



DENTAL HYGIENE

JOB DESCRIPTION

□ Because each state has specific regulations regarding the responsibilities of dental hygienists, the range of services will vary from state to state. Some of the patient care services performed by dental hygienists may include:

- patient screening procedures such as preliminary review of the health history, dental charting, oral inspections, and taking and recording blood pressure
- exposing and developing x-rays
- teaching patients oral hygiene measures to maintain healthy teeth and gums
- counseling patients about the contribution good nutrition makes to oral health
- applying cavity-preventive agents such as fluoride and sealants
- cleaning teeth
- making impressions of patients' teeth for study used by dentists to evaluate patient treatment needs
- counseling patients about the need for regularly scheduled preventive dental care

CAREER PROFILE

□ Dental hygienists are important members of the health care team. These professionals use their knowledge and clinical skills to provide dental hygiene care for patients and to instruct them on methods to improve and maintain oral health.

Dental hygiene offers solid career opportunities, preparing graduates to provide dental hygiene care to patients in dental offices, clinics, and educational or health care institutions. Additional education and experience may prepare dental hygienists for a variety of other career opportunities.

The dentist and the dental hygienist work together to meet the oral health needs of each patient. Dental hygienists are usually employed in general dental practices or in specialty practices such as pediatric dentistry and periodontics (treatment of diseases of the gums and the supporting bones of the teeth).

Dental hygienists also may be employed to provide dental hygiene services prescribed by dentists for patients in hospitals, nursing homes, and public health clinics.

EMPLOYMENT

□ In addition to career opportunities within dental offices, depending on the level of education and experience they have achieved, dental hygienists can apply their skills and knowledge in other career activities including office management, business administration, dental hygiene education, research, and marketing of dentally-related materials and equipment.

CAREER OUTLOOK

□ According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual wage for dental hygienists was \$87,530 in 2023. Salaries and benefits may vary according to the hygienist's experience and responsibilities, geographic location, and the type of practice or other setting in which the hygienist works.

Employment of dental hygienists is expected to increase 7 percent by 2032.

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE IN ALLIED HEALTH PRE-DENTAL HYGIENE

 Southern Adventist University's Pre-Dental Hygiene program is the first step to becoming a dental hygienist. A bachelor's degree in this area requires four years of college work, and most schools offering it require two years of study at a liberal arts college to meet entrance requirements into their programs.

By completing this two-year degree at Southern, a student meets the admission requirements for the Dental Hygiene program at Loma Linda University. Additionally, Southern's program can be modified for students wishing to meet entrance requirements for three-year dental hygiene options at other schools.



For further information on this or other Allied Health associate degrees offered by Southern Adventist University, contact:

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Allied Health Programs
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Collegedale, TN 37315

SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF COURSES

YEAR 1		SEMESTER: 1 2	
BIOL 101-102	Anatomy and Physiology	4	4
ENGL 101-102	Critical Thinking in Ac Rd/Wt	3	3
MATH 112	Algebra for College Students	3	
COMM 135	Intro to Public Speaking		3
ALHT 111	Intro to Health Professions	1	
PEAC 125	Fitness for Collegiate Life	1	
AREA R-1	Religion		3
AREA IN-6	Historical Perspectives		3
PSYC 122	General Psychology	3	
NOND 101	Southern Connections	1	
		16	16

YEAR 2		SEMESTER: 1 2	
BIOL 225	Basic Microbiology	4	
CHEM 119	Introductory Chemistry	4	
CHEM 120	Survey of Health Chemistry		3
CHEM 121	Survey of Health Chemistry Lab		1
HLED 173	Health for Life ♦	2	
SOCI 150 or 230	Cultural Anthropology or Multi-Cultural Relations	3	
SOCI 125	Intro to Sociology		3
AREA R-2 or R-3	Religion		3
CPT 100	Computer Concepts	1	
ADAC or PEAC	Choose ADAC or PEAC ♦♦		1
ELECTIVES	Choose a Minimum of 2 Credits from the List Below ♦♦♦		2
ELECTIVES	Electives	2	3
		16	16

TOTAL OF 64 HOURS

Additional Christian Service Requirements:

Three Community Service Activities (of at least three hours each)
Two Service-Learning Experiences

♦ May be substituted by HLNT 135 or NRNT 125

♦♦ Except: ADAC 265, PEAC 125, 225, 265, 425

♦♦♦ Choose from the following: ARTH 218; ELIT 214, 215, 216; HMNT 205; MUCH 216; MUHL 115, 120, 218; MUPF 118, 119, 128, 129, 138, 158; SPAN 101, 102; ASL 101, 102; ART 148

Grade Requirements: "C" is the lowest acceptable grade for all transferrable prerequisites.