



**Connecticut State
Dental Association**

**Interested in a
Career in
Dentistry?**





What does the practice of Dentistry Involve?

Dentistry is the evaluation, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases, disorders and conditions of the oral cavity.





There are several career paths

Dentist: General Practitioner, Specialists

Dental Hygienist

Dental Assistant

Dental Lab Technician

Dental Office Manager





What does a dentist do?



Diagnose and treat diseases, injuries and malformations of the teeth and mouth.

Improve a patient's appearance by using a variety of cosmetic procedures

Perform surgical procedures such as implants, tissue grafts and extractions

Educate patients on how to better care for their teeth and prevent oral disease

Teach future dentists and dental hygienists

Perform research improving oral health and developing new treatment methods





Education

- 4-year degree from college or university
- 3 to 4 years of dental school training
- 2 to 6 years of additional training for specialty

National examination required for licensure

Degrees: Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)

Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry (DMD)





Plan Ahead

While in high school take math and science courses, enroll in chemistry, biology and algebra and consider taking AP (Advanced Placement) science courses.

Find out everything you can about dentistry to discover if dentistry is a good fit for you and to demonstrate your interest in the profession.

Job shadow or volunteer at your family dentist's office, orthodontist or pediatric dentist's office. Contact a local practicing dentist to answer your questions. If there isn't a mentor program in your area to pursue job shadowing or volunteering, contact the nearest dental society.



Dental Specialties:



- Endodontics deal with pulp/nerve tissues inside and surrounding the roots. Perform root canals
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons correct diseases, injuries and defects of the face, jaws, teeth and mouth
- Pediatric Dentistry oral health care for infants and children through adolescence
- Periodontics focus on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the gums
- Prosthodontics restore complex cases of missing teeth and associated structures
- Orthodontist use dental devices, like braces, and retainers to change the position of teeth





Dental Hygienist



What Does a Dental Hygienist Do?

- Records patient's health history
- Removes calculus and plaque
- Examines teeth and oral structures. Screens for oral cancer and blood pressure abnormalities
- Counsels and teaches patients
- Applies preventive materials such as fluorides
- Administers local anesthesia





Hygienist Education

- 2-year community college
- 4-year college or university program

Completion of accredited program and national examination for state licensing





Dental Assistant

What Does a Dental Assistant Do?

- Assists dentist with a variety of treatment procedures
- Works with dental instruments and materials
- Prepares and sterilizes instruments and equipment
- Takes and processes X-rays
- Performs a variety of office management tasks





Dental Assistant Education/Training

Three Options

Certified Dental Assistant

1-2-year
accredited
program

Skills Training

8 -12 week
accredited
program

* Infection Control
**Radiation Health
& Safety Exams

Chairside

On the Job
Training with
Licensed Dentist
9 months

* Infection Control
**Radiation Health
& Safety Exams



*Mandatory **Optional (Both exams included in CDA program)



Lab Technician

What Does a Lab Technician Do?

- Use impressions or molds of a patient's teeth to create crowns, bridges, dentures, and other dental appliances.
- They work closely with dentists but have limited contact with patients





Lab Technician Education

- 2-year community college, vocational school, technical college, university or dental school. Some offer 4-year degree.
- Most candidates need a high school diploma or equivalent to apply to an accredited dental lab technology program.
- Dental lab technicians can become certified by passing an examination administered by the National Board for Certification in Dental Laboratory Technology.





School Resources

Does your high school have health careers clubs?

HOSA - Future Health Professionals is a national organization with high school chapters offering health profession career information

Learning for Life (Exploring) offers students 14-20 years old programs to explore careers.



Resources

Join American Student Dental Association (ASDA)

ASDA helps you prepare for dental school by sharing current issues important to dental students and dentistry.

Visit ASDA or call 800.621.8099 to become a member.

Visit GoDental for additional career information provided by the American Dental Education Association (ADEA).



Specific Career Resources

- Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)
- American Dental Hygienists Association (ADHA)
- American Dental Education Association (ADEA)
- American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA)
- Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. (DANB)
- National Board for Certification in Dental Laboratory Technology (NBC)
- National Association of Dental Laboratories (NADL)
- American Dental Association Dental Team Careers (ADA)



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(860) 378-1800



info@cnda.com



www.cnda.com



835 West Queen Street, Southington, CT 06489

