

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD)

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is the recognized authority on children's oral health. As advocates for children's oral health, the AAPD promotes evidence-based policies and clinical guidelines; educates and informs policymakers, parents and guardians, and other health care professionals; fosters research; and provides continuing professional education for pediatric dentists and general dentists who treat children. Founded in 1947, the AAPD is a not-for-profit professional membership association representing the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Its 8,400 members provide primary care and comprehensive dental specialty treatments for infants, children, adolescents and individuals with special health care needs. For further information, please visit the AAPD website at <http://www.aapd.org> or the AAPD's consumer website at <http://www.mychildrensteeth.org>.

ASK YOUR DENTIST ABOUT

X-RAY USE AND SAFETY



American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

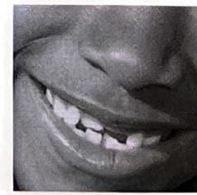
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AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY



How often should a child have dental X-ray films?

Since every child is unique, the need for dental X-ray films varies from child to child. Films are taken only after reviewing your child's medical and dental histories and performing a clinical examination, and only when they are likely to yield information that a visual examination cannot.

In general, children need X-rays more often than adults. Their mouths grow and change rapidly. They are more susceptible than adults to tooth decay. For children with a high risk of tooth decay, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends X-ray examinations every six months to detect cavities developing between the teeth. Children with a low risk of tooth decay require X-rays less frequently.

Why should X-ray films be taken if my child has never had a cavity?

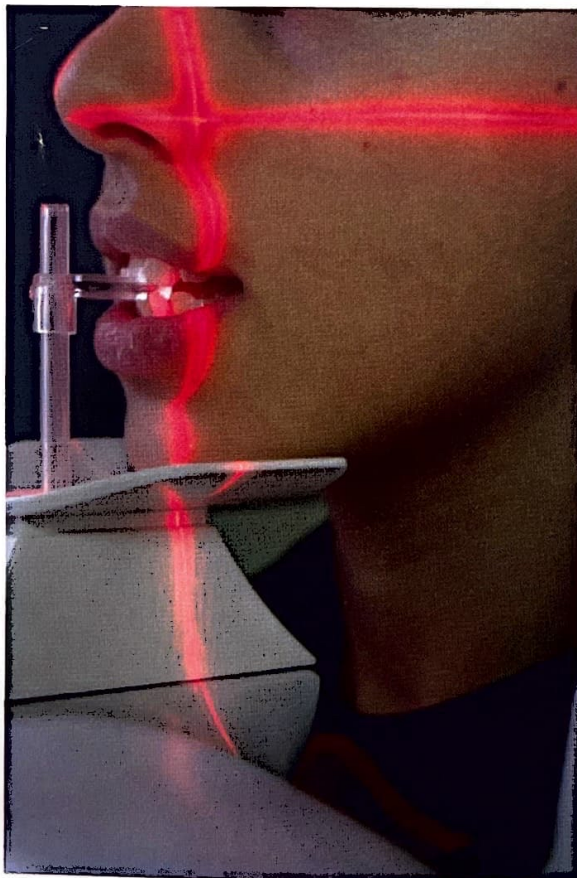
X-ray films detect much more than cavities. For example, X-rays may be needed to survey erupting teeth, diagnose bone diseases, evaluate the results of an injury, or plan orthodontic treatment. X-rays allow dentists to diagnose and treat conditions that cannot be detected during a clinical examination. If dental problems are found and treated early, dental care is more comfortable and affordable.

Will X-ray films be taken routinely?

No. X-ray films are recommended only when necessary to evaluate and monitor your child's oral health. The frequency of X-ray films is determined by your child's individual needs. If your child's previous dentist obtained X-ray films, request copies be sent to your new pediatric dentist to help reduce radiation exposure.

X - R A Y

U S E



How safe are dental X-rays?

Pediatric dentists are particularly careful to minimize the exposure of child patients to radiation. With contemporary safeguards, the amount of radiation received in a dental X-ray examination is extremely small. In fact, dental X-rays represent a far smaller risk than undetected and untreated dental problems.

What safeguards are used to protect my child from X-ray exposure?

Lead body aprons and shields help protect your child. Today's equipment filters out unnecessary X-rays and restricts the X-ray beam to the area of interest. High-speed film, digital X-rays, and proper shielding assure that your child receives a minimal amount of radiation exposure.