



# Dental Hygienists

## WHAT THEY DO

Cleans teeth and examines oral areas, head, and neck for signs of oral disease. May educate patients on oral hygiene, take and develop x rays, or apply fluoride or sealants. Belongs to the Health Science cluster and Therapeutic Services pathway.

## IS THIS FOR YOU?

**Work Interests** are described The following categories describe the work interests (compatible with Holland's Model) of people who tend to succeed in this career:

- **Realistic** – You are a "doer". You like physical activities and projects. You like to find the answers to problems by doing hands-on work instead of talking about solutions.
- **Social** – You are a "helper". You like being around people and helping them with problems. Socializing is fun for you.

**Work Values** are aspects of work that are satisfying to you. The following work values are generally associated with this career.

- **Achievement** – It's very important to you that your work allows you to use your best abilities. You want to see the results of your work and get a feeling of accomplishment.
- **Relationships**—It's very important to you that you have friendly co-workers. You would like to be of service to others without compromising your sense of right and wrong.
- **Support**—It's very important to you to know the company stands behind its workers and has competent, considerate and fair management.
- **Working Conditions**—It's very important to you that your work satisfies your needs in areas like salary, job security and your working style preferences, such as working alone, staying busy all the time or having variety in your work tasks.
- **Independence** – It's very important to you that your work allows you to make decisions on your own. You want to try out your own ideas and work with little supervision.

**Aptitudes** reflect a person's ability to acquire skills and knowledge. The following aptitudes are important for success in this career:

- **General Learning Ability**
- **Finger Dexterity**

## SKILLS YOU NEED

### Basic Skills:

- Reading Comprehension
- Active Listening
- Writing
- Speaking
- Critical Thinking
- Active Learning
- Monitoring

### Transferable (applicable in other careers):

- Collecting and recording medical information
- Developing and printing film
- Developing and using computerized medical records
- Helping people understand health care instructions
- Operating medical diagnostic equipment
- Treating physical or mental problems
- Using medical or dental instruments to treat patients
- Working as a member of a health services team

### Workplace Skills:

#### High level

- Time Management
- Management of Financial Resources
- Service Orientation
- Time Management

#### Medium level

- Coordination
- Equipment Selection
- Instructing
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Persuasion
- Service Orientation
- Social Perceptiveness

Additional skills for this occupation may be found at <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/career-exploration-resources>

## ESTIMATED & PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT

Occupational Title	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	2012-22 Employment Change	Annual Growth Rate (%)	Total Annual Openings
Total, All Occupations	1,758,205	1,955,480	197,275	1.1	61,665
Total Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations	84,995	100,885	15,890	1.9	3,345
Dental Hygienists	2,035	2,575	540	2.7	105

Source: <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections-0>

## 2015 WAGE & SALARY (\$)

Occupational Title	Average Wage	Average Salary	Entry Wage	Entry Salary	Experienced Wage	Experienced Salary
Total, All Occupations	19.77	41,122	9.55	19,858	24.88	51,755
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations	32.07	66,705	16.54	34,407	39.83	82,853
Dental Hygienists	32.36	67,317	27.44	57,076	34.83	72,438

Source: <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections-0>

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

Education	Work Experience	Job Training
Associate's Degree	None	Internship or Residency

Dental hygienists typically need an associate's degree in dental hygiene. Bachelor's degrees in dental hygiene are also available, but are less common. A bachelor's or master's degree is usually required for research, teaching, or clinical practice in public or school health programs. The Iowa Board of Dental Examiners website at [http://access.bridges.com/ext/cp/custom\\_state\\_data/iowa\\_licensed\\_occupations/29-2021.htm](http://access.bridges.com/ext/cp/custom_state_data/iowa_licensed_occupations/29-2021.htm) provides specific licensure and support information for the state of Iowa. Source: <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections-0> and <https://secure.ihaveaplaniowa.gov/>

## NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE (NCRC)

Skill	Median Skill Level
Applied Mathematics	4
Locating Information	4
Reading for Information	5

This ACT-developed credential demonstrates achievement and a certain level of workplace employability skills. The greater the score, the greater the skill level (Bronze = 3, Silver = 4, Gold = 5, Platinum = 6).

Source: <http://www.act.org/workkeys/analysis/occup.html>



## PRIMARY INDUSTRY SECTORS

### (Where are Dental Hygienists Employed?)

Ambulatory Health Care Services  
Self Employed  
Social Assistance  
Educational Services

Source: <http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/occupational-projections-0>

## ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

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