DENTAL HYGIENE Degrees

Dental Hygienists are part of the dental care team. Dental Hygienists clean and polish teeth using scaling instruments and a rotating polisher. They apply decay preventive agents such as fluorides and sealants, chart medical and dental histories, and take and develop dental X-ray films. They also gather all of the patient data and information for the dentist and teach patients good oral hygiene practices. Hygienists do not diagnose problems, but over time they acquire more responsibility. They can administer anesthesia for pain control and prepare clinical and laboratory tests for interpretation by dentists (CCC Statewide Health Occupations Directory).

A high school diploma may be required for admission to a dental hygiene program. Certificate, Associate Degree and Bachelor Degree programs are available. A minimum of an associate degree or certificate in dental hygiene is generally required 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 (see the Occupational Outlook Handbook, www.bls.gov/oco, for detailed information).

<table>
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<th>Major Preparation Coursework Required by MOST Dental Hygiene Programs</th>
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<tr>
<td>▪ English 101 *</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Math 115 or higher **</td>
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<td>▪ Chem 51 OR 101 &amp; 102***</td>
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<td>▪ Anatomy 1</td>
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<td>▪ Physiology 1</td>
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* Some programs may require an additional semester of English - English 102.
** Varies according to campus. Some require a minimum Math of 115, others specify college level.
*** Varies according to campus. Some require one semester, others require one year.

✓ Additional coursework may be required/recommended (varies according to campus/program).
✓ All coursework should be taken for a letter grade, not “Credit/No Credit” and MUST be completed with a “C” or higher.
✓ Some programs may require major prep courses to be completed within a given number of years PRIOR to enrolling.

Some Local Dental Hygiene Programs*:
- Oxnard CC (www.oxnardcollege.edu)
- Pasadena City (www.pasadena.edu)
- West LA (www.wlac.cc.ca.us)
- Loma Linda - private (www.llu.edu)
- USC - private (http://dentistry.USC.edu)

Add’l Resources:
- American Dental Hygienists’ Organization (www.adha.org)
- American Dental Education Association (www.adea.org)
- American Dental Association (www.ada.org/public/careers/team/hygienist.asp)

Programs and their requirements can change without notice.

Please contact the specific program of interest, a counselor, ASSIST (www.assist.org) and/or the catalog of the college of choice.