

# Surgical Technology

# Careers

**S**urgical technologists, also called scrubs and surgical or operating room technicians, assist in surgical operations under the supervision of surgeons, registered nurses, or other surgical personnel. Surgical technologists are members of operating room teams, which most commonly include surgeons, anesthesiologists, and circulating nurses. Before an operation, surgical technologists help prepare the operating room by setting up surgical instruments and equipment, sterile drapes, and sterile solutions. They assemble both sterile and non-sterile equipment, as well as adjust and check it to ensure it is working properly. Technologists also get patients ready for surgery by washing, shaving, and disinfecting incision sites. They transport patients to the operating room, help position them on the operating table, and cover them with sterile surgical "drapes." Technologists also observe patients' vital signs, check charts, and assist the surgical team with putting on sterile gowns and gloves.

During surgery, technologists pass instruments and other sterile supplies to surgeons and surgeon assistants. They may hold retractors, cut sutures, and help count sponges, needles, supplies, and instruments. Surgical technologists help prepare, care for, and dispose of specimens taken for laboratory analysis and help apply dressings. Some operate sterilizers, lights, or suction machines, and help operate diagnostic equipment.

After an operation, surgical technologists may help transfer patients to the recovery room and clean and restock the operating room.

Surgical technologists held about 71,000 jobs in 2000. Almost three-quarters are employed by hospitals, mainly in operating and delivery rooms. Others are employed in clinics and surgical centers, and in the offices of physicians and dentists who perform outpatient surgery. A few, known as private scrubs, are employed directly by surgeons who have special surgical teams, like those for liver transplants.

## Job Outlook

Employment of surgical technologists is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations. Job opportunities will be best for technologists who are certified. Employment of surgical technologists is expected to grow 24 percent between 2006 and 2016, much faster than the average for all occupations, as the volume of surgeries increases. The number of surgical procedures is expected to rise as the population grows and ages. Older people, including the baby boom generation, who generally require more surgical procedures, will account for a larger portion of the general population. In addition, technological advances, such as fiber optics and laser technology, will permit an increasing number of new surgical procedures to be performed and also will allow surgical technologists to assist with a greater number of procedures. Hospitals will continue to be the primary employer of surgical technologists, although much faster employment growth is expected in offices of physicians and in outpatient care centers, including ambulatory surgical centers.

## Earnings

Median annual earnings of wage-and-salary surgical technologists were \$36,080 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between \$30,300 and \$43,560. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$25,490, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$51,140.

## Related Programs

- Clinical Laboratory Science Technology
- Nursing
- Dental Hygiene
- Paramedic
- Medical Assisting
- Phlebotomy

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## Educational Opportunities in Surgical Technology

### *Associate of Applied Science in Surgical Technology*

This program prepares its graduates with a thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of surgical procedures and functions in the operating room. Upon completion of the program, graduates are qualified to serve on a surgical team in any hospital operating room and are also eligible to take the certification examination of the Association of Surgical Technologists.

## Related Educational Opportunities

- Certificate of proficiency in licensed practical nursing
- Certificate of proficiency in medical assisting
- Certificate of proficiency in phlebotomy
- Associate of applied science in nursing
- Associate of applied science in clinical laboratory science technology
- Associate of applied science in dental hygiene
- Associate of applied science in diagnostic medical sonography
- Associate of applied science in emergency medical services – paramedic
- Associate of applied science in physical therapist assisting
- Associate of applied science radiologic technology
- Associate of technical studies in nuclear medicine

## Other Educational Opportunities through LCCC's University Partnership

### **Youngstown State University**

#### *Bachelor of Science in Applied Science—Major in Allied Health*

The baccalaureate degree program leading to the bachelor of science in applied science with a major in allied health is intended to serve professional health-related, associate-degree graduates who wish to upgrade their academic credentials.

#### *Bachelor of Science in Applied Science Major in Public Health*

The Public Health major offers the Bachelor of Science in Applied Science (B.S.A.S.) degree. The public health program integrates classroom and experiential learning in many of its courses.

