

Dietetic Technician

■ Job Description

The dietetic technician works in partnership with the Registered Dietitian and other professionals to provide quality food and nutrition services. Technicians working in clinical areas help patients select nutritious diets and counsel clients on ways to select foods to promote health and treat disease. Dietary management technicians work in food production, planning and pricing menus, ordering and receiving food, and training and supervising food services personnel.

■ Job Settings

Hospitals, long-term care facilities, public health agencies, and industry

■ Projected Need

Above average growth is expected in the employment of dietetic technicians in Illinois and the nation through 2010. In addition to increased public interest and awareness of health and nutrition, the growing population of elderly people should create job openings for qualified technicians. Nursing homes, home health agencies, and other groups that work with the elderly will all need dietetic technicians. Individuals who have completed formal training programs should have the best opportunities.

In Illinois, there were about 1,420 people employed in this small occupation in 2000.

■ Salaries

According to the American Dietetic Association, half of all dietetic technicians, registered (DTRs) in the U.S. who have been working in the field for four years or less earned between \$24,000 and \$30,000 per year in 2002. Salary levels vary with employment setting, geographical location, scope of responsibility, and supply of DTRs.

In Illinois, the median wage for dietetic technicians is \$8.15 per hour.

■ Related Careers

Dietetic technicians can go on for a bachelor's degree in dietetics or hotel/motel food management.

■ Differences in Training

Dietetic technicians learn their skills through formal training programs. Two-year colleges offer these programs and grant an associate's degree. In this type of program you learn about nutrition, menu planning, food preparation and nutritional counseling. In Illinois, training is available at Malcolm X College, Chicago; and Harper College, Palatine.

■ Related Educational Programs

The programs of study listed below are the recommended areas of study to pursue for this occupation. Clicking on these will lead to files that show in-state and national schools that offer these programs.

The following link(s) will take you to CIS for more information. CIS requires an ID and password that can be obtained at <http://cis.ilworkinfo.com/loginhelp/login.asp>

[Dietary Management Dietetics](#)

■ Credentials

Registration is optional for dietetic technicians. However, registration is a sign of the technician's skills and knowledge. The Commission on Dietetic Registration awards the Dietetic Technician, Registered (DTR) credential. The requirements for the DTR include completion of an associate's degree from an accredited college or university; completion of a dietetic technician program that is approved by the American Dietetics Association; including 450 hours of approved pre-professional experience/internship; and passage of a written exam.

For more information about the DTR credential, contact the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

■ Resources

American Dietetic Association
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
Phone: 800.877.1600
E-mail: education@eatright.org
<http://www.eatright.org>
Click on "Careers and Students."

Each year the American Dietetic Association Foundation awards undergraduate and graduate scholarships to student members of the association. The number of scholarships

available and the dollar amount vary from year-to-year. For the 2003-2004 academic year, 144 scholarships were awarded in amounts ranging from \$500 to \$4,500.

Commission on Dietetic Registration
American Dietetic Association
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
Phone: 312.899.0040
E-mail: cdr@eatright.org
<http://www.cdrnet.org>