

## HOW TO GET STARTED ON A CAREER IN NUTRITION



**Summary:** *The varieties of jobs that deal with nutrition cover many industries from government to private companies, advertising to research, medical to restaurants.*

Careers in nutrition will never die out. We are a **culture obsessed with weight** and **understanding what to eat**. The number one thing to remember about nutrition is that in the end, it varies for every person. Our body chemistries are different so “eat more vegetables” isn’t always the best answer. If looking into the science of nutrition and figuring out a guideline that works for more people or just one client is something you want to be able to do, then pursue a career in nutrition.

The beginning of a **career in nutrition** can come in many forms. You can earn a major in nutrition from a university, attend a specialized program, or just take a seminar on nutrition to get you jumpstarted into the industry. If taking the university route, you will need to take several biology, chemistry, and human science classes.

Some of the careers a human nutrition and dietetics degree can lead you to are chief dietitians, clinical dietitians, consultant dietitians, public health nutritionists, cooperative extension agents, and product representatives for pharmaceutical companies. You can also use a nutrition degree as a basis for obtaining a license as a chiropractor, dentist, naturopathic doctor, physical therapist, physician, physician assistant, podiatrist, or veterinarian.

The difference between the roles of nutritionists and dietitians can be confusing but each professional role is slightly unique. Read the job responsibilities below:

A registered nutritionist provides scientific evidence-based information about the impact food and nutrition has on health and wellbeing. This job requires an undergraduate degree in nutrition science and then three years or more of practice experience.

A dietician uses the science of nutrition to create eating plans for clients/patients to treat a medical condition. They promote better health through a positive change in food choices. A dietician must complete a four year undergraduate degree in dietetics that is accredited by the Health and Care Professions Council.

An associate nutritionist has the knowledge and is working towards the registration requirements to become a registered nutritionist. This typically takes three or more years of practical experience. You only need an undergraduate degree in nutrition science to get started.

A nutritional therapist is a practitioner with a wide range of tools to assess and identify nutritional imbalances. They understand how these imbalances contribute to a person’s symptoms and concerns. There are online, distance learning, short course, diploma, and undergraduate degree options in nutrition therapy.

Now that you understand the nutrition industry a little more, you are better prepared to narrow down the specific role you want to pursue and research more.

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