATORVASTATIN CALCIUM  
AMLODIPINE BESYLATE  
PREDNISONE  
TRAMADOL HCL  
LEVOTHYROXINE SODIUM  
FUROSEMIDE  
SIMVASTATIN  
METOPROLOL TARTRATE  
METFORMIN HCL  
HYDROCHLOROTHIAZIDE

### Top Medical specialties of MDs (by size)

HYDROCODONE/ACETAMINOPHEN  
HYDROCODONE-ACETAMINOPHEN  
OMEPRAZOLE  
LISINOPRIL  
GABAPENTIN  
AMLODIPINE BESYLATE  
ATORVASTATIN CALCIUM  
FUROSEMIDE  
PREDNISONE  
LEVOTHYROXINE SODIUM  
SIMVASTATIN  
METOPROLOL TARTRATE  
TRAMADOL HCL  
HYDROCHLOROTHIAZIDE  
PANTOPRAZOLE SODIUM

## Takeaway

A DO with a relevant specialty is just as likely to consider your brand as an MD. Make sure DOs are just as informed about your product as MDs are.

#### What the Data Show

DOs write more unique drug prescriptions than MDs.

Average Number of Unique Prescriptions	
DOs	77.03
MDs	63.76

#### Takeaway

There is a common misconception that osteopathic physicians prefer homeopathic remedies to prescription drugs due to their focus on whole-person care. This is simply not true. In fact, DOs write prescriptions for a wider variety of prescription medicines than MDs.



## The Bottom Line

MDs and DOs comprise the two — and only two — types of practicing physicians in the United States. Luckily, BulletinHealthcare provides verified access to both.

Osteopathic medicine is among the fastest growing professions in healthcare, and DOs practice in every medical specialty, with more than half in primary care.

While many organizations don't specifically prioritize osteopathic physicians for marketing, the data above show that there is significant market opportunity for those that do.

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