Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) FAQ

Answers to frequently asked questions about the Admission Test for Dental Hygiene (ATDH) are provided below.

Why did the ADA Department of Testing Services develop the ATDH?

Dental hygiene program directors requested the development of a standardized, nationally administered admission test for use in evaluating the qualifications of applicants to their programs.

ADA’s Department of Testing Services has the expertise to develop, administer, and score standardized, nationally administered examinations. The DTS worked with the ATDH Steering Committee and a select group of test construction volunteers to clarify the scope of the examination and develop questions for the examination.

Who oversaw the ATDH during development and deployment?

The ATDH Steering Committee oversaw examination development. The Steering Committee was comprised of the following individuals:

- Dr. Paul R. Leary, DMD (Chair, ATDH Steering Committee)
- Dr. Wanda Cloet, DHSC, RDH
- Dr. Uri Hangorsky, DDS, MS
- Dr. Arek Horozyan, EdD
- Ms. Joyce C. Hudson, RDH, MS
- Dr. Stephen M. Lepowsky, DDS
- Ms. Donna Warren Morris, RDH, Med
- Ms. Tammy R. Sanderson, RDH, MSDH

What specific tasks were assigned to the ATDH Steering Committee?

The ATDH Steering Committee was charged with overseeing the development, launch, and validation of the ATDH. Key areas of oversight for the committee included the following:

- Examination development
- Establishment of operational policies
- Accumulation of validity evidence (i.e., psychometric research)
- Identification of an appropriate governing body for the examination program

What scores are possible on the ATDH?

ATDH scores range from 200 to 500.
I have submitted my initial application and indicated where scores should be sent. How would I send my results to another school, if I should choose to do so in the future?

Additional score requests can be made by logging into My DENTPIN Account.

When can I retest, if I am not satisfied with my initial score?

Candidates can test once per testing window. A special "retake only" testing window will be available December 15, 2021 through January 15, 2022.

The review materials for the DAT may be helpful in reviewing for the ATDH; where can we find those materials?

Download a list of DAT reference books (PDF) with a link to the list.

Will all dental hygiene programs require the ATDH as part of their admission process?

Each Dental Hygiene program will make its own decision as to whether to require or accept ATDH results as part of the program's admission process.

How long will my results be accepted by dental hygiene programs?

The ATDH is designed to accurately assess candidates' knowledge and skills at the time of administration. Candidate knowledge and skills can increase or decrease after administrations occur (e.g., if additional coursework is undertaken, or if material is simply forgotten, respectively). It is up to each program to decide whether test results are recent enough for admission purposes.

How do I select my testing appointment date when I submit my ATDH application?

Candidates will be able to select any test date within the testing window, based on the availability of seats at test centers.

Are testing sites widely available?

Testing sites are widely available across the US and its territories.Candidates can locate test centers on Prometric.com.

As I take the exam, will the questions change based on how I answer them?

No. the ATDH is not an adaptive examination. Questions will not increase or decrease in difficulty based on whether questions are answered correctly.

How much time is allotted for each section of the examination?

Please read page 13 of the ATDH Candidate Guide. Reasonable accommodations are also available for individuals with documented disabilities. See the ATDH guide ADA: Admission Test for Dental Hygiene 2021 Examinee Guide for more information.

Where can I find a list of programs that are requiring the examination in their admission process?
The ATDH website (http://www.ada.org/atdh) provides a list of programs that accept the ATDH. Candidates should also check the application requirements associated with the programs to which they intend to apply, to determine if it would be necessary or helpful to complete the ATDH.

**What is the availability of testing appointments during the testing window?**

DTS is not aware of any significant issues or challenges for ATDH candidates, in finding or scheduling ATDH appointments. As with all testing programs implemented by DTS, candidates are encouraged to apply and schedule their testing appointments as far in advance as possible, to provide the widest selection of available seats.

**Why is the examination being administered in September and October of 2021?**

The timing of the first testing window was set to permit dental hygiene programs to use ATDH results within the context of their 2022 admissions process. DTS has received requests from dental hygiene programs for many years, asking for DTS to build an admission test specifically for dental hygiene. The start date for the ATDH was identified as September 1, 2021, so that programs could benefit from using the ATDH as soon as possible.

**How will my results be reported?**

The ATDH score report is anticipated to contain six topic scores (one for each test section) and two composite scores. The two composite scores are: 1) English Language Skills (based on performance on Reading Comprehension and Language Usage), and 2) the ATDH Overall Score (based on performance on all test sections, and representing candidate critical thinking in foundational skill areas).

**How do I schedule a testing appointment?**

Candidates must first register for a DENTPIN on www.ada.org/dentpin. Candidates can then submit an application to take the ATDH on www.ada.org/atdh. Once a candidate's application is processed, testing appointments can be scheduled on Prometric.com.

**Who do I contact for additional questions?**

Questions concerning the ATDH can be emailed to atdh@ada.org.

**Can I retake the exam?**

Applications for the "Retake Only" testing window will become available as soon as the September/October testing window closes.

**How is the examination administered?**

The ATDH is administered in person at Prometric professional level testing centers in the United States and its territories (including Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands).