



# Cytotechnologist

## Education

The cytotechnologist enters the field with a BS, which is the minimal education requirement. Advancement to administrative or educational positions requires a minimum of an MS.

## Certifications

There is a national certification examination for cytotechnologists offered by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists.

## Roles and functions

Cytotechnologists are specialized laboratory professionals trained to locate and analyze cellular changes within various specimens for the presence of cancer and other pathological conditions. Cytotechnologists can be found in the laboratory at their microscopes, examining fluid aspirations from any part of the body for cells that may indicate precancerous conditions, infections, and other

diseases. Their input is crucial for determining if cancer is present, the stage of the cancer, and if it is a metastasis or primary origin. Cytotechnologists are also trained to assist the pathologist in the collection of these cellular specimens and prepare them for microscopic evaluation. Administrator, researcher and educator are additional potential roles.

## Practice settings

While most Cytotechnologists work in hospitals, government, and private clinical laboratories, some find their way to pharmaceutical laboratories to participate in clinical drug trials or forensic testing, or to veterinary laboratories. After gaining experience, some cytotechnologists participate in the training, development, and support of automation, software, and other equipment used to help cytotechnologists detect precancerous conditions.

Professional association links for further info on the profession

The American Society of Clinical Pathologists  
[www.ascp.org](http://www.ascp.org)

The American Society of Cytopathology  
[www.cytopathology.org](http://www.cytopathology.org)

The American Society of Cytotechnologists  
[www.asct.com](http://www.asct.com)

Link to TJU education program  
<http://www.jefferson.edu/JCHP/ls/cytotechdesc.cfm>