

Qualifications of a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist



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A registered dietitian nutritionist is a food and nutrition expert who has met academic and professional requirements including:

- Earned a bachelor's degree with course work approved by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Coursework typically includes food and nutrition sciences, foodservice systems management, business, economics, computer science, sociology, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology and chemistry.
- Completed an accredited, supervised practice program at a health care facility, community agency or foodservice corporation.
- Passed a national examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration.
- Completes continuing professional educational requirements to maintain registration on an ongoing basis.

Over half of RDNs hold advanced degrees and in 2024 all incoming RDNs will be required to have a master's degree. Some RDNs also hold additional certifications in specialized areas of practice, such as pediatric or renal nutrition, nutrition support and diabetes education.

Registered dietitian nutritionists who are members of the Academy are not only food and nutrition experts — they are leaders in the field of dietetics. Members of the Academy play a key role in shaping the public's food choices, thereby improving its nutritional status, and in treating persons with illnesses or injuries. Members offer preventive and medical nutrition therapy services in a variety of settings, including health care facilities, home health care, foodservice, business, research, grocery stores and educational organizations.

Every one of the Academy's wide array of member benefits is designed to advance their knowledge and skills and enhance their networking opportunities. These resources, combined with the qualifications that are required to become a registered dietitian nutritionist, enable RDNs to translate the science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy living and contribute to the nutrition expertise that RDNs use to help individuals make personalized, positive lifestyle changes.