

Health Science	<h2>Respiratory Therapist</h2>
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TEA Industry Cluster	Health Science
SOC Code	29-1126
Identified by	Tech Prep Occupations
Projected Growth (2018)	31%
BISD Magnet School Available	Yes

Source: Demand Occupations by Cluster, updated June 27, 2012

Description

What Respiratory Therapists Do

Respiratory therapists care for patients who have trouble breathing; for example, from a chronic respiratory disease, such as asthma or emphysema. Their patients range from premature infants with undeveloped lungs to elderly patients who have diseased lungs. They also provide emergency care to patients suffering from heart attacks, drowning, or shock.

Duties

Respiratory therapists typically do the following:

- Interview and examine patients with breathing or cardiopulmonary disorders
- Consult with physicians to develop patient treatment plans
- Perform diagnostic tests such as measuring lung capacity
- Treat patients, using a variety of methods, including chest physiotherapy and aerosol medications
- Monitor and record the progress of treatment
- Supervise respiratory therapy technicians during tests and evaluate the findings of the tests
- Teach patients how to use treatments

Respiratory therapists use various tests to evaluate patients. For example, therapists test lung capacity by having patients breathe into an instrument that measures the volume and flow of oxygen when they inhale and exhale. Respiratory therapists may also take blood samples and use a blood gas analyzer to test the oxygen and carbon dioxide levels present.

Respiratory therapists perform chest physiotherapy on patients to remove mucus from their lungs and make it easier for them to breathe. Removing mucus is necessary for patients suffering from lung diseases, such as cystic fibrosis, and involves the therapist vibrating the patient's rib cage, often by tapping the patient's chest and encouraging him or her to cough.

Respiratory therapists may connect patients who cannot breathe on their own to ventilators to deliver oxygen to the lungs. Therapists insert a tube in the patient's windpipe (trachea), and connect the tube to ventilator equipment. They set and monitor the equipment to ensure that the patient is receiving the correct amount of oxygen at the correct rate.

Respiratory therapists who work in home care teach patients and their families to use ventilators and other life-support systems in their homes. During these visits, they may inspect and clean equipment, check the home for environmental

hazards, and ensure that patients know how to use their medications. Therapists also make emergency home visits when necessary.

In some hospitals, respiratory therapists are involved in related areas, such as counseling people on how to stop smoking and diagnosing breathing problems for people with sleep apnea.

Training Opportunities Linked to Those Jobs (Degree Types and Colleges/Universities)

How to Become a Respiratory Therapist

Respiratory therapists who work in home care teach patients and their families to use ventilators and other life-support systems in their homes.

Respiratory therapists need an associate's or bachelor's degree. Respiratory therapists are licensed in all states except Alaska; requirements vary by state.

Education

Respiratory therapists need at least an associate's degree, but employers look favorably on applicants who have more education. Many colleges and universities, vocational-technical institutes, and the Armed Forces offer training. Most programs award an associate's or bachelor's degree.

All programs have clinical components that allow therapists to earn course credit and gain supervised, practical experience treating patients.

Respiratory therapy programs include courses in human anatomy and physiology, chemistry, physics, microbiology, pharmacology, and mathematics. Other courses deal with therapeutic and diagnostic procedures and tests, equipment, patient assessment, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

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

Licenses

Respiratory therapists are licensed in all states except Alaska, although requirements vary by state. Licensure requirements in most states include completing a state or professional certification exam. For specific state requirements, contact your state's health board.

Certification

Many employers prefer to hire respiratory therapists who have certification. Certification is not always required, but it is widely respected throughout the occupation. Certification usually requires graduating from an accredited program and passing a certification exam and is often required in order to get a state license.

The [National Board for Respiratory Care \(NBRC\)](#) is the main certifying body for respiratory therapists. The Board offers two levels of certification: the Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT) and the Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT).

The first-level certification available from NBRC for respiratory therapists is the CRT certification. Applicants must have earned an associate's degree from an accredited respiratory therapy program, or completed the equivalent coursework in a bachelor's degree program, and pass an exam.

The second-level certification available from NBRC is the RRT certification. Applicants must have a CRT certification,

meet other education or experience requirements, and pass an exam.

Important Qualities

Compassion. Respiratory therapists should be able to provide emotional support to patients undergoing treatment and be sympathetic to their needs.

Detail oriented. Respiratory therapists must be detail oriented to ensure that patients are receiving the appropriate treatments and medications in a timely manner. They must also monitor and record various pieces of information related to patient care.

Interpersonal skills. Respiratory therapists interact with patients and often work as part of a team. They must be able to follow instructions from a supervising physician.

Patience. Respiratory therapists may work for long periods with patients who need special attention.

