

# Tips for Physicians coming to Israel

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## License to practice medicine in Israel:

The practice of medicine in Israel is regulated by law and the Ministry of Health, Division of Medical Professions is responsible for the licensure of physicians in Israel.

In order to be licensed to practice medicine in Israel, the physician must be an Israeli citizen or a permanent resident in Israel; a graduate of an accredited medical school; post a one year rotating internship ("STAJ"); of "good character" (i.e. — no criminal record), and in good mental and physical health.

Graduates of foreign medical schools are required to pass a written exam administered twice a year by the Israeli Ministry of Health. The exam is a multiple choice question exam, written in Hebrew. Whenever possible, and on condition that there are at least ten examinees that wish to take the exam in another language, the exam is translated to other languages as well.

## Exemptions from the Israeli medical licensing exam:

- 1) At present, graduates of medical faculties in the US, Canada, Great Britain, France, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, are exempt from the licensing exam. This is subject to change in the future. Please note: Graduates of accredited medical schools who did not complete a one year rotation internship abroad and wish to practice medicine in Israel, must take and pass the licensing exam and complete a one year rotational internship in Israel.
- 2) Also exempt from the licensure examination are physicians certified as specialists in their native country and recognized as such by the Israeli

Medical Association Scientific Council, or physicians whose residency abroad was fully recognized by the Israeli Medical Scientific Council and who are required by the Scientific Council to pass the Stage II specialist exam in Israel only, in order to receive specialist certification in Israel.

- 3) Graduates of foreign medical schools who legally practiced medicine abroad for at least 14 years are also exempt from the licensing exam. In order to be licensed in Israel, these physicians are required to successfully pass a period of



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observation known as "Histaklut". "Histaklut" consists of two parts: First, the physician works for 6 months, under observation, in an accredited medical department of an accredited hospital in Israel. A special permit to practice medicine in Israel is issued by the Division of Medical Professions for this purpose. Upon successful completion of this period, the physician meets with a special committee, which evaluates his/her knowledge in general medicine.

Physicians who successfully pass the two parts of the "Histaklut" period are entitled to receive a temporary license to practice medicine in Israel.

## Types of medical licenses to practice medicine in Israel:

The Division of Medical Professions issues 3 different types of licenses to practice medicine in Israel: A temporary license, a permanent license and a limited permit to practice medicine in Israel.

**Temporary license:** Physicians, entitled to practice medicine in Israel initially receive a temporary license. The license is issued for 14 months.

**Permanent License:** A permanent license to practice medicine in Israel is issued to physicians who have legally practiced medicine in Israel for at least 12 months. To receive the permanent license, the physician must present the Ministry of Health with a letter of recommendation from a certified Israeli medical specialist, who knows and has observed the applicant's work in Israel personally and professionally for at least one year.

**Limited Permit:** A limited permit is issued to physicians who are not Israeli citizens or permanent residents in Israel, and who wish, for various reasons, to practice medicine in Israel for a limited period of time.

The "limited permit" is issued for work in a specific ward in a specific hospital, for a limited period of time only.

To receive the permit, the physician must be accepted for work in Israel in an accredited department of an accredited hospital. It is the hospital that applies to the Ministry of Health for the limited permit, on behalf of the physician.

As of 1.1.07, the permit will be ►

issued for a period of 2 years at the most. Physicians, who wish to extend the permit for a longer period of time, will be required to pass the Israeli licensing exam. Exemptions from the licensing exam are the same as mentioned previously for physicians who apply for a license to practice medicine in Israel.

**Documents to be included in an application for a license to practice medicine in Israel:**

- 1) An Israeli identity card.
- 2) 3 personal photos.
- 3) A medical diploma or a letter from the Dean of the medical faculty, verifying completion of studies and entitlement to a medical diploma.
- 4) An official document confirming the dates of commencement and completion of medical studies.
- 5) An official document confirming completion of internship (specifying the wards attended and the dates of start and completion of each rotation).
- 6) A valid license to practice medicine abroad.
- 7) Current registration as a physician from abroad.
- 8) Where applicable: Specialist Certification (Board Certification in the States).
- 9) Official documents confirming clinical work in hospitals or other medical institutions.
- 10) Letter(s) of "good standing" from

the appropriate Medical Board or medical authorities abroad.

**Comments:**

- A. All documents should be translated into Hebrew and notarized by an official notary in Israel.
- B. Three copies of all documents should be submitted.

**The Licensing Process:**

The process of applying for a license to practice medicine in Israel begins with filing an application in one of the District Health Offices in Israel and submitting the required documents. The application is then sent to the Division of Medical Professions in the Ministry of Health where the application is reviewed. Applicants who fulfill all requirements are entitled to receive a temporary license to practice medicine in Israel, issued by the Division of Medical Professions. The process of issuing a license takes, on average, 6 weeks.

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to meet new colleagues from  
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your solidarity for Israel  
and Israeli medicine – at the  
IMA International Conference  
[www.ortra.com/imawf](http://www.ortra.com/imawf)*

**Did You Know?**

- 1) Osteopathy: Graduates of accredited osteopathy schools in the US, who are licensed to practice medicine in the US, can be licensed to practice medicine in Israel. At present, graduates of accredited osteopathy schools in the US are exempt from the medical licensing exam. This is subject to change in the future.
- 2) Tourists are eligible to take the medical licensing exam in Israel. A passing score is valid for 3 years.
- 3) Physicians who are certified as specialists abroad, and who wish to be certified as such in Israel, may send their documentation to the Israeli Medical Association Scientific Council prior to their Aliyah.
- 4) Graduates of medical schools in the Caribbean Islands are not exempt from the Israeli licensing exam.
- 5) There are two types of "Histaklut", one for licensing purposes and another for the purpose of specialist certification.

More information regarding licensing of physicians and other medical and allied health professionals in Israel, as well as information regarding other activities of the Division of Medical Profession, can be found on our web site at the following address:  
[www.health.gov.il/professions](http://www.health.gov.il/professions)  
Send a letter by mail or by fax only to:  
The Division of Medical Professions  
Ministry of Health  
2 Ben-Tabai St., Jerusalem, Israel  
Fax: 972-2-6790846

The IMA World Fellowship wishes to encourage physicians from abroad to spend time in Israel. You have the choice of coming for a short period or completing a fellowship.

We will help find the most suitable institution and department to meet your needs and explain the process required with the Ministry of Health.

We are here for any small question and will be happy to recommend and give advice on any issue, because we are committed to our members and believe in the importance of a worldwide bond between physicians.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**For further details please contact Ms. Esti Sherbelis,  
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