AI Patient Actor 2.0

Student Quick Start Guide

NILE Laboratory | Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth

What is AI Patient Actor?

The AI Patient Actor is a platform that lets you practice clinical interviewing and diagnostic reasoning with simulated patients. You can conduct patient encounters via text or voice, request examinations and tests, and receive immediate personalized feedback on your performance.

Getting Started

1. Go to patient-actor.dartmouth.edu
2. Create a student account using your institutional email
3. Click “Join Course”
4. Enter the course code provided by your instructor
5. Select a case to begin

Conducting a Patient Encounter

Before You Begin

Read the **Description** and **Patient Information** to understand the goal of the interaction. Your role is to interact with the patient following the instructions provided in the case by your instructor.

The **left-hand panel** displays a list of tasks on which you will receive feedback. Review these before starting so you know what is expected.

During the Encounter

- **Choose your modality:** Text or voice conversation
- **Interview the patient:** Ask questions as you would with a real patient
- **Request vitals and exams:** Click the **Vitals** icon to obtain vital signs and examination findings
- **Order tests:** Click the **Diagnostics** icon to request labs, imaging, or other studies
- **End the encounter:** Click 'End Patient Encounter' to submit your diagnosis (if indicated) and receive feedback

Note: The maximum duration for voice conversations is 30 min. You can pause voice conversations for 2 minutes by using the mute button.

Getting Feedback

After ending the encounter, you will receive individualized feedback on your performance. The feedback covers the areas determined by your instructor, which are listed on the left-hand panel. Review the feedback carefully to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Tips for Success

- **Read the case instructions carefully** before starting

- **Review the task list** on the left panel to understand how you will be evaluated
- **Start with open-ended questions** to let the patient describe their concerns
- **Build rapport** by introducing yourself and showing empathy
- **Think before ordering tests** - what will help you differentiate between diagnoses?
- **Practice repeatedly** - you can retry cases to improve your skills

Features

- **52 languages** available for text-based encounters
- **Voice conversations** in English and Spanish with 26 different patient voices
- **Immediate feedback** after every encounter
- **Unlimited practice** - learn at your own pace

Does This Actually Work?

Yes. Research shows that practicing with AI-simulated patients develops clinical skills that transfer to real human interactions. In a randomized controlled trial, medical students who trained with AI patient simulations scored significantly higher on faculty-administered clinical examinations (OSCEs) with human standardized patients compared to students who received standard training. They also reported feeling more emotionally prepared and less stressed before their exams (Lavigne et al., 2025). Students at Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth who used the AI Patient Actor reported that it helped them build confidence and improve their clinical reasoning and communication skills in a low-pressure environment (Thesen et al., 2025).

Support

If you encounter technical issues, contact your instructor.

References

Lavigne, E., Lopez, A., Frandon, J., Blaizot, G., Gabellier, L., Adham, S., Bedoya, J.U., Charriot, J., Thieblemont, T., Badreddine, M. & Guenou, E. (2025). AI-standardized clinical examination training on OSCE performance. *NEJM AI*, 2(8), AIoa2500066.

Thesen, T., O'Brien, W.N., Stone, S. & Pinto-Powell, R. (2025). Generative AI as the first patient: Practice, feedback, and confidence. *Medical Science Educator*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40670-025-02473-x