

## Sample Occupations in Dental

- > Dental Assistant
- > Dental Ceramist
- > Dental Hygienist
- > Dental Laboratory Technician
- > Dentist
- > Health Science Education Teacher
- > Orthodontic Technician

### Dental Facts

- The ancient Romans were dental experts. They used gold crowns, and used a paste made of ground eggshell and honey to clean teeth.<sup>1</sup>
- The first known toothbrushes were tree twigs. As the tips of the twigs were chewed, the fibers of the twigs spread out, and were then used to clean the teeth.<sup>1</sup>
- In early America, blacksmiths and barbers were dentists.
- Today, all 50 states, including the District of Columbia, require dentists to be licensed. To qualify for a license, candidates must graduate from an accredited dental school and pass written and practical examinations.

<sup>1</sup> Valley Dental Group, <http://www.valleydentalgroup.net/id6.html>

Break free of the traditions and barriers that limit your choices.  
What's stopping you? Be different! Try something new!  
Is a nontraditional career in your future?

# Dental Assisting

A NONTRADITIONAL CAREER PATH FOR MEN



Talk to your school counselor  
about a nontraditional career in dental.

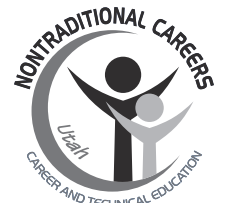
*Break free of the barriers that limit your career choices.*

[www.UtahCTE.org](http://www.UtahCTE.org)



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HEALTH SCIENCE EDUCATION



## Nontraditional Careers

Did you know a nontraditional career is any occupation in which women or men comprise 25 percent or less of its total employment?

Nontraditional jobs are attractive because they generally offer higher entry-level wages.

Choosing a nontraditional career path can mean:

- > Greater job satisfaction.
- > Higher wages and better benefits.
- > Great advancement opportunities.
- > Economic self-sufficiency.
- > Broader job opportunities.
- > Freedom to pursue a career related to your interests and abilities.

**BREAK with tradition and explore a nontraditional career!**

## Dental Assisting as a Career

Dental assistants perform a variety of duties, including sterilizing and disinfecting instruments and equipment, preparing patients for treatment, and updating dental records. During dental procedures, assistants work alongside the dentist to provide assistance.

Reading comprehension, writing, active listening, and speaking skills are critical for this career. Most assistants learn their skills on the job, though many are trained in dental assisting programs offered by community and junior colleges, trade schools, and technical institutes.

## CTE Pathways

High school is a great time to try out a wide range of Career Pathways by enrolling in Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. As an added bonus, you will be developing work related skills that can be put to immediate and profitable use.

CTE provides courses and Pathways consistent with industry training and certification, thus providing depth and meaning for both visual and hands-on learning and education that can be applied in today's job market.

Through participation in CTE, Health Science Education can guide you as you take courses in the Dental Assisting Pathway.

By taking Health Science Education courses, you can gain an important foundation of knowledge and skills necessary for continued education in the health sciences.

## Employment

In 2008, dental assistants held over 295,000 jobs in the U.S. Dental assistants work directly with the dentist to increase the efficiency and quality of dental care to the patient.<sup>1</sup>

In Utah, an entry-level position for a dental assistant generally starts at an average hourly wage of \$9.40, or \$19,552 per year.<sup>2</sup> Increases in salary are based upon training, education, and experience. In Utah, a dental assistant must be licensed.

## Working Conditions

Dental assistants work in a well-lit, clean environment. Their work area is usually near the dental chair, so that they can arrange instruments, materials, and medication, and hand them to the dentist when needed. Dental assistants wear gloves and a mask to protect themselves from infectious diseases. Following safety procedures minimizes the risks involved in handling radiographic equipment.

*Approximately 10 percent of people employed as dental assistants are men.<sup>3</sup>*

## Outlook

As the population increases, so will the demand for dental services. In the future, dentists are expected to hire more assistants to perform routine tasks so that they may devote their own time to more complex procedures.

In Utah, the annual growth rate in this occupation is expected to be 5.2 percent through the year 2016, with employment totaling 6,030.<sup>2</sup>

## UtahFutures

Log on to UtahFutures.org to learn more about dental assisting as a career. From the home page, click on the "occupations" option to find an occupation that interests you and link to the description for that occupation. (Refer to the sample list of occupations on the back of this page.) Check out employment opportunities, working conditions, outlook, skills and abilities, and wages for your selected occupation.

**Is a nontraditional career in your future?**



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>2</sup> Utah Department of Workforce Services

<sup>3</sup> Steve Thompson, "Non-traditional Jobs for Men," July 25, 2007, <http://tiny.cc/flraw>