Dental Hygienist

Job Description
Dental hygienists work with the dentist to provide comprehensive
dental care to patients. A career in dental hygiene offers variety and
personal satisfaction.

Dental hygienists clean teeth and provide preventive dental care,
as well as teach patients how to practice good oral hygiene. They
examine patients’ teeth and gums, recording the presence of diseases
or abnormalities. They may explain the relationship between diet and
oral health and educate patients on how to properly brush and floss
teeth. Hygienists use rotary, hand instruments, take X-rays, and may
administer local anesthetics in some states.

Professional Outlook
Dental hygiene is projected to be one of the 30 fastest growing
professions. Employment of dental hygienists is expected to continue to
grow through 2008. This is due to a combination of factors such as;
people are retaining their natural teeth longer and are aware of the
importance of regular dental care. As the dentists’ workload increases,
they are expected to hire more hygienists to perform preventive dental
care. Additionally, employment opportunities may include research,
teaching or marketing.

Education
A career in dental hygiene requires a minimum of two years of
college education. Some dental hygiene programs are longer than
two years and may culminate in a baccalaureate degree. Because
the dental hygiene education program includes dental and basic
science courses, high school preparation should include biology and
chemistry.

Contact Information
California Dental Association
http://www.cda.org

American Dental Association
http://www.ada.org

American Dental Hygienists’ Association
http://www.adha.org

California Dental Hygienists Association
http://www.cdha.org

Committee on Dental Auxiliaries
http://www.comda.ca.gov