

CAREER OUTLOOK

Employment opportunities for histologic technicians are expected to grow about as fast as the average for all other occupations. The US Department of Labor predicts an increase of 10% to 20% over the next eight years. The rapidly growing older population will be one reason for this growth, since older people tend to have more medical problems that will require lab work. New and improved diagnostic tests and other advancements in technology will also add to a rise in employment in this sector. As in most occupations, many openings will result from the need to replace workers who transfer to other companies, retire, or stop working for some other reason.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

National Society for Histotechnology
4201 Northview Drive, Suite 502
Bowie, MD 20716-2604
Phone: (301) 262-6221
Web: www.nsh.org

American Society of Clinical Pathologists
2100 W Harrison Street
Chicago, IL 60612-3798
Phone: (312) 738-1336
Web: www.ascp.org

Mississippi Society for Histotechnologists
Sally Jordan-President
Phone: (601) 362-9854
E-mail: CoffeeMom@prodigy.net

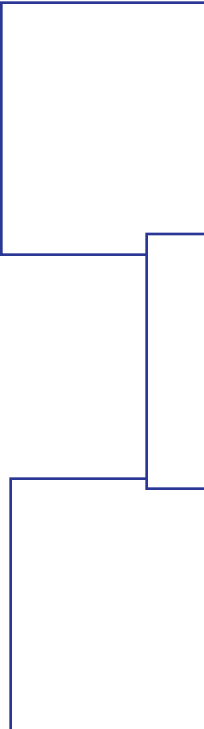


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POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

Histologic Technicians, also known as HTs, are laboratory personnel that prepare human or animal tissue samples for microscopic examination. These samples are used for diagnosing disease, conducting research, and teaching medical personnel. Slides are prepared by freezing and cutting sections of tissue, mounting the sample on a slide, and staining them in order to emphasize the details. Another way that samples can be accurately examined is embedding the sample in wax. The samples are then cut into very thin slices using a microtome. Other methods for studying tissue samples include dehydration, mounting, fixation, sectioning, decalcification, and microincineration. This work is often done while a surgical team is awaiting a pathologist's diagnosis; therefore the work must be done extremely quick and accurate. Since laboratory tests have become increasingly important in the detection, diagnosis, and treatment of many illnesses and diseases, histologic technicians are vital members of the medical laboratory team. Anyone interested in this type of laboratory work should patient and precise, and have the ability to work well under pressure.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The majority of histologic technicians work in pathology laboratories in hospitals and clinics. They may also work in medical or research laboratories, pharmaceutical companies, doctor's offices, or government agencies. Individuals may be required to work nights or weekends depending on place of employment.

HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

Students interested in this type of medical laboratory specialty should take high school courses in algebra, geometry, biology, chemistry, physics, computer skills, English, health occupations/medical professions education, and physical education.

COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

Students entering a histologic technician program should have a high school diploma or equivalent. Training programs are usually offered in hospitals or laboratory facilities. There are also accredited programs around the country that offer a certificate or degree upon completion. In addition to these educational requirements, students are expected to pass an examination given by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP).

EDUCA

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