Cytotechnology is an allied health specialty that offers exciting possibilities for anyone who wants a career in science and a significant role in health care. Cytotechnologists are trained in techniques for collecting, processing, and evaluation of cell specimens that are used to identify a variety of both neoplastic and non-neoplastic conditions based on individual cell morphology. Cytotechnology is also a profession in which the theoretical knowledge and techniques of biology and chemistry are applied in diagnosing cancer, pre-cancer, benign tumors, infectious agents, and inflammatory processes.

Cytotechnologists are employed at the staff level in hospital and private laboratories, university medical centers, and government facilities. With experience, positions are available at the supervisory, educational, and administrative levels. The job responsibilities of cytotechnologists are expanding and research opportunities are increasing with the advancement of new tumor identification techniques. Presently the number of trained cytotechnologists is inadequate to fill the need. The job market is excellent with positions available throughout the country. Salaries at one time were competitive with other allied health professions, but are now increasing due to the current shortage. A career as a cytotechnologist can be both challenging and rewarding.

Cytotechnology training programs are offered at the baccalaureate (B) and post-baccalaureate (certificate)(C) levels and are located in both hospital and university settings. There are four cytotechnology programs in Texas. The U.S. Army School of Cytotechnology at Brooke Army Medical Center (C) is open only to active duty Army and Air Force and reserve Army personnel. The other three programs are at the University of North Texas in Denton (B), The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston (C,B), and The University of Texas Health Sciences Center at San Antonio (C).

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Professional Associations

American Society of Clinical Pathologists Board of Registry
www.ascp.org

American Society of Cytotechnology
www.asct.com

American Society for Cytotechnology
www.ascct.org

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
www.caahep.org

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