

Respiratory Therapist



JOB DESCRIPTION: Respiratory therapists care for patients who have trouble breathing — for example, from a chronic respiratory disease such as asthma or emphysema. Their patients range from premature infants with undeveloped lungs to elderly patients who have diseased lungs. They also provide emergency care to patients suffering from heart attacks, drowning or shock. Other job responsibilities include performing diagnostic tests (such as measuring lung capacity), teaching patients how to take medications and use equipment (such as ventilators) and consulting with physicians to develop patient treatment plans. This position requires a license in all states except Alaska.

MEDIAN ANNUAL SALARY: \$59,710

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS:

Associate's degree required from an accredited program. Some employers may prefer a bachelor's degree.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This occupation is projected to grow 23% from 2016 to 2026.

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Sources: *Bureau of Labor Statistics and South Carolina Hospital Association.*