

Pre Dental Hygiene

IMPORTANT: The required prerequisites for individual schools vary extensively. It is **very** important to review the requirements for schools you may choose to attend in the future. You can find program prerequisite requirements for specific programs at the following web site http://www.adha.org/careerinfo/dir_education.htm.

Many dental hygiene programs grant an associate degree, others a bachelor's degree. An associate degree takes two years of course work. A bachelor's degree requires four years of study. Completion of an associate degree is usually adequate for the dental hygienist to practice in public health programs. The curriculum includes courses in basic sciences, dental sciences, clinical sciences, and liberal arts.

BYU-Idaho does not offer a degree in dental hygiene; however, the prerequisite course work for entrance into a dental hygiene program may be fulfilled here. Although entrance requirements vary greatly, prerequisites often include these courses:

General Areas	BYU-I Courses
Biology	Required level varies.
Inorganic Chemistry	Required level varies.
Anatomy and Physiology	Biology 264 AND 265
Microbiology	Biology 221
Psychology	Psychology 111
Sociology	Sociology 111

In addition to these courses, many programs also require organic chemistry, English, English composition, speech, nutrition, and CPR/first aid training.

Example of Dental Hygiene Program Prerequisite classes: Idaho State University, Pocatello Idaho

Idaho State University Requirements	BYU-I courses
Zoology	Bio 150-150L
Anatomy & Physiology	Bio 264 & 265
Microbiology	Bio 221-222
Inorganic	Chem 101
Organic/Bio	Chem 150 & 153
Principles of Speech	Comm 101
English Comp	Eng 111
Critical Reading and Writing	Eng 311
Intermediate Algebra	Math 110
Statistics	Math 221
Psychology	Psych 111
Sociology	Soc 111
Nutrition	HFED 100
Principles of Allied Health	HCA 110*
Principles of Dental Hygiene	Dent 201**

* Waived for junior students transferring to ISU (58 credits)

** Complete through correspondence study at University of Idaho. This course requires 3 months to complete, it must be completed by December 1 prior to the application.

Scholarships are available; consult ISU website www.isu.edu/department/dentalhy

DENTAL HYGIENE EDUCATION

Degrees in dental hygiene are granted by a wide variety of colleges, universities, and technical schools. BYU-Idaho does not offer a degree in dental hygiene; however, the prerequisite requirements for entrance into a dental hygiene program may be fulfilled at BYU-Idaho. The prerequisite course work varies widely from program to program. Contact the school to which you plan to apply in order to get the specific prerequisites for that school.

Many dental hygiene programs grant an associate degree, others a bachelor's degree. An associate degree takes two years of course work. A bachelor's degree requires four years of study. Completion of an associate degree is usually adequate for the dental hygienist to practice in a private dental office. A bachelor's degree is usually required to do research, teach or work in public health programs. The curriculum includes courses in basic sciences, dental sciences, clinical sciences, and liberal arts.

Dental Hygienists

Military Related Occupations:

A: Dental Spec (91E)

N: Dental Tech (DT)

AF: Preventive Dentistry Spec (98131)

CG: Dental Tech (DT-03)

Job Description and Worker Requirements:

Dental hygienists remove soft and hard deposits from teeth, teach patients how to practice good oral hygiene, and provide other preventive dental care. Hygienists examine patients' teeth and gums, recording the presence of diseases or abnormalities. They remove calculus, stains, and plaque from teeth; take and develop dental x rays; and apply cavity-preventive agents such as fluorides and pit and fissure sealants. In some States, hygienists administer anesthetics; place and carve filling materials, temporary fillings, and periodontal dressings; remove sutures; perform root-planing as a periodontal therapy; and smooth and polish metal restorations. Although hygienists may not diagnose diseases, they can prepare clinical and laboratory diagnostic tests for the dentist to interpret. Hygienists sometimes work chair side with the dentist during treatment.

Education: An associate degree is sufficient for practice in a private dental office. A bachelor's or master's degree usually is required for research, teaching, or clinical practice in public or school health programs. About half of the dental hygiene programs prefer applicants who have completed at least 1 year of college. Dental hygienists must be licensed by the State in which they practice. To qualify for licensure, a candidate must graduate from an accredited dental hygiene school and pass both a written and clinical examination. The American Dental Association Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations administers the written examination accepted by all States and the District of Columbia. State or regional testing agencies administer the clinical examination. In addition, most States require an examination on legal aspects of dental hygiene practice.

Employment: Dental hygienists held about 147,000 jobs in 2000. Because multiple jobholding is common in this field, the number of jobs exceeds the number of hygienists. More than half of all dental hygienists worked part time—less than 35 hours a week. Almost all dental hygienists work in private dental offices. Some work in public health agencies, hospitals, and clinics.

Outlook: Employment of dental hygienists is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations through 2010, in response to increasing demand for dental care and the greater substitution of the services of hygienists for those previously performed by dentists. Job prospects are expected to remain very good unless the number of dental hygienist program graduates grows much faster than during the last decade, and results in a much larger pool of qualified applicants.

Wages: Median hourly earnings of dental hygienists were \$24.68 in 2000. The middle 50 percent earned between \$20.46 and \$29.72 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$15.53, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$35.39 an hour.