



# Nurses



BY CECILIA MINDEN AND LINDA M. ARMANTROUT

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## **Hello, My Name Is Amber.**

Hello. My name is Amber. Many people live and work in my neighborhood. Each of them helps the neighborhood in different ways.

I thought of all the things I like to do. I like taking care of my friends. I like to exercise and eat healthy foods. I like to solve problems. How could I help my neighborhood when I grow up?





## **I Could Be a Nurse!**

Nurses take care of people who are sick. They enjoy helping others. Best of all, nurses make people feel better and teach them how to stay healthy!

### **When Did This Job Start?**

Nursing as a career began in the late 1800s. The first nursing school opened in 1873 in Boston, Massachusetts.

*A good nurse should enjoy helping others.*



## Learn About This Neighborhood Helper!

The best way to learn is to ask questions. Words such as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, and *why* will help me learn about being a nurse.

### Where Can I Learn More?

American Nurses Association  
8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 400  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

National League for Nursing  
61 Broadway, 33rd Floor  
New York, NY 10006







## **Who Can Become a Nurse?**

Boys and girls who are good at solving problems, excited about learning, and who enjoy helping others may want to become nurses. It is important for nurses to be good listeners. They must pay attention when patients tell them what is wrong.

Nurses are important to the neighborhood. They care for people who are sick. Nurses also show people things they can do to stay healthy.

## How Can I Explore This Job?

Teenagers are sometimes allowed to help out in hospitals. This is a great way to see one kind of work nurses do! You should also talk to your nurse the next time you visit the doctor. Ask her what she likes best about her job.



*It's important for nurses to have good listening skills.*



## **Meet a Nurse!**

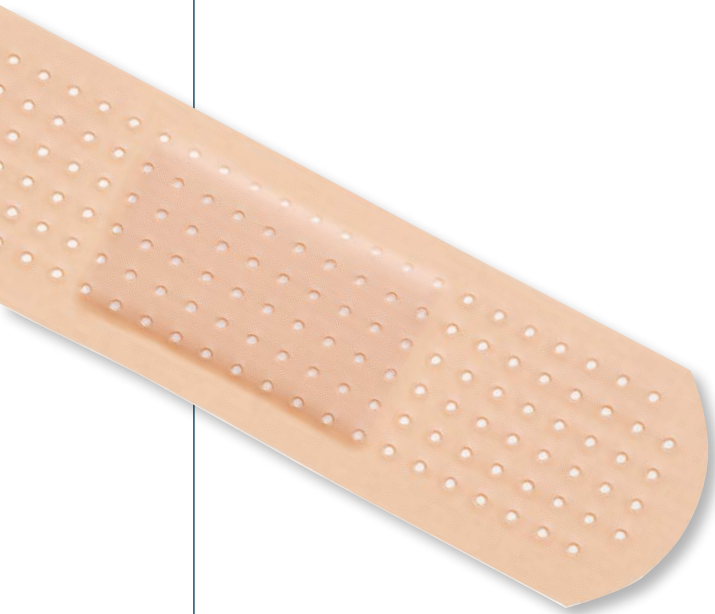
This is Mary Cordova. She is a nurse in a doctor's office in Hanford, California. She knew when she was a little girl that she wanted to be a nurse.

### **How Many Nurses Are There?**

About 2,300,000 people  
work as nurses.

*Mary enjoys being a nurse because it allows her to help others.*

“I really like doing what I do,” says Mary. “I like that I am able to help.” When Mary is not working in the doctor’s office, she enjoys helping her husband remodel old cars.



