

X-rays can save future hardship and operations

DENTAL X-RAYS

Are x-rays needed for a dental examination? And if so, is there a hazard due to radiation?

Dentists take only a minimum of x-rays to be able to



make an accurate diagnosis. The x-rays taken can tell a dentist many different types of pathology that may exist in your mouth.

For example, a small cavity can be detected on the x-ray before it can be seen by the naked eye. In that case, treatment of a small cavity can save the patient possible discomfort or more costly treatment.

In addition, cavities may develop around or under old fillings. This could not normally be diagnosed without an x-ray, unless the tooth may give the patient discomfort or cause the filling and/or a part of the tooth to fracture off.

If decay is not treated, and it has reached the nerve of the tooth, x-ray may show an abscess is forming even though the patient may not be feeling pain.

Other indications for having dental x-rays taken are the

possibilities of having impacted teeth or roots, cysts, tumors, or even an undetected "extra" tooth. All of which may go unnoticed without the x-rays.

Even if a tooth has to be extracted, being able to see the root structure on the x-ray aids the dentists in their approach at the extraction.

As for any hazard with radiation, the amount of radiation that an average patient is exposed to by the dental x-rays is usually a smaller amount than they would ordinarily receive from cosmic rays, radioactive sand, and other sources found in everyday activities. But in order to minimize the small amount of radiation, a protective lead shield is always placed over

the areas of your body that might receive exposure.

So with all the potential benefits, and the very low amount of radiation, the next time x-rays are recommended you should feel more at ease having them taken.

DENTAL VILLAGE TRAVEL

At the moment the dental clinic has only one dentist to service the North Slope Borough. Two replacement den-

tists are not anticipated to arrive until the end of October or early November. Because we are understaffed it is not yet known when we will be able to visit the villages. However, we will arrange for a dental field visit as soon as possible. We will contact the villages as soon as we can arrange for a dental visit. So please be patient with us

Carol Subarumaru
Your Tooth Doc

