

## **Reading list for pre-health**

*(overviews adapted from Google Books)*

### **Treatment Kind and Fair, Perri Klass**

*New York Times* contributor and beloved author Perri Klass addresses the primary issues in the life of any doctor and, by extension, the lives of those for whom they care. She explores the moral judgments of doctors, questions of death and physician-assisted suicide, the daily life of a doctor, doctors as patients, and more. Klass offers a fascinating glimpse inside the doctor's office for aspiring physicians and medical buffs. *Treatment Kind and Fair* is also a must-read for anyone who's ever been a patient. 2008 - 256 pages.

### **The Soul of a Doctor: Harvard Medical Students Face Life and Death**

Here are voices of third-year students just as they begin to take on clinical responsibilities. Their words focus on the odd transition students face when they must deal with real people in real time and in real crises and when they must learn to put aside their emotions to make quick, accurate, and sensitive decisions. Their decisions aren't always right, and the consequences can be life-altering—for all involved. Moving, disturbing, and candid, their true stories show us a side of the profession that few ever see, or could even imagine. They show, often painfully, how medical students grow up, right at the bedside. 2006, 248 pages.

### **Intern, Sandeep Jauhar**

*Intern* is Dr. Sandeep Jauhar's story of his days and nights in residency at a busy hospital in New York City, a trial that led him to question his every assumption about medical care today. Residency—and especially its first year, the internship—is legendary for its brutality, and Jauhar's experience was even more harrowing than most. He switched from physics to medicine in order to follow a more humane calling—only to find that his new profession often had little regard for patients' concerns. He struggled to find a place among squadrons of cocky residents and doctors. He challenged the practices of the internship in *The New York Times*, attracting the suspicions of the medical bureaucracy. Then, suddenly stricken, he became a patient himself—and came to see that today's high-tech, high-pressure medicine can be a humane science after all. Jauhar's beautifully written memoir explains the inner workings of modern medicine with rare candor and insight. 2009, 320 pages.

### **The Pact, Drs. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Ramack Hunt**

Filled with drama, courage, temptation, and, ultimately, triumph, this bestseller is the uplifting story of three teenaged boys from broken homes in Newark, New Jersey, who pledged to support one another in realizing their dreams. Despite tremendous difficulties they faced, today two are doctors and one is a dentist. 2003, 272 pages.

### **On Being a Scientist, A guide to responsible conduct in Research, National Academy of Sciences**

The scientific research enterprise is built on a foundation of trust. Scientists trust that the results reported by others are valid. Society trusts that the results of research reflect an honest attempt by scientists to describe the world accurately and without bias. But this trust will endure only if the scientific community devotes itself to exemplifying and transmitting the values associated with ethical scientific conduct. *On Being a Scientist* was designed to supplement the informal lessons in ethics provided by research supervisors and mentors. The book describes the ethical foundations of scientific practices and some of the personal and professional issues that researchers encounter in their work. It applies to all forms of research—whether in academic, industrial, or governmental settings—and to all scientific disciplines. *Edition 3, 2009, 69 pages.*

**My Own Country, Abraham Verghese**

The first book by a doctor who works with AIDS victims daily offers a revealing look at the impact of AIDS on a small Tennessee town, as townspeople respond to the disease's presence in inspiring ways. *1994, 347 pages.*

**Gifted Hands, Ben Carson**

Gifted Hands is the riveting story of one man's secret for success, tested against daunting odds and driven by an incredible mindset that dares to take risks. This inspiring autobiography takes you into the operating room to witness surgeries that made headlines around the world — and into the private mind of a compassionate, God-fearing physician who lives to help others. Through it all shines a humility, quick wit, and down-to-earth style that make this book one you won't easily forget. *1990, 232 pages.*

**What I learned in Medical School: *personal stories of young doctors*, Takakuwa, Rubashkin and Herzig**

In these pages, a black teenage mother overcomes seemingly insurmountable odds, an observant Muslim dons the hijab during training, an alcoholic hides her addiction. We hear the stories of an Asian refugee, a Mexican immigrant, a closeted Christian, an oversized woman--these once unlikely students are among those who describe their medical school experiences with uncommon candor, giving a close-up look at the inflexible curriculum, the pervasive competitive culture, and the daunting obstacles that come with being "different" in medical school. Their tales of courage are by turns poignant, amusing, eye-opening--and altogether unforgettable. *2006, 209 pages.*

**Pebbles in the Water, B. Lewis Barnett, Jr.**

A collection of essays and poems about the feelings, thoughts and experiences of family physicians - describing the true art of healing from a firsthand perspective. In this fast-paced world, Dr. Barnett's humanistic approach to medicine comforts and refreshes. Dr. Barnett, Professor Emeritus of the University of Virginia School of Medicine, has been listening for over 50 years to patients' stories. He tells many of those moving stories in this second collection. *2004, 200 pages.*

