

TOPIC – “Diagnosing everyday problems from everyday radiographs”

ABSTRACT

Dental radiographs (including CBCT) have been a valuable diagnostic tool in the dentist's armamentarium and are commonly being used in various dental practices across Australia. Successful interpretation of dental radiographs depends on thorough understanding of the normal anatomy of head and neck and therefore, a systematic approach is highly recommended for the interpretation of any radiograph per se. Dental radiographs are very useful in evaluating the pathologies affecting the teeth, developmental disorders of jaws, foreign bodies, trauma, cysts and tumours etc. Calcifications of various structures located in the head and neck region are relatively common and are detected on routine panoramic radiographs.

Dental practitioners should be aware of all the above pathologies, especially those associated with systemic illnesses so that they can timely refer the patients to the respective specialists. Knowledge acquired through experience and keeping abreast of the literature is helpful when arriving at an accurate diagnosis. Clinicians are responsible for reviewing the entire image, and when anomalies are detected, must determine the appropriate course of action. Advanced radiological or other examinations can be performed for comparison, periodic follow up, management and research purposes.

This presentation highlights variety of oral and dental pathologies (which are illustrated by classic examples, are exclusively Radiology related, many of which are brain teasing) that general dentists in Australia encounter. It also outlines the basic steps the clinicians must consider to continually refine their diagnostic skills and knowledge of anatomy in order to formulate a differential diagnosis.