

Dental Profession Risk Factors

The Division of Dental Education tries to minimize the risk of exposure by following the Division of Dental Education Exposure Control Plan, which complies with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) Standards. These standards include universal precautions, which students are taught prior to beginning patient care. Even though the program makes extensive efforts to protect students enrolled in the healthcare programs from various hazards involved in working with patients, including exposure to body fluids contaminated with blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis, total protection from all potential hazards is not possible.

As health professionals, dental hygienists, and other dental team members are exposed to contagious diseases and are therefore at risk of becoming infected. The National Health Institute, the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health and Human Services all strongly recommend that health professionals at high risk have prescribed vaccinations. Dentists, their assistants and hygienists, are near the top of the list of those persons more likely to contract certain diseases than others of the health professions. The guidelines for immunizations are established in compliance with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). ***Therefore, it is recommended that dental health students be vaccinated against mumps, measles, rubella and hepatitis B.***

Students are required to provide documentation of Tine or IPPD (tuberculin) tests and must present evidence of having the Hepatitis B vaccine, or sign a disclaimer in order to attend clinics and before working on patients in clinic.

Criminal Background Check

FBI Background Checks are required prior to final acceptance. Area healthcare agencies prohibit students from providing care, treatment or services if an individual has been convicted of a certain crime. ***Once provisional acceptance is granted,*** students must order a background check which will be viewed by the Indiana University South Bend Division of Dental Education prior to final acceptance into dental hygiene program. The cost of this background check is the responsibility of the applicant.

Applicants accepted and enrolled in the Division of Dental Education must be free of criminal offenses that would disqualify them from participating in clinical experiences within the programs. These certain criminal offenses include, but not limited to: rape, criminal deviate conduct; exploitation of an endangered adult; failure to report batter, neglect, or exploitation of an endangered adult, murder; or voluntary manslaughter and a third offense for DUI.

A conviction of any of the above crimes at any time during an individual's life prohibits entering clinical rotations. In addition, if an individual was convicted of involuntary manslaughter; felony batter; a felony offense relating to a controlled substance; or theft within five (5) years before the individual's start of clinical rotations. Background checks will be completed and all convictions will be reviewed.

The student is responsible for notifying the Director of the Division of Dental Education of any arrests that occur during enrollment and after acceptance into the program. Failure to notify the Director shall be grounds for dismissal from the program. Graduation from the Division of Dental Education does not guarantee that those persons with an arrest record will be eligible to sit for State Board Licensure. That process is controlled by State Boards of Health/Dentistry, which reviews each case and makes the decision.