



## What do Respiratory Therapists do?

Respiratory Therapists:

- Assist physicians in the diagnosis, treatment and management of patients with heart and lung abnormalities,
- Educate patients and families about the proper use of equipment, and
- Draw blood, perform stress tests and lung function testing, and mechanically ventilate patients who cannot breathe adequately.

## Where do Respiratory Therapists work?

Respiratory Therapists work in hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies and doctors' offices.

## How do I become a respiratory therapist?

### After high school...

Respiratory Therapists must have formal education and be credentialed. Minimum entry into the profession is at the associate degree level. Four-year bachelor's degree programs are available at certain educational institutions. All Respiratory Therapists in Pennsylvania must be legally credentialed by the

Board of Medicine or the Board of Osteopathic Medicine.

## Is this the career for me?

Respiratory Therapists need to be critical thinkers and decision makers who are able to follow instructions and adhere to safety procedures. They also need to be sensitive to patient needs, pay close attention to details and work well as part of a team. They need mechanical ability and manual dexterity to properly operate complex equipment. Recommended high school courses include Biology, Algebra and Chemistry.

## How much do Respiratory Therapists make?

The average annual salary for Respiratory Therapists is \$45,470.

## Will I be able to get a job in Pennsylvania?

Pennsylvania averages 142 openings for Respiratory Therapists annually.

*Where do I go for more information?*

# [www.pahealthcareers.org](http://www.pahealthcareers.org)

**Pennsylvania Center for Health Careers**

**901 North Seventh Street  
Suite 103  
Harrisburg, PA 17102**

**Telephone: 717-772-4966  
Fax: 717-783-4660  
[www.paworkforce.state.pa.us](http://www.paworkforce.state.pa.us)**