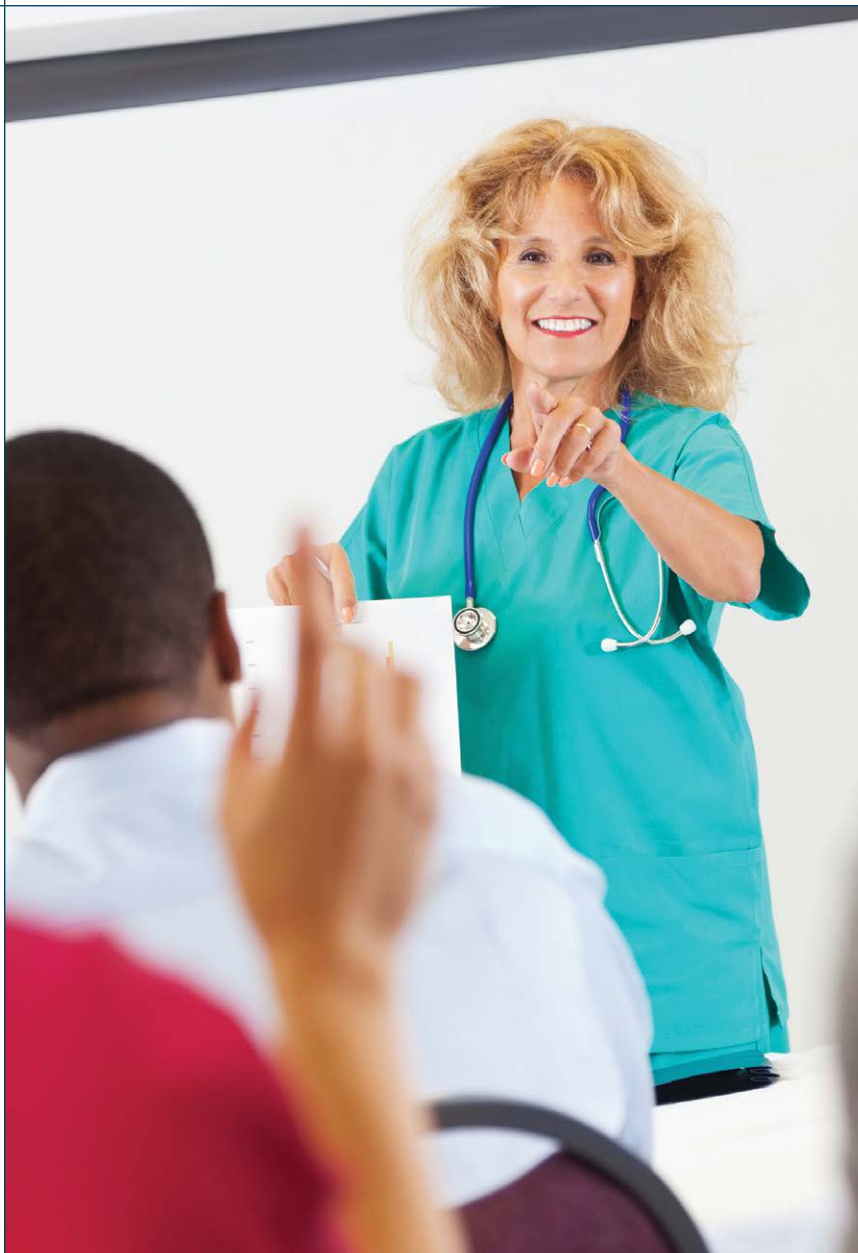


## **Where Can I Learn to Be a Nurse?**

People who want to become nurses must take classes in special nursing programs. There are different programs available. The programs take different amounts of time to complete. Nurses also have to pass a test to get their nursing license. The state provides this license. The license gives a nurse permission to work.

## How Much School Will I Need?

Many nurses have a four-year college degree. Some nurses study for two to three years at community colleges. A few nurses study for about three years in hospitals. Nurses take a test to get their license once they finish their training. A nurse with a license is called a registered nurse, or RN.



## What Does a Nurse Need to Do the Job?

Mary uses many different instruments to help care for patients. One important instrument is a **stethoscope**. The stethoscope helps Mary listen to the sounds inside a person's body. Everything makes a different sound. Your heart makes a *lub-dub* sound. Your stomach sometimes gurgles. It may even make a loud growl if you are really hungry!

### What Are Some Instruments I Will Use?

- Bandages
- Computer
- Stethoscope
- Thermometer



### What Clothes Will I Wear?

- Comfortable shoes
- Latex gloves
- Scrubs or uniform



Mary often uses special words when she speaks with doctors and other nurses. Sometimes Mary needs help right away. She then asks for help “STAT!” This is short for the Latin word *statim*, which means “immediately” or “right away.” Mary might use this word during an emergency, when it is important to act quickly.



## Where Does a Nurse Work?

Mary works in a doctor's office. Other nurses work in hospitals, factories, or schools. Many nurses are in the military. Some nurses teach classes for students who are training to be nurses. Nurses may work in different places, but they are always helping people!

Mary's job is different every day. She sees many patients who need her help. Mary uses different pieces of information to decide how to care for her patients. How fast is someone's heart beating?

### What's It Like Where I'll Work?

Hospitals and doctors' offices are very clean. They are brightly lit. Lots of people come and go. Sometimes sick people are difficult or unhappy. Nurses must always stay calm and pleasant.





**How Much Money  
Will I Make?**

Most nurses make between  
\$34,000 and \$70,000 a year.

