



RESPIRATORY THERAPY

What is a Respiratory Therapist?

Respiratory therapists assist physicians in the diagnosis, treatment and care of patients with respiratory and cardiopulmonary disorders. Ventilators and other equipment are used to treat patients with heart or lung problems. Respiratory therapists may specialize in areas such as anaesthesia, critical care, pediatrics, cardiopulmonary diagnostics and respiratory home care.

Respiratory therapists generally have the following responsibilities:

- Performing diagnostic tests, such as arterial blood gas analysis, to measure lung and heart functions;
- Operating and monitoring respiratory equipment to administer treatments such as oxygen and inhaled medications;
- Operating, monitoring, maintaining and testing a variety of diagnostic and therapeutic equipment;
- Providing patient and family education;
- Assessing patients and performing or assisting with interventions such as line insertions, tube insertions and supporting patients' breathing;
- Performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation on a variety of patients (newborns, trauma victims, and people with heart and lung disease, etc.);
- Assisting with transport of high-risk patients;
- Assisting with high-risk deliveries;
- Assisting anaesthetists in the operating room; and
- Providing respiratory care to patients in their home.

A career in respiratory therapy requires:

- Good judgment;
- Excellent interpersonal skills;
- An ability to maintain composure in critical medical situations; and
- An aptitude for the health sciences.

How do you become a Respiratory Therapist?

Employment as a respiratory therapist in Saskatchewan requires:

- Graduation from a school of respiratory therapy accredited by the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists;
- Successful completing the registration exam through the Canadian Board for Respiratory Care, or already licensed to work in another province

Where can you be trained to be a Respiratory Therapist?

Alberta

Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
<http://www.sait.ca/calendars/daycalendar/courses/art.htm>

Please Note: Through an inter-provincial agreement, a number of spaces at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) are reserved exclusively for qualified Saskatchewan students on a competitive basis. These seats are reserved exclusively for qualified Saskatchewan students.

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
<http://www.nait.ab.ca>

British Columbia

University College of the Cariboo
<http://www.cariboo.bc.ca/index.html>

Manitoba

University of Manitoba
School of Medical Rehabilitation
<http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/units/medrehab/rt/>

Ontario
Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology
<http://cecat.algonquincollege.com/program.cfm?query=60>

Canadore College of Applied Arts and Technology,
<http://www.canadorec.on.ca/Programs/FullTime/HealthSciences/040301.cfm>

Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology
<http://www.fanshawec.on.ca/programs/rst2.asp>

Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences
<http://www.michener.ca/lrc/lrcrespi.php>

What do you need to get into a SAIT Respiratory Therapy program?

The minimum requirements for the SAIT are:

- A High School Diploma or equivalent; and
- An overall average of at least 60% in each of Biology 30, Chemistry 30, Pure Math 30, Applied Math 30 or Math 33, and English 30 or 33.

What does a Respiratory Therapist study?

A course in respiratory therapy at SAIT includes the following courses

- Patient assessment and evaluation
- Respiratory care
- First aid
- Basic life support
- Advanced cardiopulmonary procedures
- Neonatal resuscitation program
- Anatomy and physiology
- Respiratory instrumentation
- Pathophysiology and pharmacology
- Anesthesia

The third year (in the SAIT program) is spent in a practical application environment at an affiliated hospital. Saskatchewan students complete this year in either Regina or Saskatoon.

Where does a Respiratory Therapist work?

- Regional Health Authorities (hospitals, home care, and rehabilitation facilities)
- Sleep Disorder Laboratories
- Private Respiratory Home Care Companies
- Medical Supply Corporations

What is the salary of a Respiratory Therapist?

Respiratory therapists' pay rates are according to the SAHO Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan Collective Agreement. <http://www.hsa-sk.com/>

Related Links

Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists (CSRT)

<http://www.csrt.com/main.htm>

Lung Association of Saskatchewan

<http://www.sk.lung.ca/>

Saskatchewan Association of Respiratory Therapists (SART)

sart@sk.lung.ca

Please check the Saskatchewan Health Bursary webpage for information about bursaries for health science students: http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/hhrp_bursaries.html