

# X-Rays

## DIAGNOSTIC TOOL

Xrays are a useful diagnostic tool in pediatric dentistry. Without x-rays, we cannot verify if a child is cavity-free or if a child has cavities growing on the flossing sides of their teeth. We need x-rays to detect much more than just cavities. Xrays are needed to track unerupted teeth, verify bone quality, evaluate injuries, jaw health and to plan orthodontic treatment.

## DIGITAL RADIOGRAPHS

With the advent of digital radiographs, radiation exposure due to dental x-rays is less than half of what it used to be. A routine exam which includes 4 bitewings is about 0.005 mSv, which is **less than one day of natural background radiation**. It is also about the same amount of radiation exposure from a short airplane flight (~1-2 hrs).

## MINIMAL RADIATION EXPOSURE

Radiation exposure with x-rays is always kept minimal in the office by use of a lead apron and a thyroid collar. **X-rays represent a far smaller risk than undetected and untreated dental problems.**