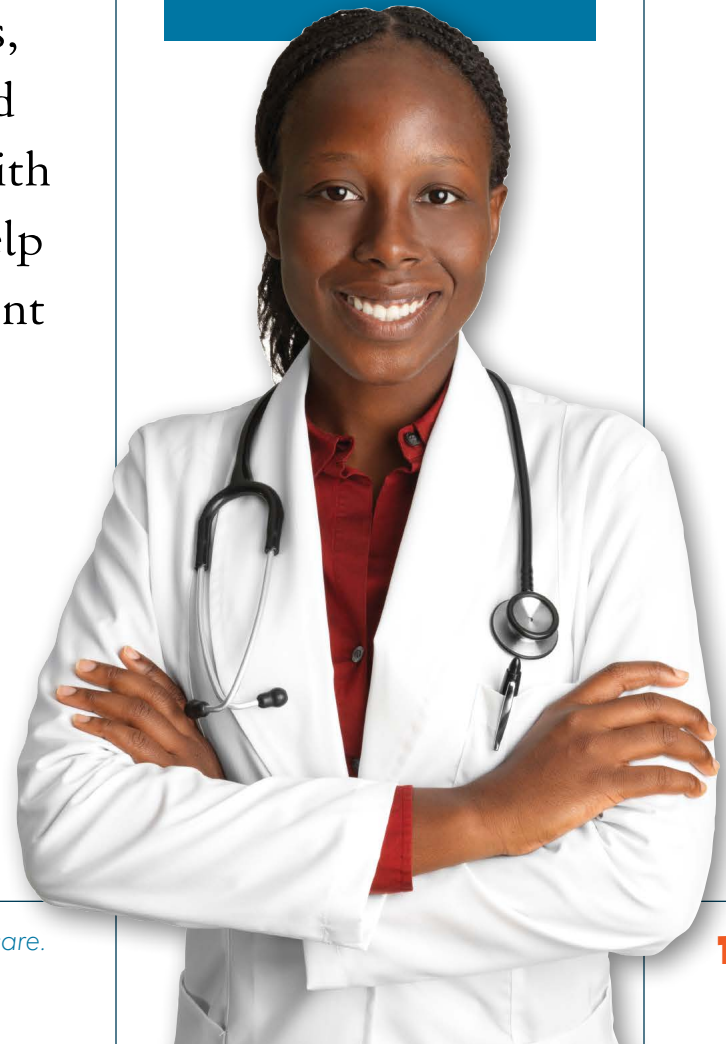
Does the person have a cut or sore?  
Does the patient need medicine? Is  
the patient sad or scared? “I like it  
when patients come back and they  
are happy to see me,” says Mary.  
“It’s so nice to see them doing well.  
I try to be friendly. I want to make  
them feel better.”

## Who Works with Nurses?

Mary works with doctors to give her patients the very best care. Nurses also work with physical therapists, nursing and medical students, and counselors. Nurses work closely with a patient's family. Some nurses help family members care for the patient at home. These nurses are called home health care nurses.

### What other Jobs Might I Like?

- Paramedic
- Physical therapist
- Physician



*Doctors and nurses work together to give the best possible care.*



## When Do ER Nurses Help People?

Have you ever broken a bone? Someone probably took you to the Emergency Room, or ER. People go to the ER if they have had an accident or need medical help quickly. Nurses in the ER must be ready to **assess** and care for any medical emergency.

### How Might My Job Change?

Some nurses become teachers in nursing schools. Others go back to school and learn more complicated skills. Some nurses with a lot of experience oversee other nurses in hospitals, home care, or nursing homes.



## **I Want to Be a Nurse!**

I think being a nurse would be a great way to be a neighborhood helper. Someday I may be the nurse who helps you feel better!

### **Is This Job Growing?**

The need for nurses will grow more than other jobs.





## Why Don't You Try Being a Nurse?

Do you think you would like to be a nurse? Nurses often measure a person's **pulse rate**. Try measuring your own pulse rate. Find your pulse by putting two fingers on the palm side of your wrist. Can you feel the blood pumping? Count how many times your pulse beats in one minute. This is your pulse rate.

### **I Didn't Know That!**

Florence Nightengale (1820–1910) was the first world-famous nurse. She helped soldiers in an army hospital during a long war in eastern Europe. She worked her whole life to make hospitals better places.



A child's pulse rate should be 85 to 100 beats per minute. Try jumping up and down twenty times. Then take your pulse rate again. Is it lower or higher? What do you think caused a change in your pulse rate?



## GLOSSARY

**assess** (uh-SESS) to find out or decide the importance of a problem

**pulse rate** (PULSS RAYT)

a measurement of how fast someone's heart is beating

**stethoscope** (STETH-uh-skope)

an instrument used to listen to sounds in a patient's heart, lungs, stomach, and other areas

## LEARN MORE ABOUT NURSES

### BOOKS

Brill, Marlene Targ. *Nurses*. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2005.

James, Robert. *Nurses: People Who Care for Our Health*. Vero Beach, FL: Rourke, 1995.

Whitelaw, Nancy. *Clara Barton: Civil War Nurse*. Springfield, NJ: Enslow, 1997.

### WEB SITES

Visit our home page for lots of links about nurses:

**[www.childsworld.com/links](http://www.childsworld.com/links)**

*Note to Parents, Teachers, and Librarians: We routinely check our Web links to make sure they're safe, active sites—so encourage your readers to check them out!*

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