Problem-solving skills. Respiratory therapists need strong problem-solving skills. They must evaluate patients' symptoms, consult with other healthcare professionals, and recommend and administer the appropriate treatments.

Science and mathematical skills. Respiratory therapists must understand anatomy, physiology, and other sciences and be able to calculate the right dose of a patient's medicine.

Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College	The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American
Respiratory Care (AAS)	Respiratory Therapy (AAS)			

Local Employers

Employer	City		Employer	City
Aaron's Rental Purchase	Brownsville		Aaron's Rental Purchase	Harlingen
Abc Pediatrics	Brownsville		Alpha Temporary Hosp Staffing	Harlingen
Anesthesia Consultants	Brownsville		Back To Action Inc	Harlingen
Asthma Center	Brownsville		Cardiovascular Associates	Harlingen
Bienestar Counseling Ctr	Brownsville		Casa DE Amigos	Harlingen

Career Options (Specific Job Types)

Sample of reported job titles:

- Respiratory Therapist (RT)
- Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT)
- Respiratory Care Practitioner (RCP)
- Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT)
- Clinical Coordinator of Respiratory Therapy
- Director of Cardiopulmonary Services
- Respiratory Therapy Director
- Staff Respiratory Therapist

Salary Ranges

Wages for Respiratory Therapists

Location	Pay Period	2011				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$19.55	\$22.63	\$26.56	\$31.29	\$35.77
	Yearly	\$40,700	\$47,100	\$55,200	\$65,100	\$74,400
Texas	Hourly	\$19.65	\$22.54	\$25.63	\$28.47	\$32.81
	Yearly	\$40,900	\$46,900	\$53,300	\$59,200	\$68,200
Brownsville-Harlingen, TX MSA	Hourly	\$19.60	\$21.59	\$25.12	\$29.09	\$33.86
	Yearly	\$40,800	\$44,900	\$52,200	\$60,500	\$70,400
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX MSA	Hourly	\$18.97	\$23.51	\$27.52	\$32.48	\$36.24
	Yearly	\$39,500	\$48,900	\$57,200	\$67,600	\$75,400

Professional Associations Linked to the Careers

For more information about respiratory therapists, visit

[American Association for Respiratory Care](#)

For a list of accredited educational programs for respiratory care practitioners, visit

[Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care](#)

For a list of state licensing agencies, as well as information on gaining credentials in respiratory care, visit

[National Board for Respiratory Care, Inc.](#)

Sources

The information provided in this document was collected from the following sources:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)
- O*NET OnLine (<http://www.onetonline.org/>)
- Texas CARES (<http://www.texascaresonline.com/>)
- CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org/>)

Local Employers (continued)

Employer	City	Employer	City
Aaron's Rental Purchase	Brownsville	Aaron's Rental Purchase	Harlingen
Abc Pediatrics	Brownsville	Alpha Temporary Hosp Staffing	Harlingen
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Asthma Center	Brownsville	Cardiovascular Associates	Harlingen
Bienestar Counseling Ctr	Brownsville	Casa DE Amigos	Harlingen
Boyd Chiropractic Ctr	Brownsville	Children's Clinic-Harlingen	Harlingen
Boys & Girls Pediatric Clinic	Brownsville	Clark Orthopedics	Harlingen
Brownsville Care Ctr	Brownsville	Coastal Bend Physical Therapy	Harlingen
Brownsville Center-Obstetrics	Brownsville	Energy Spinal Ctr	Harlingen
Brownsville Children's Clinic	Brownsville	Family Medical Ctr	Harlingen
Brownsville Family Medicine	Brownsville	Family Practice Residency Ctr	Harlingen
Brownsville Medical Assoc	Brownsville	Fruge Vision Clinic	Harlingen
Brownsville Neonatal Assoc	Brownsville	Garcia Cynthia A	Harlingen
Brownsville Nursing & Rehab	Brownsville	Harlingen Anesthesia Assoc	Harlingen
Brownsville Ob/Gyn Assoc	Brownsville	Harlingen Bone & Joint Clinic	Harlingen
Brownsville Pediatric Assn	Brownsville	Harlingen Eye Clinic	Harlingen
Brownsville Physical Therapy	Brownsville	Harlingen Good Samaritan Ctr	Harlingen
Brownsville Podiatry & Wound	Brownsville	Harlingen Lung & Sleep Clinic	Harlingen
Brownsville Pulmonary Ctr	Brownsville	Harlingen Medical Ctr	Harlingen
Brownsville Reg Chemo Ctr	Brownsville	Harlingen Nursing & Rehab	Harlingen
Brownsville Surgical Hospital	Brownsville	Harlingen Obstetrics & Gyn	Harlingen
Brownsville Urological Assoc	Brownsville	Harlingen Podiatry Assoc	Harlingen
Brownsville Women's Health Ctr	Brownsville	Headache & Pain Ctr	Harlingen
Brownsville Kiddie Health Ctr	Brownsville	Health Care Unlimited Inc	Harlingen
Center For Pain Management	Brownsville	Health Success Physical Thrpy	Harlingen
Clinica Santa Maria	Brownsville	Heart Clinic	Harlingen
Del Mar Medical Clinic	Brownsville	Hughston & Redmond	Harlingen
Diagnostic Chiropractic Ctr	Brownsville	Internal Medicine Assoc	Harlingen
Dr Rafael DE LA Cruz Clinic	Brownsville	Izquierdo Family Health	Harlingen
Dreamland Sleep Lab	Brownsville	Kidney & Hypertension Spec	Harlingen
E & F Audio Visual Rental Svc	Brownsville	LA Hacienda Healthcare	Harlingen
Ebony Lake Health Care Ctr	Brownsville	Laser Vision Correction Instut	Harlingen
First Rio Valley Medical	Brownsville	Lone Star Rehab	Harlingen
Foot Doctor	Brownsville	Manrique Custom Vision Ctr	Harlingen

