

## *Regarding Dental X-Rays...*

We wanted to take a moment and review our office policy & protocol regarding dental x-rays. Our office policy is to adhere to Texas State Dental Board and American Dental Association guidelines when taking x-rays on new and existing patients.

### **I'm A New Patient. What X-Rays Can I Expect?**

For adult new patients being seen for full exam & cleaning, we will take a full mouth series of x-rays in addition to a panoramic x-ray. These films allow Dr. Bohan to diagnose decay, periodontal (*gum*) disease, bone loss, orthodontic issues, possible pathology, and/or abnormalities in jaw. This more extensive set of x-ray films is only needed at your first visit and then every 3 to 5 years. For children under the age of 18, we will take 7 bitewing x-rays and a panoramic film. For smaller children, 2 to 4 bitewing x-rays & possibly a panoramic x-ray will be taken. For patients being seen for a "limited exam" focusing on one or two particular issues, we will only take a few small films.

### **I'm A Returning Patient. What X-Rays Are Recommended For Me?**

For existing patients returning for bi-annual cleanings, a set of 7 bitewing x-rays is recommended every 6 months to diagnose decay. Dental insurances will typically cover these types of films twice a year as well. Doing x-rays annually versus bi-annually oftentimes does not allow Dr. Bohan to diagnose decay before it becomes more extensive AND more expensive. To maintain care at our office, patients must have a minimum of 4 bitewings once per year.

### **Can I Bring My X-Rays From My Other Dentist?**

It is our policy to always take our own films. Because our office utilizes digital x-rays and computer software that allows Dr. Bohan to darken, lighten, contrast, zoom in, and even highlight specific areas, it is beneficial to have our own films to aid in diagnosing. Copies or print outs of previous x-rays are often not "diagnostic quality". Decay can be missed when trying to diagnose from previous x-rays. In addition, one's oral condition can change even over a short period of time. It is imperative, in order to be able to accurately diagnose issues, to see the mouth as it presents *today*. We make every effort to determine which films may or may not be covered by insurance due to frequency limitations. If insurance denies a certain type of x-ray, we are often able to submit alternate codes to obtain some payment from insurance and therefore minimize any unexpected balance for patients.

### **What Is My Radiation Exposure Risk With Dental X-Rays?**

Dental technology is constantly making advances. We are excited to utilize all digital x-rays which emit very low radiation. Dental offices are regularly inspected and monitored by both the State Department of Health as well as Radiation Control Specialists to assure compliance and minimal exposure to radiation. In addition, each time a patient is x-rayed, we utilize lead aprons and thyroid collars. We were pleased upon our recent inspection to be informed that our levels actually fall 75-80% *below* what the state considers allowable.

### **In Summary...**

We employ the guidelines we do in order to protect patients' oral and overall health. Dr. Bohan cannot diagnose what she does not see, and we always strive to provide patients with the highest quality of care. Please sign below stating that you have read and understand the above policies.

X

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Patient/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date