

To become an anesthesiologist, you need to complete a bachelor's degree program, four years of medical school and 3-8 years in an internship or residency. You would also need to obtain certification in this specialty. Critical care nurses must enroll in a nursing program, during which you would take classes and learn experientially from in a medical setting. You would study anatomy, chemistry, nutrition, psychology and nursing theory.

You can find associate's degree and bachelor's degree programs in respiratory therapy through colleges and universities, medical schools, vocational schools and the military. Your coursework would include anatomy and physiology, pathophysiology, chemistry, physics, microbiology, pharmacology and mathematics. You would learn about treatments, diagnostic procedures, equipment, patient assessment, CPR and respiratory health. Most states require respiratory therapists to obtain licensure.

!!What Might I Earn?

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual wage for registered nurses was \$68,910 as of May 2013 ("www.bls.gov"). Respiratory therapists earned a mean annual wage of \$57,880 that same year. Anesthesiologists who were employed in general medical and surgical hospitals earned a salary of \$235,070 a year on average.