

I am interested in pursuing a career in nuclear medicine technology. The challenge I face now that I have determined my career objective is getting accepted to a program with a limited number of seats. Once I receive an Associate of Science in Nuclear Medicine Technology, I will be eligible to take the national certification examinations offered by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists and the Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board. Successful completion of the examinations reciprocates with Florida Radiologic Licensure. Technological innovations are expected to increase the diagnostic uses of the nuclear technology field. Changes in technology also result in certified technologists are completing hours in continuing education in order to maintain their certification.

I believe this career would easily fit into my lifestyle, especially if I was able to find a position that utilized my willingness to work evenings and late night hours. On average, a technologist works a 40 hour work week. However, there are positions that offer part-time or shift work. The number of positions in the nuclear medicine technologist field is expected to increase by 16% between 2008 and 2018. However, the number of properly trained technologists is expected to exceed the number of job openings. To prepare myself to be a competitive candidate in the job market, I am considering pursuing an AS in Radiography or an advanced certificate in Diagnostic Medical Sonography in addition to obtaining an AS in Nuclear Medicine Technology.

The average salary of a nuclear technologist in 2008 was \$66,660. Advancement opportunities exist as a supervisor or to chief technologist. There are also specialty areas such as nuclear cardiology or PET scanning. With a bachelor's or masters degree in the subject, a technologist can become an instructor in a nuclear medicine technology program.

As a nuclear medicine technologist I would be administering radioactive drugs to patients in order to monitor the concentration levels in tissues or organs of the body to allow for the diagnoses of abnormalities. First, I would discuss the procedure with the patient. Then, I would prepare a dose of radiopharmaceutical to administer by mouth, injection, or inhalation. With the use of a scintillation camera, or scanner, I would produce images that show if there are higher or lower areas of concentration. The image produced by the scanner would then be examined by a physician to diagnose abnormal tissues or organs.

Nuclear medicine technologists are constantly on their feet and need the physical stamina required to lift and manipulate patients. Additionally, a nuclear medicine technologist must have mechanical abilities to operate equipment as well as verbal and written communication skills to correspond with patients and other health care workers. I feel confident that I possess the necessary physical abilities and communication skills to succeed as a nuclear medicine technologist. I highly enjoy interacting with people, particularly when I am

helping others. My only concern is dealing with patients or loved ones that are worried about the results of the procedure. I do not enjoy seeing people in physical or emotional pain.

There is a potential for this career to present stressors and challenges. As discussed, there are some physical demands that could lead to physical exertion and injury. There is also a level of danger involved with the preparation and administration of radiopharmaceuticals for both the technologist and the patient. To prevent over exposure to radiation, technologists wear badges that measure radiation levels. It is necessary for nuclear medicine technologists to work independently as they may have little direct supervision. Also, in order to ensure that all regulations are being followed, technologists also need to be detailed-oriented and meticulous when performing procedures. Being solely responsible for patient procedures that require precision could be stressful.