

DENTISTRY



Individuals working in the field of dentistry focus on the prevention and treatment of mouth, gum, and tooth disease. This includes providing education about good oral health.

Careers within this section include:

Dental Assistant

Dental Hygienist

Dental Laboratory Technician

Dentist



Dental Assistant

What would I do?

Dental Assistants help dentists and dental hygienists provide care for patients. The duties of a dental assistant include greeting patients, taking and developing patient X-rays, taking patients' medical histories, sterilizing instruments, providing dentists with proper instruments, providing intra-oral care as allowed by state law, providing patient education, providing post-treatment instructions, and helping in other day-to-day management of the dental office.

Some dental assistants process dental X-ray film and prepare materials for making impressions and restoration. They may also remove sutures, apply anesthetics to gums, or apply materials that prevent cavities.

Where would I work?

Dental Assistants may work in private dental offices, group offices, hospitals, community health agencies, or dental and dental hygienist schools.

What would I earn?

\$20,000–34,000

What do I need to know?

Many community colleges offer an accredited program, which takes nine to 12 months to complete.

What schools can I attend?

New Hampshire Technical Institute

Where can I find more information?

American Dental Association

211 E. Chicago Avenue

Chicago, IL 60611

(312) 440-2500

www.ada.org

American Medical Technologists

10700 West Higgins Road, Suite 150

Rosemont, IL 600618

(847) 823-5169

(800) 275-1268

www.amt1.com

Dental Assisting National Board

444 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 900

Chicago, IL 60611

(312) 642-3368

(800) 367-3262

www.danb.org

American Dental Assistants Association

35 East Wacker Drive, Suite 1730

Chicago, IL 60601-2211

(312) 541-1550

www.dentalassistant.org

Dental Hygienist

What would I do?

Dental Hygienists conduct medical/dental histories, perform soft tissue exams and oral cancer screenings, assess periodontal health, teach clients how to practice good oral hygiene and provide preventive dental hygiene procedures and instruction. Responsibilities include removing soft and hard deposits from teeth, taking, developing and interpreting dental X-rays and applying cavity-preventive materials, such as fluorides and sealants. In some states, such as New Hampshire, dental hygienists can also become qualified to administer local anesthesia.

Where would I work?

Most Dental Hygienists work in private dental offices. Others may work in community health centers, hospitals, schools, correctional facilities, or nursing homes. Dental Hygienists may also be involved with education, public health, research, and sales and marketing.

One feature of this job is flexibility. Full-time and part-time positions are available. Dental hygienists may work only two or three days a week and have jobs in more than one dental office.

What would I earn?

\$45,000–69,000

What do I need to know?

Dental hygienists must be licensed by the State in which they are employed. Qualifications for licensure include graduation from an ADA accredited dental hygiene program with an associate's degree, and passing a written as well as a clinical examination. In addition, most states require an examination on the legal aspects of dentistry and dental hygiene practice in that state.

A bachelor's or master's degree is usually required for teaching, research, and public health programs.

What schools can I attend?

New Hampshire Technical Institute

Where can I find more information?

American Dental Association
Commission on Dental Accreditation
211 E. Chicago Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 440-2500
www.ada.org

American Dental Hygienists' Association
444 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 3400
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 440-8900
(800) 243-2342
www.adha.org

New Hampshire Dental Hygienists' Association
www.members.tripod.com/nhdentalhygiene

Dental Laboratory Technician

What would I do?

Dental Laboratory Technicians make and repair dental appliances such as dentures, crowns, bridges, and braces. Using materials such as gold, silver, stainless steel, porcelain, and plastic, technicians fill dentists' prescriptions for dental appliances. They may specialize in orthodontic appliances, crowns and bridges, partial and complete dentures, or ceramics.

Where would I work?

Most Dental Laboratory Technicians work in commercial laboratories, which are usually small,

employing fewer than five technicians. However, there are some large laboratories, which may employ more than 50 technicians. Also, some technicians may work in dentists' offices, hospitals, the military, or their own homes.

What would I earn?

\$25,000–50,000

What do I need to know?

Prior to taking the national exam to become certified, Dental Laboratory Technicians attend a two-year program at a community or technical college to receive a certificate or an associate's degree. Dental Laboratory Technicians may also become certified by completing a five-year apprenticeship program prior to passing the national exam.

What schools can I attend?

At the current time there are no academic institutions in New Hampshire offering a program for Dental Laboratory Technicians. In the past, New Hampshire students have attended out-of-state schools such as Middlesex Community College in Lowell, MA.

Where can I find more information?

American Dental Association
211 E. Chicago Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 440-2500
www.ada.org

National Association of Dental Laboratories
325 John Knox Road, #L103
Tallahassee, FL 32308
(850) 205-5626
(800) 950-1150
www.nadl.org

National Board for Certification in Dental
Laboratory Technology
325 John Knox Road, #L103
Tallahassee, FL 32308
(800) 684-5310
(850) 205-5627
www.nbccert.org

Dentist

What would I do?

Dentists evaluate the oral health of their patients, integrating oral health care with total health care. Dentists have earned either the degree of Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) or Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS). They replace missing teeth and diagnose and treat tooth decay and periodontal disease. They help prevent dental disease, malocclusions, and oral-facial anomalies. Dentists also provide early detection of oral cancer and systemic conditions of the body that often first manifest themselves in the mouth.

Although 80% of dentists are general practitioners, others practice in one of nine areas of specialization: endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral and maxillofacial radiology, oral pathology, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, prosthodontics, and public health dentistry. The field of dentistry has evolved to encompass treatment of jaw and joint problems, snoring, nutritional counseling, forensic victim identification, and lip and skin problems.

Where would I work?

Most dentists work in private practice or with a dental group. Some dentists work in hospitals, teaching institutions, research facilities, uniformed services, or in federal, state, and local departments of health.

What would I earn?

\$85,000–250,000

What do I need to know?

Most dental school students have a bachelor's degree, although dental school may consider applicants with less than four years of undergraduate course work if they have a high grade-point average. The dental school curriculum is four years in length, preparing individuals for entry into practice. Some dental graduates immediately pursue advanced general dentistry or specialty education, ranging from one to five additional years. To be licensed, Dentists must graduate from an accredited dental school and pass a national written exam and a state or regional practical exam.

What schools can I attend?

At the current time there are no dental schools in New Hampshire. For a listing of dental schools nationwide, please contact the American Dental Education Association (see below). For undergraduate preparation, the following schools offer pre dental advising and specific courses required for admission to dental schools:

Dartmouth College
University of New Hampshire

Where can I find more information?

American Dental Association
211 E. Chicago Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 440-2500
www.ada.org

American Dental Education Association
1625 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036-2212
(202) 667-9433
www.adea.org

Commission on Dental Accreditation
American Dental Association
211 E. Chicago Avenue, Suite 1814
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 440-2500
www.ada.org

National Dental Association
3517 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20010
(202) 588-1697
www.ndaonline.org

