



Dental X-ray

What is a dental xray?

Dental xrays fall into two distinct types - OPGs and Lat Cephs. Each examination is described in more detail below.

OPG is short for orthopantomogram, which is an xray showing both the upper and lower teeth in a long flat line. It shows the number, position and growth of all teeth including those that have not yet surfaced.

A lateral cephalometrogram (or lat ceph) is a side view xray of the face showing the bones and facial contours in a profile on a single image. It is used to determine the nature of the patient's bite (i.e. the relationship between the mandible (jaw) and maxilla (cheekbone) both currently and in the future).

Why do I need a dental xray?

OPG and Lat Ceph examinations are commonly referred by general practitioners, dentists, orthodontists and facial surgeons in order to examine a patient's teeth, jaw and facial structures.

What preparation is required?

No specific preparations are required.

What documentation is required?

Bring your referral and any relevant previous xrays for comparison. Also bring your Medicare card, Pension or Healthcare card or Veteran's Affairs card details if applicable.

What you need to tell us prior to your appointment?

At the time of arranging your appointment, please advise us if you are pregnant.

What will happen during the examination?

Prior to the examination you will be asked to remove any false teeth, jewellery or metallic items (e.g. zips) from the neck and head area as they may interfere with the xray image. You will not be required to change into a gown.

During the dental xray procedure the arm of the machine will rotate around your head, but it should not come into contact with you.

For the OPG you will be asked to bite on a small plastic mouthpiece attached to the machine. This device keeps the top and bottom rows of teeth separated, and, and its plastic

What will happen during the examination? Cont...

cover is replaced after each patient to ensure high standards of hygiene.

For a Lat Ceph a pair of cone-shaped plastic supports are gently positioned in each ear (rather like headphones), to ensure that the ears are aligned and a valid profile is obtained.

How long will the examination take?

The examination is simple and brief, and will take approximately 10 minutes.

What can you expect after your examination?

There should be no ill effects after the examination.

Are there any risks?

You will receive a small dose of radiation, the level of which is kept to an absolute minimum. The benefits of this examination are considered to outweigh any potential risks from receiving such a small dose.

Please, however, advise the radiographer if you are, or think you may be, pregnant.

What happens with the images and report?

After your examination you may be given a copy of the most pertinent images from your study.

A report will be provided directly to your referring doctor.

We will store digital copies of all studies and reports on our secure patient information system for comparison with any future examinations.

For branch contact details and other services, please visit our website ncrg.com.au