**STEM Career:**

**Microbiologist**

Microorganisms (bacteria, viruses, algae, and fungi) are the most common life-forms on Earth. They help us digest nutrients; make foods like yogurt, bread, and olives; and create antibiotics. Some microbes also cause diseases. Microbiologists study the growth, structure, development, and general characteristics of microorganisms to promote health, industry, and a basic understanding of cellular functions.

Microbiologists:

* Figure out how to prevent food from molding quickly.
* Develop an acne medication that kills pimple-causing bacteria.
* Identify the virus responsible for a pandemic.

A bachelor's degree is adequate for some non-research microbiology-related jobs, such as serving as a technician or an inspector in the food industry. However, the majority of microbiology jobs require at least a master's degree. A master's degree is sufficient for many jobs in applied research or product development, as well as for jobs in management, inspection, sales, and service. To conduct independent research, in either industry or in academia, or for advancement to administrative positions, a PhD is usually necessary.

STEM Career Video: <https://youtu.be/pdq_JoNoOGs>