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Specialities in Dentistry



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Specialities in Dentistry

Dentistry is a broad study and has several official specialties. It takes a minimum of five years to be a dental surgeon, a year of community service and a dentist can choose to specialise.

The specialties in dentistry are:

Endodontics

A study in dentistry concerned with the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of injuries in the dental pulp and the nerve of the teeth. These specialists will normally perform root canal treatments and other root related treatments.



Orthodontics

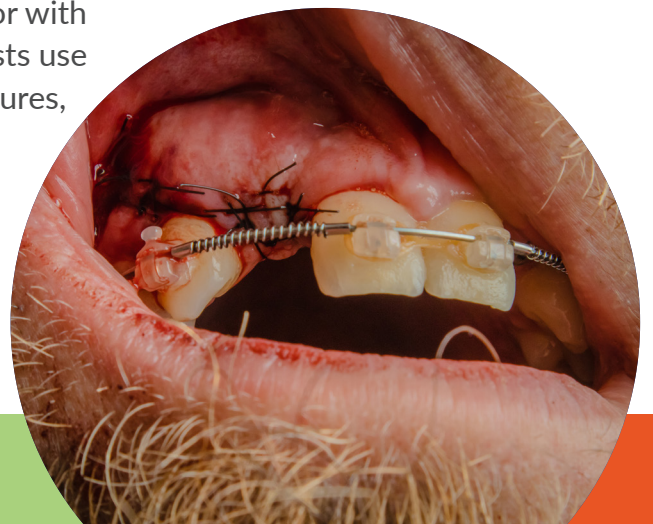
This is the specialty focused on the diagnosis, prevention, and correction of misaligned teeth and malocclusion. Orthodontists are responsible for neuromuscular abnormalities, skeletal abnormalities, and cleft and palate deformities. Orthodontic treatment includes the use of wires, dental brackets, and dental plates to move the dental bone and correct the bite of patients.

Periodontics

This field of study originates from the structures in the mouth referred to as the “periodontium”. These are the supporting tissues of the teeth, it is the gum, the cementum, the bone, and ligaments. Periodontists prevent and treat infections of the periodontium. They also are known for treating implant related conditions because the implant is placed into the bone which is part of the periodontium.

Prosthodontics

The specialty is intended for patients with missing teeth or with deficient teeth and other dental structures. Prosthodontists use biocompatible material to create substitutes such as dentures, implant components, and crowns for patients.





Oral and maxilla-facial surgery

Surgical treatment of dental diseases and conditions involving the natural functioning of hard and soft tissues in the head and neck region. These specialists treat oral cysts, cleft lip and palate deformities, tumours, trauma to dental structures, and masses in the jaws.

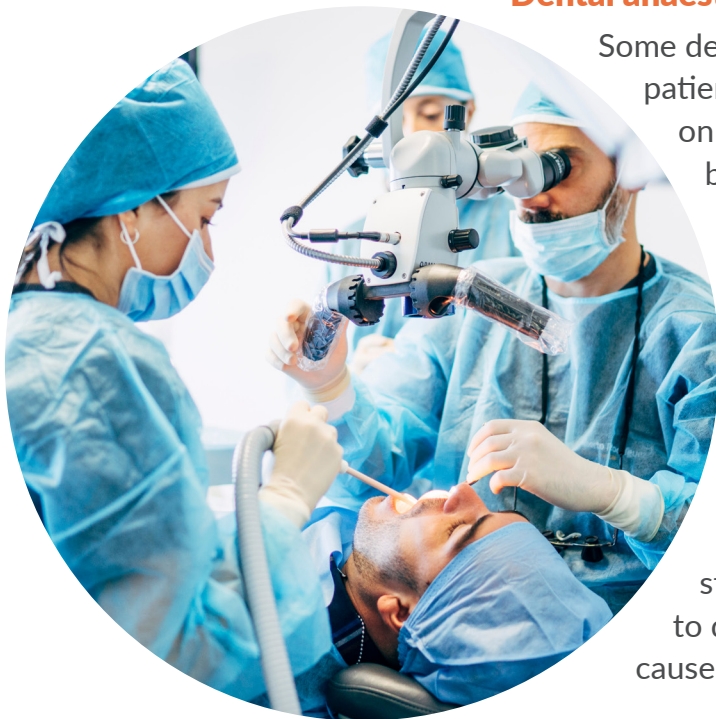
Oral radiology

This is the study that involves capturing dental radiographs and providing clinical interpretation of the radiographs to assist other dental specialists with a diagnosis for the management and treatment of the disease in question.

Dental anaesthesiology

Some dental treatments are only performed when the patient has lost consciousness. This specialty focuses on managing the pain during certain treatments for both adults and children.

This specialty is not found in all countries but prominent in countries such as United States of America, Japan, Canada, and Turkey. It is not an official specialty in South Africa.



Dental pathology

Pathologists are responsible for the identification of disease-causing pathogens. These specialists study the pattern in which micro-organisms behave to develop into a disease. It involves investigating the cause, process, and effects of diseases.

Oral medicine

This specialty is intended for complex oral diseases. It is the bridge between medicine and dentistry. There are some conditions that need both the specialty of a dentist and a medical doctor. For example, the treatment of cysts found in the lower jaw affecting veins connecting to the lower body.



Community dentistry

Community dentists study the epidemiology and prevalence of dental conditions to offer solutions and develop policies to improve the overall oral health of a community.

Dental specialties do not discredit the importance of any dental practitioner. Most dental treatments require a team of dental practitioners to increase the chance of treatment success. There are also dental subspecialties that can be applied in any specialty. The subspecialties are general dentistry (extractions), cosmetic dentistry (aesthetics), restorative dentistry (mainly fillings), paediatric dentistry (treatment of young children) and geriatric dentistry (the treatment of elderly patients).



References

Webster Dental. 12 Types of Dental Specialties. Chicago. Mount Sinai Hospital. 2019.

