

# Respiratory Therapist



## What do they do?

Respiratory therapists help patients who have difficulty breathing, like asthma, emphysema or sleep apnea.

Respiratory therapists may also provide care in emergencies, like a stroke or heart attack.

## Where do they work?

Respiratory therapists can work in hospitals, clinics, nursing home facilities or in patient's homes.

Respiratory therapists can work with patients of all ages, from newborn through old age.

## Pay:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average yearly income for respiratory therapists is \$55,870.



## Education:

Students interested in becoming a Respiratory Therapist can pursue either an Associate's or Bachelor's degree.

High School students interested in applying to respiratory therapy programs should take courses in health, biology, mathematics, chemistry and physics.

### Respiratory Therapy Schools in Madison:

MATC: [www.madisoncollege.edu](http://www.madisoncollege.edu)

## Accreditation:

Education programs in Respiratory Therapy are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care

You can find additional schools in Wisconsin and nationwide by going to their website:

[www.coarc.com](http://www.coarc.com)



## Professional Association:

Once certified, Respiratory Therapists can become members of the American Association for Respiratory Care.

You can learn more about the field of Respiratory Therapy by going to their website:

[www.aarc.com](http://www.aarc.com)



## Certification/License:

After graduating, students must become certified to work as a Respiratory Therapist.

Certification is administered by the National Board for Respiratory Care.

[www.nbrc.org](http://www.nbrc.org)

At the state level, Respiratory Therapists must also become licensed through the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services.

[www.dsps.wi.gov](http://www.dsps.wi.gov)



## Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT)

The CRT Exam includes 160 multiple choice questions covering clinical data, equipment and procedures.

Students must have the CRT credential before they can become an RRT.

## Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT)

The RRT Exam includes both a written exam and a clinical simulation portion.

## Potential for Advancement:

After working in the field as a CRT or RRT, someone could also specialize in the following areas of respiratory care:

- Pulmonary Function Technologist (CPFT or RPFT)
- Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty (CRT-NPS or RRT-NPS)
- Sleep Disorder Specialty (CRT-SDS or RRT-SDS)
- Adult Critical Care Specialty (RRT-ACCS)

## Job Outlook:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for Respiratory Therapists is expected to grow 19 percent between 2012-2022, which is faster than the average across all occupations.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2014-15 Edition*, Respiratory Therapists:

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/respiratory-therapists.htm>

