

Dental Hygiene

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.



Trusted. Respected. Preferred.

Dental Hygiene Course Outline

Quarter I					
Course #	Course	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credits
COMM 1000	Communications & Composition	30			3.0
BIOL 1000	Anatomy & Physiology	60			6.0
BIOL 1100	Microbiology & Immunology	45			4.5
DHYG 1200	Introduction to Dental Hygiene	30			3.0
DHYG 1000	Dental Anatomy	45			4.5
Quarter I Total		210			21.0

Quarter II					
Course #	Course	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credits
CHEM 1000	Chemistry/Biochemistry	45			4.5
DHYG 1010	Head & Neck Anatomy	30			3.0
DHYG 1020	Medical Emergencies	15			1.5
DHYG 1210	Preclinical Dental Hygiene	45		84	7.0
DHYG 1100	Radiology	30	45		5.0
Quarter II Total		165	45	84	21.0

Quarter III					
Course #	Course	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credits
DHYG 1220	Dental Hygiene I	30	36		4.5
DHYG 1230	Clinical Dental Hygiene I			96	3.0
DHYG 1110	Biomaterials (lect online, lab on-ground)	30	30		4.5
DHYG 1030	Periodontics	45			4.5
DHYG 1040	Pharmacology for Dental Hygiene	45			4.5
Quarter III Total		150	66	96	21.0

Quarter IV					
Course #	Course	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credits
PSYC 1000	Psychology	30			3.0
DHYG 1240	Dental Hygiene II	45			4.5
DHYG 1250	Clinical Dental Hygiene II			120	4.0
DHYG 2020	Patient/Pain Management	30	45		5.0
DHYG 2000	General/Oral Pathology	45			4.5
Quarter IV Total		150	45	120	21.0

Quarter V					
Course #	Course	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credits
SOCI 1000	Sociology	30			3.0
DHYG 2200	Dental Hygiene III	45			4.5
DHYG 2210	Clinical Dental Hygiene III			144	4.5
DHYG 2010	Nutrition & Cariology	36			3.5
DHYG 2100	Community & Public Dental Health I	30			3.0
Quarter V Total		141		144	18.5

Quarter VI					
Course #	Course	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credits
DHYG 2110	Community & Public Dental Health II	30			3.0
DHYG 2130	Review of Dental Hygiene	50			5.0
DHYG 2220	Dental Hygiene IV	36			3.5
DHYG 2230	Clinical Dental Hygiene IV			144	4.5
DHYG 2120	Principles of Dental Hygiene Practice	30			3.0
Quarter VI Total		146		144	19.0

Program Totals		962	156	588	121.5
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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 7 percent from 2024 to 2034, much faster than the average for all occupations. About 16,400 openings for dental hygienists are projected each year, on average, over the decade.*

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.

The program in dental hygiene in San Antonio is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation and has been granted the accreditation status of “initial accreditation”. The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at (800) 232-6108 or at 401 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 3300, Chicago, IL 60611-4250. The Commission’s web address is: <https://coda.ada.org>

Notice of Accreditation Status: Pima Medical Institute (Phoenix) is currently a developing program that has submitted an application for initial accreditation to the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). The program is not currently accredited. Enrollment of students is contingent upon receiving the status of Initial Accreditation from CODA.

* Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Dental Hygienists, at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dental-hygienists.htm> (visited December 8, 2025).



- Hands-on training
- Financial aid if qualified
- Career planning services