

Pathway to Becoming a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) are food and nutrition experts who have met the Commission on Dietetic Registration's (CDR) criteria:

- Completed a minimum of a bachelor's degree at a US regionally accredited university or college and course work accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.
- Completed 1,200 hours of supervised practice through an ACEND-accredited Dietetic Internship, Coordinated Program in Dietetics, or an Individualized Supervised Practice Program (ISPP).
- Passed a national examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). To maintain the RDN credential, continuing professional educational requirements must be completed.

In addition to RDN credentialing, many states have regulatory licensure laws for dietitians and nutrition practitioners. All states accept the RDN credential for state licensure purposes.

Dietetics students study a variety of subjects, including food and nutrition sciences, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology, anatomy, chemistry, foodservice systems, business, pharmacology, culinary arts, behavioral social sciences and communication.

RDNs work in a wide variety of settings, including health care, business and industry, community/public health, education, research, government agencies and private practice. Many work environments, particularly those in medical and health-care settings, require that an individual be credentialed as a RDN. Some examples of work settings include:

- Hospitals, clinics and health care facilities
- Sports nutrition and corporate wellness programs
- Food and nutrition-related business and industries
- Private practice
- Community and public health settings
- Universities and medical centers
- Research facilities

Need more information?

Go to www.eatright.org and click on "Become an RD/RDN/DTR" for more information. The site also lists the dietetics education programs accredited by ACEND at www.eatright.org/acend.

For more information on the RDN exam and credentialing, refer to CDR's website at www.cdrnet.org.