

Career Possibilities

What can you do with a Dietetics Degree from UGA?

*Click below to take you to the pages that show the many jobs available
[for the RDN](#) | [for the non-RDN](#)*

The good news? Employment of nutrition professionals is projected to grow 7% from 2023 to 2033 according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). [This article](#) + [data source \(Feb 2025\)](#) highlights that majoring in nutrition has a very low unemployment rate. The role of food in reducing the risk for and treating chronic diseases is well known. More nutrition professionals will be needed in the workforce to provide care for patients with various medical conditions and to advise people who desire to improve their overall health.




If you receive a degree in dietetics, you are eligible to pursue the NDTR credential.

The path to becoming an RDN involves a college degree (like UGA's dietetics degree), acceptance to a ~1,000-hour supervised practice experience, and passing a national credentialing exam.

The Future Nutrition and Dietetics Practice model is shown in this graphic. As of January 2024, you will need to obtain an advanced degree (minimum of a Master's degree in any field) before you are eligible to take the credentialing exam and practice as an RDN.

Below is a list of job possibilities for the R-DN:




CAREER PATHS FOR REGISTERED DIETITIAN NUTRITIONISTS (RD/RDN)

CLINICAL DIETITIAN

- Work with other health professionals to coordinate medical and nutrition needs for patients. Focus on Medical Nutrition Therapy for individuals with chronic disease (i.e., diabetes, renal disease, obesity) and any patients needing guidance. Populations include pediatrics and geriatrics.
- Locations: hospitals, children's hospitals, nursing homes, extended care facilities, and rehabilitation facilities

FOOD SERVICE DIETITIAN

- Oversees large-scale menu planning, meal preparations, special diets and food safety. Great for those who have a business background or interest in the business and/or cooking aspect of nutrition.
- Locations: Work in healthcare operations, schools or corporate dining facilities



College of Family and Consumer Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

CONSULTANT DIETITIAN

- Gives talks and workshops to help other dietitians grow and improve in their field.
- Locations: May work from a central office and travel to offsite locations or have multiple offices or sites

SPORTS DIETITIAN

- Work with athletes to help optimize performance. May include creating meal plans to match their level of training. Counsel athletes to maintain body mass and hydration. Also, focus on how to prevent/recover from injuries.
- Locations: Olympic training centers, gyms, professional, college, or high school sports teams, or the military

COMMUNITY DIETITIAN

- Responsible for the promotion of healthy nutrition choices, public health and some clinical work.
- Locations: WIC, community based clinics, Head Start Programs, and the food bank

NUTRITION BLOGGING AND MEDIA DIETITIAN

- Provide nutritional information to the public utilizing social media platforms, blogging sites, and other online media streams.
- Locations: May work from an office or from home to upload content to websites or social media platforms

RESEARCH DIETITIAN

- Seeks grants in order to conduct research projects. Manage/conduct/evaluate research activities at the facility. After completing research write and publish peer-reviewed papers. Position may pair with a teaching responsibility.
- Locations: Medical centers, universities, food science labs and sports testing centers

ACADEMIA

- Teach lectures and labs to students and evaluate their understanding of knowledge. May require research endeavors from the professor.
- Locations: Universities and colleges including community and online education

GROCERY STORE DIETITIAN

- Promote healthy choices and education among grocery store shoppers. Conduct grocery store tours and help consumers with label identification. May include restructuring design and marketing of food displays.
- Locations: Grocery store chains and convenience stores

PUBLIC POLICY DIETITIAN


- Work closely with government officials to advocate for nutrition policies.
- Locations: National Institutes of Health, USDA, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and in the private sector.


PRIVATE PRACTICE DIETITIAN

- Provide Counseling for a variety of nutrition concerns including group and individual counseling. Responsible for billing, marketing and program coordination of the business. Must strive to recruit clients in order to be successful.
- Locations: Can work in private office, physician's office, or from home

CORPORATE DIETITIAN

- Work with companies to counsel employees on nutrition, health, and wellness. Provide education on healthy lifestyle choices and promote corporate wellness. May be individual or group sessions.
- Locations: Large corporations or smaller businesses that want to improve employee health





Possible practice settings for the RDN:

RDNs lead the nutrition care process in a wide variety of settings. Many work environments, particularly those in medical and health-care settings, require that an individual maintain the RDN credential as well as professional licensing. Common practice settings include:

- Hospitals and ambulatory clinics
 - Long-term care and rehabilitation
 - Collegiate and professional sports
 - Agriculture and sustainability programs
 - Corporate wellness
 - Consumer health promotion
 - [Retail](#) and nutrition products
 - Research
 - Scientific communications
 - Private practice
 - Wellness and lifestyle coaching
 - Consulting
 - Community-based programs
 - Public health programs and centers
 - Governmental and regulatory agencies
 - Universities and medical centers
 - Training and organizational development
 - Marketing and media (could include, but not limited to: Magazine or website writer; On-air talent for TV, radio, or podcasts; Brand spokesperson or ambassador; Host for local media events; Talent at trade show booths; Recipe developer or food photographer; Social media content creator; Video creator; Book author; Podcast host; Nutrition or health consultant)
-

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics members can join Dietetic Practice Groups (**DPGs**) for unique career ideas:

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/career/academy-groups/dietetic-practice-groups>

All Access Dietetics published this '**Dream Job**' resource: [Dietitian Dream Jobs: 75 Exciting Careers in Dietetics Ebook](#)

