

Dental hygiene, a preventive profession, is composed of licensed dental hygienists who are an integral part of the dental health team. They provide educational, clinical and therapeutic services to those seeking dental care.

The dental hygiene curriculum at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Dentistry is fully approved by the Commission on Dental Accreditation and its graduates are eligible for examination and licensure in all states.

The curriculum is organized into a four-year program leading to a bachelor of science degree in dental hygiene. Preparation for admission consists of approximately two academic years of study with the course work to be completed at any accredited college. To comply with our prerequisites, it is advisable to contact the dental hygiene program advisors at the College of Dentistry so we can help you select the classes that will fulfill requirements for our curriculum, as well as your respective college.

After selection into the program, the next two academic years and one summer session are spent at the College of Dentistry in Lincoln or the West Division in Gering.

Admissions Guidelines

The department of dental hygiene accepts 24 students each year (20 Lincoln; 4 West). Students who meet the following requirements may be considered for admission.

- Maintain a minimum total grade point average of 2.5 (Average GPA for the 24 students accepted into the program each fall is generally 3.5.)
- Submit an online application and complete Admissions Test for Dental Hygiene. Application deadline is February 1.

Criteria utilized by the Admissions Committee for selection are cumulative GPA, science GPA, ACT score, interview, familiarity with the profession, completed/verified application including program questions (essay, affiliation with College of Dentistry, campus selection and letters of recommendation.) *The University of Nebraska Medical Center is an equal opportunity institution and all qualified minorities are urged to apply.*

Contact

College of Dentistry Department of Dental Hygiene
Room 2117, 4000 East Campus Loop South
Lincoln, NE 68583-0740
rcharles@unmc.edu | 402-472-1433 | unmc.edu/dentistry

Pre-Dental Hygiene Requirements

High School

Preparation for the study of dental hygiene begins in high school. The prospective dental hygiene student should take the following high school subjects:

| | |
|---|---------|
| English | 3 years |
| Mathematics/Algebra | 2 years |
| Geometry | 1 year |
| Biological Sciences (Biology) | 1 year |
| Chemistry | 1 year |
| Foreign Language (suggested, not required) | 2 years |

College

The pre-dental hygiene courses fulfill general requirements and provide the student with a core of knowledge.

| Classes | Hours |
|---|-------|
| Communication (English comp) | 6 |
| Biology | 4 |
| Microbiology | 4 |
| Human Anat or Anatomy & Physiology I | 4 |
| Human Phys or Anatomy & Physiology II | 4 |
| General Chemistry | 8 |
| Introductory Sociology | 3 |
| Introductory Psychology | 3-4 |
| Communication (speech/must give speeches) | 3 |
| Humanities/Arts | 6 |
| Social & Behavioral Sciences/ Human Behavior, Culture, & Social Organization | 3 |
| Nutrition | 3 |
| 12-hour Series | 12 |

Six credit hours must be completed in the arts and humanities and three hours in social and behavioral sciences/human behavior, culture and social organization. A twelve-hour series (a 12-hour minor in one academic area) must be completed in a specific area of study. The courses taken in the 12-hour series must have the same course prefix for all courses being considered. For details, consult the dental hygiene program advisor.

Transfer Credit

All official transcripts from post-secondary institutions will be examined and credit will be awarded according to UNMC policy. Usually, credit from any accredited institution of higher learning is accepted for transfer if successfully completed with a course grade of C or above.

For two- and four-year institutions, transfer credit will be determined by the standards set forth in the "Transfer Credit Practices of Designated Educational Institutions," published by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Offices. No credit will be awarded for D grades.



Program & Admissions Information

Department of Dental Hygiene
University of Nebraska Medical Center
College of Dentistry

unmc.edu/dentistry

Application Process

Applicants must take the Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) through the American Dental Association (ADA). Register for the test at: unmc.edu/dentistry - Dental Hygiene - Admissions. ada.org/en/education-careers/admission-test-for-dental-hygiene. The testing cycle is from September 1 - October 31.

You will then start the dental hygiene admission process by completing the online application at: unmc.edu/dentistry (Programs - Dental Hygiene Program - Admissions). The application is available in mid-October and must be completed and submitted online by **February 1**. When completing the online application, you will enter:

- All college course work information (from transcripts).
- Personal/demographic information.
- Answers to:
- program campus selection and
- program questions, including an essay about why you are pursuing dental hygiene.
- Up to three letters of recommendation are strongly encouraged.
- Official college transcripts submitted from all colleges/universities attended (even if transfer credit is not being used from that institution), as directed in application. All must be sent directly to the application service in Massachusetts. Do not send directly to the program. This will delay verification of your application.
- Complete application by paying \$60 fee as directed in the application at the time of submission.

Provide an official high school transcript and ACT report/score directly to the UNMC Dental Hygiene Program via email to rcharles@unmc.edu. For further information, please contact the department of dental hygiene at 402-472-1433.

