

Dietetic Technician



Career Description

Dietetic technicians assist in shaping the public's food choices and provide nutrition assessment and counseling to persons with illnesses or injuries. Technicians work under the supervision of the registered dietitian. They often screen patients to identify nutrition problems, provide patient education and counseling to individuals and groups, develop menus and recipes, supervise food service personnel, purchase food, and monitor inventory and food quality.



Employment Characteristics

As an integral part of the nutrition care team, dietetic technicians work with registered dietitians in a number of different settings, such as hospitals, public health nutrition programs, and long-term care facilities. Technicians also work in child nutrition and school lunch programs, community wellness centers, health clubs, nutrition programs for the elderly, food companies, restaurants, and food service management.



Salary

According to the ADA's 2007 Dietetics compensation and benefit survey, half of all registered dietetic technicians employed full-time in their primary position for 5 years or less earn annual incomes of between \$30,000 and \$40,000. Salary levels may vary based on location, scope of responsibility, and supply of DTRs. For more information, refer to www.ama-assn.org/go/hpsalary.



Educational Programs

Length. Two years (associate degree), combining classroom and supervised practical experience, at a US regionally accredited college or university. After completing this program, individuals are eligible to take the registration examination for dietetic technicians. Those who pass the exam become Dietetic Technicians, Registered, and can use the initials "DTR" after their names.

Prerequisites. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalency and must meet institutional entrance requirements.

Curriculum. Didactic instruction and a minimum of 450 hours of supervised practice experiences make up the curriculum. Food, nutrition, and management courses are emphasized, supported by the sciences, especially biology, anatomy, and chemistry. Mathematics, english, sociology, psychology, communications, and business courses are also important.



Inquiries

Careers

Inquiries regarding careers in dietetics and nutrition should be addressed to:

Accreditation and Education Programs
American Dietetic Association
120 S Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
312 899-0040, Ext 5400
E-mail: education@eatright.org

Certification/Registration

Inquiries regarding dietetic technician registration should be addressed to:

Commission on Dietetic Registration
120 S Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
312 899-0040, Ext 5500
E-mail: cdr@eatright.org

Program Accreditation and Approval

Accreditation and Education Programs
American Dietetic Association
120 S Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
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E-mail: education@eatright.org

Accredited and Approved Programs

A list of accredited and approved programs with selected information is available on the ADA Web site at: www.eatright.org/cade