[Dial a Dietitian](#) is a YouTube channel that has a series of video interviews

[RD2Be Podcast](#) also highlights professionals in the field

Several videos produced by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics show dietetics students and leaders in the field discussing various areas where RDNs work:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZC2DMgub1o>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-D9h4tDQxfY&t=5s>

salaries and Job Outlook for the R-DN:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics posts average salaries for nutrition professionals: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dietitians-and-nutritionists.htm>. According to the Academy's [2024 Compensation and Benefits Survey of the Dietetics Profession](#), the median full-time salary of all RDNs equates to \$70,000 per year. As with any profession, salaries vary by region of the country, employment settings, and scope of responsibility. Salaries increase with years of experience and RDNs in management and business may earn incomes above \$100K. Employment of dietitians is projected to grow faster than average because of the increased emphasis on the role of nutrition in chronic disease, a growing and aging population, and public interest in nutrition.

What is the difference between an R-DN and a Nutritionist? This [video](#) explains.

Starting in 2024, a master's degree will also be required.



RDN Specialty Areas: Some RDNs choose to pursue additional certifications after several years of working in specialized areas of practice. These are awarded through the [Commission on Dietetic Registration](#):

- Certified Specialist in Gerontology Nutrition
 - Certified Specialist in Oncology Nutrition
 - Certified Specialist in Renal Nutrition
 - Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics
 - Certified Specialist in Obesity & Weight Management
 - Certified Specialist in Pediatric Nutrition
 - Certified Specialist in Pediatric Critical Care
 - Certified Diabetes Educator
 - Certified Nutrition Support Clinician
 - Certified Lactation Consultant
-

Below is a list of job possibilities for the non-RDN (without the RDN credential):

Earning your credential as an RDN might not be in your plans, but there is no shortage of jobs. An RDN might not be required for these positions listed below. This means that you can likely enter these jobs with your BS degree in dietetics and not have to complete a supervised practice experience (e.g., a dietetic internship), a master's degree, or pass the RDN exam first.

National Diet Technician Certification

- NDTR (see this [site](#) for information about this certification). You are eligible to take this exam as soon as you graduate with your dietetics degree from UGA.

Virtual

- Virtual assistant for an RD (this Facebook [group](#) posts openings)

Public Health

- Women, Infants & Children (WIC)
- Cooperative Extension educator (UGA hires nutrition educators to work throughout the state)
- Public Health Department (state and county agencies)
- Congregate Meals program or hunger relief organizations like the Food Bank (see if they have positions as a nutrition educator, grant writer, social media and marketing, community relations, or benefits coordinator)
- Head Start
- SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
- Health inspector

Foodservice Management

- School districts (school nutrition coordinator or director positions do not require an RD)
 - Consider getting your Certified Dietary Manager credential
 - Consider getting your Sanitation Manager credential
-

-
- Aramark (has paid training): www.aramark.com/students
 - Foodservice vendors (e.g., Sysco, US Foodservice, etc.)
 - Long term care (nursing home) facilities
 - Catering
 - Hotel and restaurant management (Restaurant owner or manager)
 - Cook/Chef (e.g., restaurant, retirement community, school, etc.)
 - Restaurant consultant for food labeling or menu analysis
 - Food service administrator or manager
 - Quality control supervisor for a food processing plant
 - Integrative nutrition position for a health food store
 - Grant writer

Wellness

- YMCAs
- Worksite wellness or insurance company health coach
- Summer camps (e.g., weight loss or diabetes camp coordinator)
- Wellness/fitness centers
- Early childhood education centers
- Health promotion speaker/blogger
- Wellness coach (as long as you do not practice MNT)

Summer Camps

- Camp with specialized diet training (e.g., Camp Kudzu in GA)

Medical (requires further training)

- Medical assistant
- Physician assistant
- Registered nurse
- Medical doctor
- Occupational or physical therapist

Private corporations

- Nutrition journalist
 - Food photography
 - Consultant at health clubs/spas
-

Industry

- Regulatory specialist at a food company (e.g., Pepsi, Coke, Kraft, Starbucks, etc.); make sure food labels and ingredients are correct
- Formula tech/Milk tech; prepare baby formula and breast milk for a maternity ward or NICU
- Consumer communications within a food company
- Nutrition product sales (e.g., Abbott, Nestle, Novartis, Ross)
- Food sales (brokers for places like school nutrition)
- Pharmaceutical (e.g., GlaxoSmithKline, Pfizer, etc.)
- Sales representative for medical, aesthetic, or pharma company (e.g., vitamin companies)
- Food scientist
- Health food store management
- Brand ambassador for food-related companies

International food-related organizations

- FoodCorps (paid training): <https://foodcorps.org/>
- Peace Corps
- Non-government organizations (e.g., World Relief, CARE)

Universities/colleges/community colleges

- Research assistant for a research hospital or university; check to see if nursing, med school, public health, or nutrition departments are hiring
- Community nutrition educator
- Cooking demonstrator or Culinary educator

Nonprofit organizations

- Nutrition educator (as long as you do not practice MNT)
- Team leader for an org., such as Feed My Starving Children
- Program director for a government education program
- Grant writer

Marketing/PR/IT

-
- Marketing specialist for food companies, nutrition publications, or nonprofit organizations
 - Public relations for food companies, nutrition publications, or organizations
 - Website developer for nutrition professionals
 - Nutrition writer for health newsletter, magazine, blog, online forum, or other media
 - Social media director for large or small companies

What other careers have you seen, heard of, or experienced?

Please email me at emonk@uga.edu and I will add them to this list!