**Caring for the Country, Howard Rabinowitz**

Medical students lack role models in rural primary care, contributing to the severe shortage of family care physicians in rural areas. This unique book addresses that need by profiling ten graduates from the Physician Shortage Area Program (PSAP) of Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University, who are now practicing rural family medicine. At the heart of this text is a challenge to pre-med undergraduates, medical students, and family physicians to consider rural family practice. An excellent resource for pre-med and medical school advisors, the book brings into focus the true calling of medicine making a difference by helping others. The text opens by discussing the impact that the PSAP has had on the physician shortage. In-depth profiles advance the topic by revealing the everyday reality of the shortage through poignant stories and candid dialogue. They cover the spectrum of social and professional issues that rural family physicians face, addressing topics such as the meaning of rural family practice, the roles of medical schools and hospital systems, health care policy, rural obstetrics, and telemedicine. The concluding chapter summarizes the professional and personal lessons learned from the profiles and outlines the future of rural family practice. *2004, 262 pages.*

**The Ghost Map, Steven Johnson**

A thrilling historical account of the worst cholera outbreak in Victorian London--and a brilliant exploration of how Dr. John Snow's solution revolutionized the way we think about disease, cities, science, and the modern world. The Ghost Map takes place in the summer of 1854. A devastating cholera outbreak seizes London just as it is emerging as a modern city: more than 2 million people packed into a ten-mile circumference, a hub of travel and commerce, teeming with people from all over the world, continually pushing the limits of infrastructure that's outdated as soon as it's updated. Dr. John Snow--whose ideas about contagion had been dismissed by the scientific community--is spurred to intense action when the people in his neighborhood begin dying. With enthralling suspense, Johnson chronicles Snow's day-by-day efforts, as he risks his own life to prove how the epidemic is being spread.

When he creates the map that traces the pattern of outbreak back to its source, Dr. Snow didn't just solve the most pressing medical riddle of his time. He ultimately established a precedent for the way modern city-dwellers, city planners, physicians, and public officials think about the spread of disease and the development of the modern urban environment. *The Ghost Map* is an endlessly compelling and utterly gripping account of that London summer of 1854, from the microbial level to the macro-urban-theory level—including, most important, the human level. *2006, 299 pages.*

### **28 Stories of AIDS in Africa**, Stephanie Nolen

Twenty-eight anecdotal stories that chronicle men, women, and children involved in every aspect of the African AIDS crisis. *2007, 375 pages.*

### **Better**, Atul Gawande,

Author Gawande explores how doctors strive to close the gap between best intentions and best performance in the face of obstacles that sometimes seem insurmountable. Gawande's stories take us to battlefield surgical tents in Iraq, to labor and delivery rooms in Boston, to a polio outbreak in India, and to malpractice courtrooms around the country. He discusses the ethical dilemma of lethal injections, examines the influence of money on modern medicine, and recounts the contentious history of hand washing. And he gives us an inside look at his own life as a practicing surgeon, offering a firsthand account of a field where mistakes are both unavoidable and unthinkable.--From publisher description. *2007, 273 pages.*

### **Complications**, Atul Gawande

In gripping accounts of true cases, surgeon Atul Gawande explores the power and the limits of medicine, offering an unflinching view from the scalpel's edge. *Complications* lays bare a science not in its idealized form but as it actually is—uncertain, perplexing, and profoundly human. *2003, 288 pages.*

### **Genome**, Matt Ridley

The genome has been mapped, but what does it mean?

*Genome* offers extraordinary insight into the ramifications of this incredible breakthrough. By picking one newly discovered gene from each pair of chromosomes and telling its story, Matt Ridley recounts the history of our species and its ancestors from the dawn of life to the brink of future medicine. From Huntington's disease to cancer, from the applications of gene therapy to the horrors of eugenics, Matt Ridley probes the scientific, philosophical, and moral issues arising as a result of the mapping of the genome. It will help you understand what this scientific milestone means for you, for your children, and for humankind. *2006, 368 pages.*

### **Mountains beyond Mountains**, Tracy Kidder

At the center of **Mountains Beyond Mountains** stands Paul Farmer. Doctor, Harvard professor, renowned infectious-disease specialist, anthropologist, the recipient of a MacArthur "genius" grant, world-class Robin Hood, Farmer was brought up in a bus and on a boat, and in medical school found his life's calling: to diagnose and cure infectious diseases and to bring the lifesaving tools of modern medicine to those who need them most. This magnificent book shows how radical change can be fostered in situations that seem insurmountable, and it also shows how a meaningful life can be created, as Farmer—brilliant, charismatic, charming, both a leader in international health and a doctor who finds time to make house calls in Boston and the mountains of Haiti—blasts through convention to get results. *2004, 322 pages.*