



Careers in Health

Dentistry

Caring for Teeth



Years of Training in the U.S.:

- 4 years college, 4 dental school, optional dental residency (1-6 years)

Necessary skills:

- **Communication skills:** Explain procedures clearly and build trust
- **Manual dexterity:** Perform precise procedures with small instruments.
- **Critical thinking:** Diagnose problems and choose the best treatment
- **Patience:** Work with anxious patients and keep them comfortable

WHAT IS DENTISTRY?

Dentists are oral health professionals who diagnose, treat, and prevent problems with the teeth, gums, and mouth. They perform a variety of procedures, including fillings, cleanings, extractions, and root canals. Dentists also provide education and advice on oral hygiene to help patients maintain good dental health.

DISEASES and CONDITIONS

Dentists diagnose and treat a variety of diseases and conditions that affect the teeth, gums, and mouth. Some common issues include cavities, gum disease (gingivitis and periodontitis), tooth decay, root infections (abscesses), and worn teeth. They also address problems like cracked or broken teeth, bad breath, and canker sores. In some cases, dentists can even detect signs of oral cancer and other mouth problems.

DAILY WORK LIFE

Dentists primarily work in dental offices. Some dentists may also work in hospitals, public health clinics, or academic settings. A dentist might see patients for appointments throughout the day, with examinations, cleanings, and minor procedures. They may also consult with patients and their families, review X-rays and other diagnostic tests, and keep detailed records. Some dentists may have evening or weekend hours to accommodate patients with busy schedules.