

# Medical Technologist

Nearly 300,000 practitioners of clinical laboratory science are working in the United States today. Since the development of this career profession in the 1920s, clinical laboratory science professionals have played a vital role in the diagnosis and prevention of disease.

AMT is qualified by education and experience to perform clinical laboratory testing requiring the exercise of independent judgment and discretion.

Medical Technologists who work in small laboratories perform many types of tests, whereas those in large laboratories generally specialize.

Specialized areas are:

- Clinical Chemistry Technologists – prepare specimens and analyze the chemical and hormonal contents of body fluids
- Microbiology Technologists - examine and identify bacteria and other microorganisms
- Blood Bank Technologists/Immunohematology technologists/Phlebotomy Technicians – collect, type and prepare blood and its components for transfusions
- Immunology Technologists – examine elements and responses of the human immune system to foreign bodies
- Cytotechnologists – prepare slides of body cells and microscopically examine these cells for abnormalities that may signal the beginning of cancerous growth
- Molecular Biology Technologists – perform complex genetic testing on cell samples

## Education requirements:

Medical Technologists usually have a bachelor's degree with a major in medical technology or in one of the life sciences, or they have a combination of formal training and work experience. Universities and hospitals offer medical technology programs.

It is also possible to qualify through a combination of education, on-the-job, and specialized training.

Bachelor's degree programs courses include:

- Chemistry
- Biological sciences
- Microbiology
- Mathematics
- Statistics
- Specialized courses devoted to knowledge and skills used in the clinical laboratory
- Management (depends on school)
- Business (depends on school)
- Computer applications (depends on school)

The Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act required technologists who perform certain complex tests to have at least an associate's degree.

The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS) fully accredits 503 programs for medical and clinical laboratory technologists, medical and clinical laboratory technicians, histologic technologists and technicians and pathologists' assistants. NAACLS also approves 70 programs in phlebotomy, cytogenetic technology, molecular biology, and clinical assisting. Other nationally accrediting agencies include the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) and Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP).

Some states require laboratory personnel to be licensed or registered. Information is available from state department of health boards. Certification is a voluntary process by which a non-governmental organization grants recognition to an individual whose professional competence meets prescribed standards. Widely accepted by employers and in many cases is a prerequisite for most jobs and often is necessary for advancement.

Information from [www.amt1.com](http://www.amt1.com)