Health Success Rehab Ctr	Brownsville	Mc Kenna Allergy & Asthma Clnc	Harlingen
Imaging Ctr	Brownsville	Mes	Harlingen
Intensivo Nursing Svc	Brownsville	Obesity Surgery Ctr-South TX	Harlingen
Isla Physical Therapy	Brownsville	Office of Vincent F Honrubia	Harlingen
Kury Gloria	Brownsville	Ophthalmic Consultants of TX	Harlingen
LA Doctora DE Los Ninos	Brownsville	Pathology Laboratories	Harlingen
Lakeview Rehab Care	Brownsville	Pegasus Quest	Harlingen
M & M Pediatrics	Brownsville	Retama Manor Nursing Ctr	Harlingen
Master Eye Assoc	Brownsville	Rgv Surgery	Harlingen
Medical Associates-Brwnsvll	Brownsville	Rio Grande Orthopedic Ctr	Harlingen
Mexico Vision Ctr	Brownsville	Rio Grande Valley Pediatric	Harlingen
Moonwalks R US	Brownsville	Rio Physical Medicine Ctr	Harlingen
Mother of Perpetual Help Home	Brownsville	Sandi Jo Funk Hospice	Harlingen
Mtb Silverio Pediatric Ctr	Brownsville	Sleep Center At Valley Baptist	Harlingen
New Beginnings Childrens	Brownsville	South Texas Cancer Ctr	Harlingen
Odyssey Health Care	Brownsville	South Texas Clinic For Pain	Harlingen
Ophthalmic Consultants of TX	Brownsville	South Texas Endocrine Clinic	Harlingen
Palm Valley Emergency Phys	Brownsville	South Texas Hospital	Harlingen
Pediatric Heart Clinic	Brownsville	South Texas Sleep Disorder	Harlingen
Plotkin & Assoc	Brownsville	Southwest Eye Care Clinic	Harlingen
Primary Eye Care	Brownsville	Therapy To Go	Harlingen
Ramiro Munoz Facog	Brownsville	Total Rehabilitation	Harlingen
Rancho El Eden	Brownsville	Tyler Medical Plaza	Harlingen
Rehab Center At Vly Regl Med	Brownsville	U S Oncology	Harlingen
Renaissance Orthopaedics	Brownsville	Urology Associates of South TX	Harlingen
Rio Grande Valley Orthopedic	Brownsville	Valley Baptist Behavioral Hlth	Harlingen
Rodolfo Walss Ob-Gyn Med Group	Brownsville	Valley Baptist Health System	Harlingen
Rodriguez-Rodriguez	Brownsville	Valley Baptist Med Arts PvlN	Harlingen
South Texas Cancer Ctr	Brownsville	Valley Baptist Medical Ctr	Harlingen
South Texas Eye Ctr	Brownsville	Valley Baptist Round Outpatnt	Harlingen
South Texas Rehab Hosp	Brownsville	Valley Childrens Clinic	Harlingen
South Texas Sleep Disorder	Brownsville	Valley Diagnostic Clinic	Harlingen
Southwest Ear Nose & Throat	Brownsville	Valley Ear Nose & Throat Spec	Harlingen
Southwest Facial Plastic Srgry	Brownsville	Valley Eye Clinic & Outpatient	Harlingen
Stepping Stone Rehab Svc	Brownsville	Valley Eye Ctr	Harlingen
Sudarshan Associates	Brownsville	Valley Neurosurgeons	Harlingen
Sunrise Chiropractic Clinic	Brownsville	Valley Orthopedic Clinic	Harlingen
Surgical Assoc-Brownsville	Brownsville	Valley Primary Care Network	Harlingen
Texan Coast Eye Care & Surgery	Brownsville	Valley Radiologists & Assoc	Harlingen
Texas State Optical	Brownsville	Valley Retina Institute	Harlingen
Total Rehabilitation Svc Inc	Brownsville	White Cleaners Laundry & Tux	Harlingen
Ukoli Care Clinic	Brownsville	Zerenity Sleep Ctr Inc	Harlingen
United Chiropractic Clinic	Brownsville	Neighborhood Doctor	LA Feria
Urologic Specialists Assoc	Brownsville	Valley Entertainment Ctr	LA Feria
Valley Baptist Medical Ctr	Brownsville	Port Isabel Health Clinic	Port Isabel
Valley Cardiac Care Ctr	Brownsville	Valley Childrens Clinic	Port Isabel