The curriculum for the YSU bachelor's degree in public health addresses each of the five core areas through multiple courses. This curriculum enables mastery at the bachelor's level of the nationally recognized Public Health Core Competencies, and requires an internship tailored to the area of public health interests of each student. Most of the professional courses for the degree can be completed through a combination of interactive videoconferencing and online distance learning options.

### *Master of Health and Human Services*

The program accommodates students from health and human service professions who require the skills and abilities for supervisory/managerial positions or who desire competence in health promotion.

### *Certificate in Health Care Management*

The program accommodates students from health and human service professions who require the skills and abilities for supervisory/managerial positions or who desire competence in health promotion.

### **The University of Akron**

#### *Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN Completion Program)*

The University of Akron nursing program prepares students to provide patient care, to direct others in giving care and to become members of comprehensive health care teams. Professional nurses also teach health care, prepare discharge plans and make referrals that can aid patients and their families.

### *Master of Science in Nursing*

Nursing education at the master's level builds upon baccalaureate nursing preparation. Program courses and content are organized and courses sequenced to facilitate the progression of student learning from that of a baccalaureate generalist to that of a specialist.

### *(RN to MSN Bridge Component)*

The RN-MSN sequence is designed for registered nurses who have diplomas or associate degrees in nursing and who aspire to the master of science in nursing degree.

## About Lorain County Community College

Lorain County Community College is one of Ohio's leading colleges delivering distance learning education via the Internet. The College has expanded its delivery of its programs and services through the opening of the Learning Center at St. Joseph Community Center in Lorain, the LCCC Wellington Center, Lorain County Growth Partnership in downtown Elyria and the Midpoint Campus Center in Brunswick. Partnerships with Lorain County's K-12 school districts have also led to important developments for the community. More than 1300 high school students participate in the Post Secondary Enrollment Options program by enrolling in LCCC classes, making LCCC the state's largest community college provider of PSEO. More than 35 percent of Lorain County's top high school graduates choose to attend LCCC.

LCCC is one of Ohio's fastest growing colleges because of the variety of learning opportunities it provides. Students can choose from more than 80 educational programs. Students can complete the first half — and sometimes more — of a bachelor's degree. The University Partnership brings eight universities to the LCCC campus offering 37 bachelor's and master's degree programs. With the University Partnership at LCCC, the College partners with the state's finest universities to bring the best in bachelor's and master's degree programs right to the LCCC campus. Students can earn degrees that get them jobs immediately. Students can upgrade, retrain and improve current life skills. Students can learn in the classroom, at home and over the Internet.

LCCC offers a complete college experience. We understand that there's more to college life than attending classes. We offer many of the programs, sports, and activities available at large four-year universities and colleges. But, students will not have to stand in line behind juniors and seniors in the classroom, on the playing field, or in leadership positions. Students can immediately act in a play, sing in a musical group, serve as editor for the college newspaper, plan social activities, compete on the playing field, or set policy as a student government member.

In addition to providing a great education for those who enter college with aspirations of a degree, LCCC helps those who have changed their career goals, who want to broaden their horizons, and who want to return to work. LCCC provides learning and training for those who want to move up but find they need new or improved skills for the kind of professional opportunities they seek.

LCCC faculty is recognized locally and nationally for their work as professors and in other areas. They all have advanced degrees and real-world experience and understand their primary responsibility at LCCC is to teach classes. Classes are small. Individual attention is plentiful.

An LCCC education, prepares students for real jobs and real futures. To find out more, call (800) 995-LCCC or visit LCCC's Connections Center, the Learning Center at St. Joseph Community Center in Lorain, the LCCC Learning Center in Wellington, the Lorain County Growth Partnership in downtown Elyria or the Midpoint Campus Center in Brunswick for all of your enrollment service needs, including admissions, registration, advising and counseling.



**Lorain County  
Community College**



**The University  
Partnership**

*of Lorain County Community College*

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