Dentistry

Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD)
What is Dentistry?

Dentistry is the branch of the healing arts and sciences devoted to maintaining the health of the teeth, gums, and other hard and soft tissues of the oral cavity and adjacent structures. A dentist is a scientist and clinician dedicated to the highest standards of health through prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of oral diseases and conditions.

Why should I become a dentist?

- Service to Others: Help people maintain and improve their oral health, quality of life and appearance
- Balanced Lifestyle: Dentistry offers flexibility to balance professional and personal life
- Empower Your Patients: Give patients smiles they are proud to wear
- Technology and Research: Be involved with the scientific advancement of dentistry
- Be a Leader: Earn respect from your family, friends and community
- Prevention/Education: Be an educator on the importance of oral health
- Detect Disease: Treat oral health and detect disease – including cancer and cardiovascular
- Be Creative: Use your artistic and scientific talents
- Success Potential: With the aging population and increase in access to care, the demand and need for dentistry is on the rise
- Self-Employment: Own a dental practice and be your own boss
Did you know...

Advances in dental research including genetic engineering, the discovery of links between oral and systemic diseases, the development of salivary diagnostics and the continued development of new materials and techniques make dentistry an exciting, challenging and rewarding profession. Today's dentists are highly sophisticated health professionals who provide a wide range of oral health care that contributes to the general health and quality of their patients' lives. Approximately 80% of all dental school graduates are general dentists while 20% of dental school graduates choose to specialize.

Many dental academicians say the chief benefit of their career is the stimulation of working with outstanding colleagues and bright young students. But another significant benefit is the variety of activities, which can include: teaching in didactic, clinical, and laboratory areas; patient care in the clinic or a faculty practice; designing and conducting research; writing for journals; exploring new technologies and materials; and administration.

**Dental Specialties**
- Dental Public Health
- Endodontics
- Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics
- Pediatric Dentistry
- Periodontics
- Prosthodontics

**Practice Options**
- Self-Employed in Private Practice
- Practice as a Salaried Employee or Associate
- Academic Dentistry and Dental Education
- Dental Research
- Service in the Federal Government
- Public Health Care Policy
- International Health Care
Dental Schools with PU Alums

Harvard School of Dental Medicine: hdsm.harvard.edu
NYU Dentistry: dental.nyu.edu
Temple University School of Dentistry: dentistry.temple.edu
University of Florida College of Dentistry: dental.ufl.edu
University of North Carolina School of Dentistry: dentistry.unc.edu
University of the Pacific School of Dentistry: dental.pacific.edu
University of Pennsylvania Dental Medicine: dental.upenn.edu
University of San Francisco School of Dentistry: dentistry.ucsf.edu
Curriculum at a Glance

Most dental school programs are 4 years in length, courses include:

- Biological sciences: human anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, microbiology, and pharmacology; plus oral anatomy, oral pathology, and oral histology
- Clinical sciences: prevention, diagnosis, treatment planning, and all aspects of clinical dentistry
- Courses related to the practice of dentistry: working effectively with patients from many cultural backgrounds, ethics and professionalism, behavioral science, practice management, working with allied dental professionals and the total health care team.

Years One and Two, students study:

- biological sciences to learn about the structure and function of the human body and its diseases
- oral diagnosis
- dental treatment procedures through practice on models and simulated patients

In many dental schools, first and second year students interact with patients and provide basic oral health care.

Years Three and Four, students focus increasingly on clinical study and patient care:

- interacting with patients regarding prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of oral disease disorders
- application of principles of oral diagnosis, treatment planning, restorative dentistry, periodontics, oral surgery, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, prosthodontics, endodontics and other aspects of patient care
- treating the chronically ill, disabled, special care, geriatric, and pediatric patients

Dental students typically provide patient care in dental school clinics, hospitals, and in local community health centers.

After Dental School:

In many states, dental school graduates may complete a licensure examination and become licensed to practice general dentistry. Some states require graduates to complete at least one year of additional training by completing a General Practice Residency, an Advanced Education in General Dentistry program, or other advanced education.

*adapted from the ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools
Sample Curriculum from University of Pennsylvania

First Year Curriculum
- Biochemistry
- Manual Dexterity (Virtual Reality) Lab
- Restorative Dentistry
- Histology/Embryology
- Dental Materials
- Community Oral Health I
- Intro to Medicine
- Gross & Radiological Anatomy
- Dissection
- Microbiology
- Physiology
- Dental Auxiliary Utilization (patient care)
- Radiology
- Preclinical Periodontics

Second Year Curriculum
- Orthodontics
- Dentures
- Anesthesia/Pain Control/Emergency
- Community Oral Health II: Local & Global Public Health
- Pathology
- Manual Dexterity (Virtual Reality) Lab
- Fixed Prosthetics
- Pharmacology
- Dental Auxiliary Utilization II
- Principles of Medicine
- Endodontics
- Diagnostic Radiology
- Periodontics
- Adjunctive Orthodontics
- Intro to Clinics/Practice Management
- Selectives

Third Year Curriculum
- Pediatric Dentistry Lecture/Lab & Clinic
- Endodontics Lecture & Clinic
- Periodontics Lecture & Clinic
- Health Promotion Seminar
- Practicum in Community Health Promotion
- Implant Dentistry Lecture/Lab
- Preventive and Interceptive Clinic
- Restorative Dentistry Lecture & Clinic
- Orthodontics II Lecture
- Oral Medicine Lecture
- Oral Surgery Lecture & Clinic
- Radiology Clinic
- Practice Management
- Clinic Seminar
- General Dentistry Lecture
- Selectives

Fourth Year Curriculum
- Adjunctive Orthodontics Clinic
- Community Oral Health
- Restorative Dentistry Clinic
- Pediatric Dentistry Clinic
- Endodontics Clinic
- Admissions and Emergency Care Clinic
- Oral Surgery Clinic
- Radiology Clinic/Seminar
- Periodontics Clinic
- Hospital Assignment Clinic
- Clinical Seminar
- Externship (four weeks – US or abroad)
For More Information...

- ADA.org
  American Dental Association
- ExploreHealthCareers.org
  Explore Health Careers
- ADEA.org
  American Dental Education Association