



DENTAL HYGIENE —

Major Steps

**** Use this information sheet as a guide only.** Please verify all admission requirements with your transfer school.

Thinking about a Dental Hygiene Major?

Dental hygienists discuss general health issues with patients and update dental charts. They inspect patients' teeth for deposits and decay, and look for any shrinkage or disease in the gums. When x-rays need updating, or when there are new patients, hygienists take x-rays. They take great care to position the camera at different angles around the head and mouth. They also develop film for dentists to use as they diagnose problems and plan treatments.

Hygienists use dental instruments to clean plaque and various stains from teeth, in preparation for the dentist. Part of that preparation may include applying numbing agents to a patient's gums. Hygienists also apply fluoride to children's teeth.

Finally, dental hygienists perform finish work on certain procedures so the dentist can go on to the next patient. Examples include removing excess cement from tooth surfaces or polishing fillings. They report what work they do to the dentist, including any other concerns they may find. They counsel clients about dental health. They may teach dental health education for school children and other members of the community.

***Source: Washington Occupation Information System (WOIS)**

How can you prepare for transfer into a Dental Hygiene major?

Highline DOES NOT offer a dental hygiene program. However, you can enroll in prerequisite courses at Highline in preparation for attending dental hygiene programs at other schools. It will take you at least one year to complete your courses at Highline. **If you choose to finish a degree at Highline and then apply to dental hygiene school, complete the AA Option A degree (emphasis: biology).**

Dental Hygiene is a highly competitive field for admission. It is critical that you have competitive grades in your prerequisite courses. It is also important that you obtain some experience in a dental setting so that you have some understanding of the field. It is also valuable that you have an understanding of cultures and perspectives other than your own. Having good judgment and critical thinking skills plus the ability to handle stress will be extremely relevant to your future career as a dental hygienist. Dental Hygienists must also be sensitive to the fact that patients may be fearful and uncomfortable during their visits.

While in High School, enroll in:

- A minimum of two years of Algebra
- Biology and Chemistry classes
- Four years of English. Develop strong writing skills.
- Psychology, Nutrition and Speech classes
- Computer classes, particularly Word and Excel

Work with an advisor

Advisors in the Educational Planning and Advising Center (EPAC) can help you plan your prerequisite courses.

Drop-in advising appointments are available in EPAC, building 6:

Monday and Tuesday—8 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Wednesday—8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Thursday—8 a.m. - 2 p.m., 3 p.m.-5 p.m.

Friday—9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (9am– 1pm Summer quarter)

Listing of Washington Dental Hygiene Programs

At the Associate's Degree Level:

Clark College

Vancouver, WA
<http://www.clark.edu/>
 (360) 992-2345
healthocadv@clark.edu

Columbia Basin College

Pasco, WA
<http://www.columbiabasin.edu/>
 (509) 542-4571
lstedman@columbiabasin.edu

Lake Washington Technical College

Kirkland, WA
<http://www.lwtc.edu/>
 (425) 739-8300
info@lwtc.edu

Pierce College

Lakewood, WA
<http://www.pierce.ctc.edu/>
 (253) 964-6796

Seattle Central Community College

Seattle, WA
<http://seattlecentral.edu/>
 (206) 587-4186
scccdh@sccd.ctc.edu

Shoreline Community College

Shoreline, WA
<http://www.shoreline.edu/>
 (206) 546-4711
pduggan@shoreline.edu

Yakima Valley Community College

Yakima, WA
<http://www.yvcc.edu/>
 (509) 574-4916
dfulton@yvcc.edu

At the Bachelor's Degree Level:

Eastern Washington U

Spokane, WA
<http://www.ewu.edu/>
 (509) 368-6550
dental.hygiene@mail.ewu.edu

Dental Hygiene Prerequisite Courses

The following classes are common prerequisites for students interested in receiving a degree in Dental Hygiene. For additional courses, not shown, please see the links listed below by your college of interest.

Biology& 241, 242, 260

Chemistry& 121, 131

Nutrition& 101

Psych& 100

English& 101

CLARK COLLEGE: http://www.clark.edu/academics/list_index.php#dental

COLUMBIA BASIN COLLEGE: <http://www.columbiabasin.edu/home/index.asp?page=650>

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY: <http://www.ewu.edu/x6849.xml>

PIERCE COLLEGE: <http://www.pierce.ctc.edu/Denthyg/qualifications.php>

SEATTLE CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE: <http://seattlecentral.edu/programs/dental.php>

SHORELINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: <http://www.shoreline.edu/dental/>

YAKIMA VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE: <http://www.yvcc.edu/programs/DentalHygiene/Prerequisites.asp>

LAKE WASHINGTON TECHNICAL COLLEGE: <http://lwtchost.ctc.edu/dept/catalog10/programs/ce/dentalhygiene/>

****Always check with your Dental Hygiene program to verify all admission information, including:**

prerequisite courses, minimum grades, timeline for completing the prerequisite courses, application deadlines, number of repeat courses allowed, dental hours/experience, health occupations testing, etc.

Since dental hygiene is a highly competitive program, you should strive to achieve grades that are substantially higher than what is listed on dental hygiene admission web sites.