The dental hygiene admissions committee notifies all applicants of their acceptance or rejection. Upon notice of acceptance for admission to the program, a letter of intent to enroll and a non-refundable deposit of \$300 are required. The full amount of the deposit applies toward payment of tuition and fees when the student enrolls.



Financial Information

- Dental hygiene students pay by the credit hour for tuition: **\$292.17** per hour for residents and **\$814.50** per hour for nonresidents.
- For students entering in the fall of 2021, resident cost for tuition, fees, all equipment and instruments for the two-year program is estimated at approximately **\$34,229** (**\$67,658** for non-residents).
- Living expenses for a single student are budgeted by the financial aid office to be about **\$2,100** per month. For a resident student, the total cost of a dental hygiene education including living expenses is estimated at **\$80,429** for two years.
- To make adequate financial arrangements, additional costs of approximately **\$4,310** are identified to students at the beginning of the program (license, National Boards and Clinical Boards, student travel, etc.).

Financial Aid

All students admitted to the College of Dentistry will automatically receive information pertaining to the financial aid program. For additional information, please contact:

Financial Aid Office
Nebraska Medical Center 984265
Omaha, NE 68198-4265
1-800-626-8431 (Ext. 4199) or 402-559-4199
finaid@unmc.edu

Note: The awarding of any grant, scholarship or loan is dependent on timely application and meeting all requirements for eligibility. It is each student's responsibility to know the deadlines and to have met the application requirements for the desired aid program.

Program Costs*

Junior Year

(Fall, Spring & Summer Semesters)

| Resident | Year's Total Cost |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Tuition (37 hrs @ \$292.17/hr) | \$10,810.29 |
| Student Health Insurance | 3,275.00 |
| Library Fee | 231.25 |
| Student Fees | 1,480.00 |
| Anatomy Lab Fee | 25.00 |
| Instrument Issue | 2,060.00 |
| Technology Fee | 200.00 |
| Background Check | 50.00 |
| Equipment | 620.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$18,751.54 |

Non Resident

| Non Resident | Year's Total Cost |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Tuition (37 hrs @ \$814.50/hr) | \$30,136.50 |
| Student Health Insurance | 3,275.00 |
| Library Fee | 231.25 |
| Student Fees | 1,480.00 |
| Anatomy Lab Fee | 25.00 |
| Instrument Issue | 2,060.00 |
| Technology Fee | 200.00 |
| Background Check | 50.00 |
| Equipment | 620.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$38,077.75 |

Senior Year

(Fall, Spring & Summer Semesters)

| Resident | Year's Total Cost |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Tuition (27 hrs @ \$292.17/hr) | \$7,888.59 |
| Student Health Insurance | 3,275.00 |
| Library Fee | 168.75 |
| Student Fees | 1,240.00 |
| Anatomy Lab Fee | 25.00 |
| Instrument Issue | 2,060.00 |
| Technology Fee | 200.00 |
| Equipment | 620.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$15,477.34 |

Non Resident

| Non Resident | Year's Total Cost |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Tuition (27 hrs @ \$814.50/hr) | \$21,991.50 |
| Student Health Insurance | 3,275.00 |
| Library Fee | 168.75 |
| Student Fees | 1,240.00 |
| Anatomy Lab Fee | 25.00 |
| Instrument Issue | 2,060.00 |
| Technology Fee | 200.00 |
| Equipment | 620.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$29,580.25 |

*Costs may vary (+/-) from the time of this printing.

A Dental Hygienist is...

Dental hygienists are licensed oral health professionals who focus on preventing and treating oral diseases - both to protect teeth and gums, and also to protect patients' total health. They are graduates of accredited dental hygiene education programs in colleges and universities and must take a written national board examination and a clinical examination before they are licensed to practice. In addition to treating patients directly, dental hygienists may also work as educators, researchers and administrators.

What do dental hygienists do?

Each state has its own specific regulations and the range of services performed by dental hygienists varies from one state to another. As part of dental hygiene services, dental hygienists may to the following:

- Perform oral health care assessments that include the review of patients' health history, dental charting, oral cancer screening, and evaluation of gum disease/health.
- Expose, process, and interpret dental radiographs (x-rays).
- Remove plaque and calculus ("tartar") from above and below the gum line using dental instruments.
- Apply cavity-preventive agents such as fluorides and sealants to the teeth.
- Administer local anesthetic and/or nitrous oxide analgesia.
- Educate patients on proper oral hygiene techniques to maintain healthy teeth and gums.
- Counsel patients about plaque control, developing individualized at-home oral hygiene programs, and the importance of good nutrition for maintaining optimal oral health.
- Administer smoking cessation programs.

Where do dental hygienists work?

- Dental offices of general dentists and dental specialists
- Public health agencies, hospitals and community health clinics
- Public school systems, dental schools and dental hygiene education programs
- Dental equipment and product sales and research

What are some future opportunities for dental hygienists?

- 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 who are over 23 years of age and those seeking a career change.
- Compensation depends on responsibilities, geographic location and other factors.

Information obtained from AHDA & ADA publications, March 2021.