What is a Registered Dietitian?
Registered dietitians are food and nutrition experts that translate science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy living. Registered dietitians work in a variety of employment settings, including health care, food and nutrition-related businesses and industries, community and public health, education, research, government agencies and private practice. Approximately 50 percent of RDs hold advanced degrees. Some RDs also hold additional certifications in specialized areas of practice, such as pediatric or renal nutrition, nutrition support and diabetes education.

What are the qualifications of a Registered Dietitian?
Registered dietitians have met academic and professional requirements including:
- Earned a bachelor’s degree with course work approved by the Academy of Nutrition and Earned a bachelor’s degree with course work approved by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics.
- Completed an accredited, supervised practice program.
- Successfully passed a national examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration.
- Complete continuing professional educational requirements to maintain registration.
- Many hold advanced degrees and additional certifications in specialized areas of practice.

Services RDs Provide
Registered dietitians work in a wide variety of settings throughout the community, including:
- Hospitals / Nursing homes / Aging, WIC and other community programs
- Food management / Food industry
- Government / Regulatory Agencies
- Public health clinics / Mental and behavioral health
- Schools / Universities
- Private practice
- Grocery stores / Fitness centers
- Research

The majority of RDs work in the treatment and prevention of disease (administering Medical Nutrition Therapy, often in hospitals, HMOs, private practice or other health care facilities. In addition, a large number of registered dietitians work in community and public health settings and academia and research. A growing number of registered dietitians work with food and nutrition industry and business, journalism, sports nutrition, corporate wellness programs and other non-traditional work settings.
10 Ways RDs Can Improve the Health of Wisconsinites

A registered dietitian or “RD” serves as an integral liaison in helping individuals and communities make changes for a healthy delicious diet. See how registered dietitians can improve the health of Americans and save health care dollars.

1. **You have prediabetes and want to stave off diabetes.** A registered dietitian can change your life by teaching you skills that will help you lose and keep off weight and keep diabetes at bay.

2. **Your community has high levels of obesity.** A registered dietitian can work with public health, government, school and other local leaders to create wellness programs that promote healthful eating and physical activity for everyone.

3. **You are a marketing manager for a large food company and know consumers’ preference for good-tasting food that is healthy.** A registered dietitian can make the connection to work with food scientists to develop healthy and delicious new products that will be successful in the marketplace.

4. **You want to improve your performance in sports.** A registered dietitian can help you set realistic goals to achieve results — whether you’re running a marathon, skiing or jogging with your dog.

5. **You have had gastric bypass surgery.** Since your stomach can only manage small servings, it’s a challenge to get the right amount of nutrients in your body. A registered dietitian will work with you to develop an eating plan for your new needs.

6. **You realize you need to feed your family healthier foods but you do not cook.** A registered dietitian can teach you how to cook in a simple, convenient way.

7. **Your teenager has issues with food and eating healthfully.** A registered dietitian can assist with eating disorders like anorexia, bulimia and overweight issues, and can help educate your teen on general nutrition topics.

8. **Your community wants more local foods to be available.** A registered dietitian can lead efforts to make sure foods will not only be healthy but also will be accessible and positively affect the local economy.

9. **You just had your first child, are concerned the baby is not eating enough, and need help and confidence for breastfeeding.** A registered dietitian can provide guidance and assurance that you and your infant are getting all the right nutrients including iron, vitamin D, fluoride and B vitamins.

10. **Your mother, who is increasing in age, wants to stay in her home.** A registered dietitian leading a local congregate dining and home delivered meals program can obtain a nutrition screening to make sure this happens, and also connect you to valuable resources to ensure your mother is well-nourished.

**Members specialize in a variety of nutrition services including:**

- Weight Loss
- Celiac Disease
- Healthy Lifestyle Promotion
- Women’s Health
- Diabetes
- Sports Nutrition
- Heart Disease
- Cancer Nutrition
- Child and School Nutrition
- Critical Care
- Mental and Behavioral Health
- Complementary Medicine