

What can a career in Dentistry offer you?



**Service to Others • Balanced Lifestyle • Self-Employment • Earning Potential
Status & Prestige • Variety of Career Options**

What's unique about dentistry?

- One of the ten most trusted and ethical professions in the U.S.
- Flexibility to balance a professional and personal life
- Opportunity to be your own boss and own a dental practice
- Personally rewarding profession
- Combines art and science

What does a dentist do?

- Diagnose and treat diseases, injuries and malformations of the teeth and mouth
- Improve a patient's appearance
- 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
- Perform research directed to improving oral health and developing new treatment methods

What career options are available in dentistry?

- Over 80% are general practitioners while about 20% are dental specialists who limit their practices to one of the nine recognized dental specialty areas
- Teaching, dental research and dental industry comprise additional rewarding career options for both general practitioners and dental specialists
- Dentists also work in public health agencies, hospitals, the military and other settings

How can I prepare for a career in dentistry?

- Get a 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 and inorganic chemistry and physics
- Ask to volunteer or job shadow at your family dentist's office, orthodontist's office and pediatric dentist's office
- A college undergraduate degree is recommended as preparation for dental school

- Talk with admission officers about financial aid resources and dental school requirements (See list of ADA accredited dental schools in the U.S. on ADA.org)
- Take the Dental Admissions Test (DAT) a year before entering dental school

What are the future opportunities for dentistry?

- Outlook is favorable for new dentists and exceptional career opportunities exist for 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

For additional information about careers in dentistry

American Dental Education Association (ADEA)
202.289.7201, adea.org

American Student Dental Association (ASDA)
312.440.2795, ASDAnet.org