



# DENTAL CAREERS IN VERMONT

*We've got a "chair" for you!*



EXPLORE  
CAREER  
PATHWAYS FOR:

DENTAL ASSISTANT  
DENTAL HYGIENIST  
DENTIST

# CHOOSE A BRIGHT FUTURE IN DENTISTRY AND ORAL HEALTHCARE



*There are so many paths one can take when considering what you want to do after high school or when choosing a profession. This brochure is designed to give you an idea of the careers that exist in Dentistry. This path will enable you to stay in Vermont, earn a good living and have a professional career.*

*Does Science appeal to you? Are you a people person?*

*While Dentist positions require a 4 year undergraduate degree and 4-10 years of dental education, additional dental team positions require a 2-3 year educational, science-focused track which may suit your path better. Explore these different tracks and choose the one that fits you best.*

*In these professions, there is always somewhere to go depending on how much education you complete. Looking to the future, it is projected that the demand will continue to grow for all of the **Dental Auxiliary positions** which includes: **Dental Hygienists (RDH); Certified and Traditional Dental Assistants (CDA & TDA); and Expanded Functions Dental Auxiliary (EFDA)**. These careers can provide promising and rewarding options for you, providing excellent salaries, sought after skills, industry stability and portability.*

*Here we present an array of current dental positions that are the core of the clinical Dental Team in any dental practice. Demand for these positions is high nationwide and is projected to grow enormously over the next 10 years.*

*Maybe science DOES hold an interest for someone you know? If so, this could be a wonderful career track and exactly what they are looking for!*

## DID YOU KNOW...

**You can train on-the-job to become a  
Traditional Dental Assistant (TDA)**

**You can take additional education classes and become a  
Certified Dental Assistant (CDA)**

**You can, with 2 to 4 years of specialized training and  
education after High School, become a  
Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH)**



# EXPLORE DENTAL CAREERS...

## DENTAL ASSISTANT

### What does a Dental Assistant do?

- Assists dentists with a variety of treatment procedures
- Facilitates care to dental patients throughout treatment
- Takes and processes x-rays into patient charts
- Takes impressions of patients teeth
- Prepares and sterilizes instruments and equipment
- Communicates with patients, health professionals, dental suppliers, business contacts and insurers
- Performs a variety of office management tasks

### Work Settings

- Dental practices
- Public health settings
- Military facilities
- Dental schools
- Other educational programs
- Dental Manufacturers
- Service providers

### Training Needed

- Traditional Dental Assistants (TDA) need to become employed by a dental office and register with the state
- Certified Dental Assistants (CDA) must hold the national certification after training completion
- Expanded Function Dental Assistants (EFDA) must hold a current national DANB certification and complete a formal training program in each expanded function
- The exact responsibilities of a specific dental assistant job will depend on the assistant's background & credentials as well as Vermont state laws and the dentist for whom the assistant works

### Future Opportunities

- The demand is currently excellent
- Flexible work schedules are often available
- Dental assisting offers excellent career opportunities for nontraditional students including those individuals seeking a career change
- Compensation depends on responsibilities, geographic location and other factors



## DENTAL HYGIENIST

### What does a Dental Hygienist do?

- Performs patient oral health screenings
- Educates patients on how to practice good oral hygiene
- Applies preventive materials such as fluorides and sealants to the teeth
- Counsels patients regarding good nutrition and its impact on oral health
- Removes calculus and plaque (hard and soft deposits) from the teeth

### Work Settings

- Dental practices
- Public health settings
- Military facilities
- Dental schools
- Other educational programs
- Dental Manufacturers
- Service providers

### Training Needed

- Most training programs take at least two years to complete with graduates receiving associate degrees
- Concentrate High School classes in mathematics, chemistry, and biology.
- There are approximately 300 ADA accredited dental hygiene education programs in community & technical-colleges, dental schools & universities in the U.S.
- Other innovative training methods include electronic distance education and institutional based didactic coursework combined with community experience

### Future Opportunities

- Projected to be one of the 30 fastest growing occupations
- Flexible work schedules are often available in this high demand field
- Dental hygiene offers excellent career opportunities for nontraditional students including individuals and those seeking a career change
- Compensation depends on responsibilities, geographic location and other factors

## DENTIST

### What Does A Dentist do?

- Diagnose and treat diseases, injuries & malformations of the teeth, mouth, jaw and face
- Improve a patient's physical function
- 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

### Work Settings

- Associate, Partner or Owner in Private Dental Practices
- Public health settings, military and hospital programs
- Teaching, dental research and dental industry
- Over 80% work in general dentistry & 20% in Specialties

### Future Opportunities

- Exceptional career opportunities exist for all, especially minority students
- Large numbers of dentists are projected to retire in the next 20 years and new dentists will be needed in private practice, as teachers/researchers and in public health dentistry
- Increasing numbers of older adults are keeping their teeth longer, greater awareness of oral health care, and a high demand for cosmetic services
- Advancements in dental technology such as digital radiography, laser systems and informatics will allow dentists to provide more effective treatments and practice more efficiently
- New information about the relationship of oral health to general health makes dentistry an important health profession for the future

### Specialty Dentistry

The Dental profession offers numerous "Specialty" areas of study. These paths require additional specialized training after dental school. Areas include: Dental Anesthesiology, Dental Public Health, Endodontics, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology or Radiology, Oral Medicine, Orofacial Pain, Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopedics, Pediatric Dentistry, Periodontics, Prosthodontics

# NEXT STEPS

## Preparing for ALL Careers in Dentistry

- Gain broad exposure to science and math while in high school
- Enroll in college preparatory classes in biology, algebra and chemistry
- Continue taking natural science courses in college such as general biology, organic & inorganic chemistry and physics
- Talk to YOUR dentist, dental hygienist/assistant/EFDA, ask them about their path to their current vocation
- Volunteer or job shadow at your local dentist's office
- To attend dental school, an undergraduate degree is required

## RESOURCES

**Vermont State Dental Society (VSDS)**

[www.vsds.org](http://www.vsds.org)

**Vermont Dental Assistants Association (VDAA)**

[www.vermontdentalassistants.org](http://www.vermontdentalassistants.org)

**Vermont Dental Hygienists Association (VDHA)**

[www.vdha.org](http://www.vdha.org)

**American Dental Education Association (ADEA)**

[www.adea.org](http://www.adea.org)

**American Student Dental Association (ASDA)**

[www.asdanet.org](http://www.asdanet.org)

**Area Health Education Centers, VT (AHEC)**

[www.med.uvm.edu/ahec/home](http://www.med.uvm.edu/ahec/home)

**Vermont Technical College**

[www.vtc.edu](http://www.vtc.edu)

**Centers for Technology Essex**

[www.ewsd.org/CTE](http://www.ewsd.org/CTE)

To speak with our VSDS Dental Recruitment Manager, please call the VSDS office at 802-864-0115.



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