A good choice for pre-med students is volunteering in hospitals. This will give you an early exposure to the doctor-patient relationship, the daily routines of healthcare workers, and help you learn about some of the tools of modern medicine. It will also show an interest in helping humanity, always a good image to put forth to an admissions board. Almost every major hospital has a volunteer department and even small hospitals would likely welcome the help. Call around to local hospitals and see if they have available positions.

If your career interests include research, try to get into a research lab. Many professors are looking for undergraduate volunteers to do work in their labs. Most of the time you can also get course credit for the work you do.

There are thousands of different ways to volunteer. Finding the ones that suit you best is up to you. In the end, if you show that you have an interest in helping others though, you will greatly improve your chances of acceptance to medical school.

Know your resources!

Students interested in medicine are encouraged to research the wide variety of jobs available in the health professions, to discuss the nature and demands of medicine with a pre-medical advisor or health professional, and to ask a lot of questions before embarking on the application process. Be sure to speak with the financial aid officers at your school about concerns of financing your medical education.

Know the school's admission requirements

In general, however, most medical schools will expect applicants to have attempted the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), and to have completed the following types of courses:

- One year of BIOLOGY
- One year of PHYSICS
- One year of ENGLISH
- One year of GENERAL CHEMISTRY
- One year of ORGANIC CHEMISTRY
- One year of BIOCHEMISTRY (at many schools)

What exactly is the MCAT?

The MCAT is a 1-day test that includes three multiple-choice sections and two essays. It is taken by all students applying to United States and Canadian medical schools, as well as by many applying to osteopathic and chiropractic schools. The exam is given only in the United States and Canada, once in April and once in August.

If you're planning to apply to medical schools during your senior year, take the MCAT in either April or August of your junior year -- the year before you apply to medical school. Take it in April, and you'll have time -- Heaven forbid! -- to take it again in August if you don't do so well the first time. The advantage of the August date is that it could give you a school-free summer in which to focus solely on preparing for the MCAT.

Other helpful hints

1. Seek a mentor in college who can help you with your academic journey.
2. Try to take no more than two sciences during your 1st semester.
3. Do not pledge into fraternities/sororities within your first year of college!
4. Seek help from others who are where you would like to be going.
5. Always study hard!