As a dental hygienist, you will be an important asset to the dental office. You will help patients maintain healthy teeth and gums by cleaning and polishing teeth and removing stains, tartar and plaque. You will take X-rays of teeth, teach patients to have good oral hygiene and perform various other preventative dental care functions, such as applying cavity-preventative agents like fluoride and sealants.

In some states dental hygienists can administer anesthetics, place and carve filling materials and periodontal dressings, and remove sutures.
What You Will Learn

As a student in Pima Medical Institute's Dental Hygiene program, you’ll learn skills necessary to become a successful entry-level dental hygienist, including radiography, oral pathology, periodontics, and patient management of diverse populations. You will also build solid communications skills and develop a strong foundation in dental materials and anatomy and physiology.

Job Outlook

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of dental hygienists is projected to grow 20 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. The demand for dental services will increase as the population ages and as research continues to link oral health to overall health.

Employment

The majority of dental hygienists work part time and nearly all are employed in dentist offices. A small number may work for employment services, in physicians’ offices or in other industries.

Certification

Dental hygienists are required to be licensed in the state where they practice. Nearly all states require that dental hygienists graduate from an accredited dental hygiene school and pass national and regional written and clinical examinations administered by the American Dental Association’s Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations and by state or regional testing agencies.