

# Dental hygienists with a specialty in restoring teeth

Knowing the roles and expertise of a dental hygienist can help individuals maximize their oral health care.

All registered dental hygienists, RDH, are regulated health-care professionals, whose primary concern is promoting good oral health. Registered restorative dental hygienists display the RRDH designation after their name, which means they have attained a specialty to perform restorative procedures.

In addition to providing traditional services which prevent gum disease and tooth decay, restorative dental hygienists have enhanced knowledge and skills, enabling them to use the latest products and techniques to restore teeth. They are important members of the oral health-care team, working together on treatment planning and care for clients.

## Disease prevention and restoration

Restorative dental hygienists combine clinical knowledge for preventing oral disease with the artistry and innovation required for esthetic and restorative procedures.

## Specialty education

Restorative dental hygienists have completed both the dental hygiene diploma program as well as the one-year post-graduate certificate program in restorative.

The restorative program builds on the dental hygienist's extensive clinical knowledge and skills, while focusing on new materials, techniques and standards for tooth restoration.

The skills of restorative dental hygienists include:

- placing and finishing traditional and bonded fillings;
- taking final impressions for crowns, bridges and implants;

*As professional health-care providers, dental hygienists are primarily concerned with promoting good oral health. Dental hygiene is among the largest of the regulated healthcare professions in the province. In Ontario all dental hygienists are registered with the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario, which regulates the profession to ensure the public receives safe and ongoing comprehensive oral care.*



- making occlusal (bite) adjustments for restorations, crowns and bridges; and
- torquing (tightening) implants

## Work settings

Restorative dental hygienists most often work in general private practice. They are also employed in public health, hospitals, education and industry. All dental hygienists must follow strict standards of practice set by the regulatory college to ensure the public receives safe and ongoing comprehensive oral health care.

## Body-mouth connection

As important members of the oral health-care team, dental hygienists have a distinctive clinical and educational role in recognizing, treating and managing oral diseases. Bacteria from oral infections are often the source for a variety of health-related problems. A healthy mouth is important for good general health and well-being.