Valley Cataract Institute	Brownsville		Allergy Supplies of the Valley	San Benito
Valley Ears Nose Throat Specs	Brownsville		Children First Pediatric Rehab	San Benito
Valley Eye Ctr pa	Brownsville		Harlingen Physical Therapy	San Benito
Valley Grande Manor Inc	Brownsville		Kids Round Up Pediatric Rehab	San Benito
Valley Regional Medical Ctr	Brownsville		Stat Agency Nurses	San Benito
Valley Retina Institute	Brownsville		Tapangan Pediatrics	San Benito
Whispering Palms Development	Brownsville		Twinbrooke South	San Benito
Whispering Palms Nursing Home	Brownsville		Visent Dolly Memorial Hospital	San Benito
A & M Nursing Svc	Harlingen		Isla Physical Therapy	South Padre Island



Respiratory Therapist

Course Overview: Focuses on careers in planning, managing, and providing therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development.

Career Goal (O*NET Code): Respiratory Therapist (29-1126) - Respiratory therapists care for patients who have trouble breathing; for example, from a chronic respiratory disease, such as asthma or emphysema. Their patients range from premature infants with undeveloped lungs to elderly patients who have diseased lungs. They also provide emergency care to patients suffering from heart attacks, drowning, or shock.

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

School: _____

SUGGESTED COURSEWORK

EXTENDED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Middle School	8th	HS Courses:	(Local districts may list high school credit courses here)		<p>Curricular Experiences: *** Health Occupations Students of America</p> <p>Career Learning Experiences: Career Preparation Internship Job Shadowing Clinical Rotations Certifications Clinical Volunteer Work (local hospitals & medical facilities)</p>	<p>Extracurricular Experiences:*** Language Immersion Programs National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine School Newspaper Student Council UIL Academic Competitions Yearbook</p> <p>Service Learning Experiences: Boy/Girl Scouts Campus Service Organizations Community Service Volunteer Medical Mission Trips Peer Mentoring / Peer Tutoring Special Olympics</p>
	High School	9th	Courses*:	English I Algebra I or Geometry Biology		
Career-Related Electives:			Principles of Health Science			
10th		Courses:	English II Geometry or Algebra II Chemistry	World History Foreign Language II Elective		
		Career-Related Electives:	Medical Terminology and Pathophysiology			
11th	Core Courses:	English III Algebra II or Pre-Calculus Physics	United States History Foreign Language III ** Professional Communications or Speech	Elective		
	Career-Related Electives:	Health Science				
12th	Core Courses:	English IV Pre-Calculus or Calculus 4th Science	Government/Economics Elective	Elective		
	Career-Related Electives:	Practicum in Health Science				
Postsecondary	<p>How to Become a Respiratory Therapist Respiratory therapists who work in home care teach patients and their families to use ventilators and other life-support systems in their homes. Respiratory therapists need an associate's or bachelor's degree. Respiratory therapists are licensed in all states except Alaska; requirements vary by state.</p>				<p>COLLEGE CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES -- High School Students should take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual credit, Advanced Technical Credit (ATC), or locally articulated courses (Tech Prep), if possible. List those courses that count for college credit on your campus.</p>	<p>Professional Associations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Association for Respiratory Care • Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care • National Board for Respiratory Care, Inc. </p>
	<p>Texas Southmost College South Texas College Texas State Technical College</p>					
	Respiratory Care (A)		Respiratory Therapy (A)			
	<p>The University of Texas at Brownsville The University of Texas - Pan American</p>					
<p>Career Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respiratory Therapist • Registered Respiratory Therapist • Respiratory Care Practitioner • Certified Respiratory Therapist • Staff Respiratory Therapist 						

* Students must meet local & state high school graduation requirements. ** Required course for the Distinguished Graduation Plan (in addition to other measures). *** Based on campus availability. Students may select other elective courses for personal enrichment purposes.

This plan of study serves as a guide, along with other career planning materials, for pursuing a career path and is based on the most recent information as of 2009. All plans meet high school graduation requirements as well as college entrance requirements.