

Radiation Therapist



What do they do?

A Radiation Therapist uses targeted and carefully measured doses of radiation to treat cancer and other diseases in patients. They work closely with physicians, nurses and physicists to treat their patients.

Where do they work?

The majority of Radiation Therapists work in hospitals and outpatient centers. They are on their feet for long hours, they may need to lift or turn their patients, and they must be careful not to expose themselves or their patients to a harmful amount of radiation.

Pay:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average yearly income for Radiation Therapists is \$77,560.



Education:

The preferred entry-level education for Radiation Therapists is a four-year B.S. degree.

Radiation Therapy training in Wisconsin:

UW-La Crosse:

www.uwlax.edu/Health-Professions/Radiation-Therapy

High School students interested in becoming a Radiation Therapist should take classes in biology, anatomy & physiology, math, statistics, physics, psychology, health and social sciences.

Accreditation:

Education programs for Radiation Therapy are accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT).

www.jrcert.org



Professional Associations:

Radiation Therapists can choose to join the following professional associations:

American Society for Radiation Therapy:

www.astro.org



American Society of Radiologic Technologists:

www.asrt.org



Registry/Certification:

Graduates of an accredited Radiation Therapy program need to meet basic education, ethics, and examination requirements to become eligible for certification as a Registered Technologist (R.T.).

Candidates must pass a competency exam before they are eligible for employment. The exam is administered by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT):

www.arrt.org



Potential for Advancement:

With experience, a Radiation Therapist can advance to manage a radiation therapy program. Managers usually continue seeing patients while they take on additional responsibilities.

If interested, a Radiation Therapist could also move into research, education, or technical sales.

Medical Dosimetry:

Some Radiation Therapists will continue their education and become certified as a Medical Dosimetrist. This role is responsible for calculating the appropriate dose of radiation used when treating cancer patients.

According to explorehealthcareers.org, pay for a Medical Dosimetrist is between \$81,000 and \$112,000 and job outlook is very good.

Medical Dosimetry training in Wisconsin:

UW-La Crosse: www.uwlax.edu/medical-dosimetry-ms/

Job Outlook:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for Radiation Therapists is expected to grow 24 percent between 2012-2022, which is much faster than the average across all occupations.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2014-15 Edition*, Radiation Therapists:
<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/radiation-therapists.htm>

