

Dentist – Smiling Career

Dentistry is the branch of the healing arts and sciences devoted to maintaining oral health. It is a dynamic health profession, offering opportunities to become a successful, highly respected member of the community. It is accepted as a professional field which help people maintain their health and appearance. Dentists or dental surgeons provide surgical, medical and other forms of treatment for oral and dental disorders and diseases by examining teeth and mouth of the patients.

Education & Skills Required:

The Bachelor of Dental Surgery or BDS, is commonly known prepares a student for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of all diseases, malformations and injuries related to the mouth and its components. To get into this field one must pass the 10+2 level with Physics, Chemistry and Biology to apply for the competitive entrance examination. This degree program is a five-year course that is divided into four parts each of one years' duration followed by a year of internship. The Dental Council of India registers those who have completed the BDS to practice dentistry. After completion of this degree, many graduates choose to join a government hospital to get hands-on experience.

Dentists must have excellent communication skills. They must be detail oriented, so patients receive appropriate treatments and medications. Must be good at working with their hands. Most dentists work in their own practice. This requires them to manage and lead a staff. Dentists may work for long periods of time with patients who need special attention and need a strong Physical stamina. Good at problem-solving skills and must evaluate patients' symptoms and choose the appropriate treatments.

Specialization:

A BDS degree alone is not considered enough to succeed in this profession so one will have to go for a Master of Dental Science (MDS) degree. One can also pursue various certificate and diploma courses to upgrade and update the knowledge in this field. Keeping up with the trends of open and distance learning, the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), in collaboration with the Dental Council of India launched two programs, a PG certificate course in Endodontics and a PG certificate course in Oral Implant.

Career prospects:

If you are looking for a rewarding career in health care with a competitive salary and a sustainable work-life balance, dentistry may be for you. A degree in dentistry offers a number of career options, including: Private practice either as a general dentist or specialist (self-employed, employee, associate/ partner), Dental departments of government or private hospitals, nursing homes, dental clinics and health departments, Teaching in dental colleges, Medical insurance firms, Researcher or adviser in a pharmaceutical or a dental care company, Armed forces and State Government Jobs.

India is fast gaining ground as a hot destination to get that perfect smile at a fraction of the cost, compared to many parts of the world. So, does that make dentistry a lucrative career option? Undoubtedly! Most dentists are general practitioners and handle a variety of dental needs. Other dentists' practice in one of nine specialty areas:

Dental public health specialists	• Promote good dental health and the prevention of dental diseases in specific communities.
Endodontists	• Perform root-canal therapy, by which they remove the nerves and blood supply from injured or infected teeth.
Oral and maxillofacial radiologists	• Diagnose diseases in the head and neck through the use of imaging technologies.
Oral and maxillofacial surgeons	• Operate on the mouth, jaws, teeth, gums, neck, and head, including procedures such as surgically repairing a cleft lip and palate or removing impacted teeth.
Oral pathologists	• Diagnose conditions in the mouth, such as bumps or ulcers, and oral diseases, such as cancer.
Orthodontists	• Straighten teeth by applying pressure to the teeth with braces or other appliances.
Pediatric dentists	• Focus on dentistry for children and special-needs patients.
Periodontists	• Treat the gums and bone supporting the teeth.
Prosthodontist	• Replace missing teeth with permanent fixtures, such as crowns and bridges, or with removable fixtures such as dentures.