

AIDING BETTER DIAGNOSTICS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

CASE PRESENTATION | 21

Digital intraoral radiography, when coupled with digital photography, can create a powerful tool for dental staff—to improve diagnostic skills, as well as patient understanding and acceptance.

At my practice, we use Sirona Dental's Schick 33 intraoral digital sensors. In addition, I routinely take intraoral photos during treatment. By showing both, it helps staff compare the amount of decay visible on a radiograph to the actual decay present in the tooth. This sharing helps create better staff understanding and communication.

Digital radiography is the transformative influence that is helping dental professionals be more impactful and relate with patients. By supplementing the radiographs with high-resolution photographs, staff can better translate decay from 2D to 3D. It enables them to connect the dots to what they notice on the X-ray to what the dentist is actually treating—they can better and more accurately codiagnose.

Calibrating the radiographic presentation of decay with the observable decay during tooth preparation has profound benefits for the healthcare providers and patients:

- Staff is better equipped to codiagnose problem areas. This allows the dentist to efficiently make the appropriate final diagnosis as to treatment.
- Communication is enhanced in the office relative to urgency of treatment. Everyone has a clearer mental picture of the quantity and severity (quality) of decay. Treatment options and timing can be improved with this information.
- Outcomes are enhanced and made more predictable when decay is treated at a level the dentist determines meets his or her practice philosophy. Decay can be treated at the earliest possible opportunity and lesions that fall short of this standard can be managed with less invasive or non invasive techniques.
- Calibrated staff is able to be more actively involved in providing premium patient care.
- Patients can be educated by viewing images showing their specific situation; how the decay was removed as well as the final restoration.

The bottom line is when the patient asks a question about their oral health, the staff is ready and able to answer academically, as well as clinically.

The following pages illustrate 2 examples of digital radiographs and their corresponding intraoral images. One is a 17-year-old patient whose digital radiographs presented with decay on the mesial of tooth No. 4. The other is a 24-year-old patient with decay on the distal of tooth No. 4.



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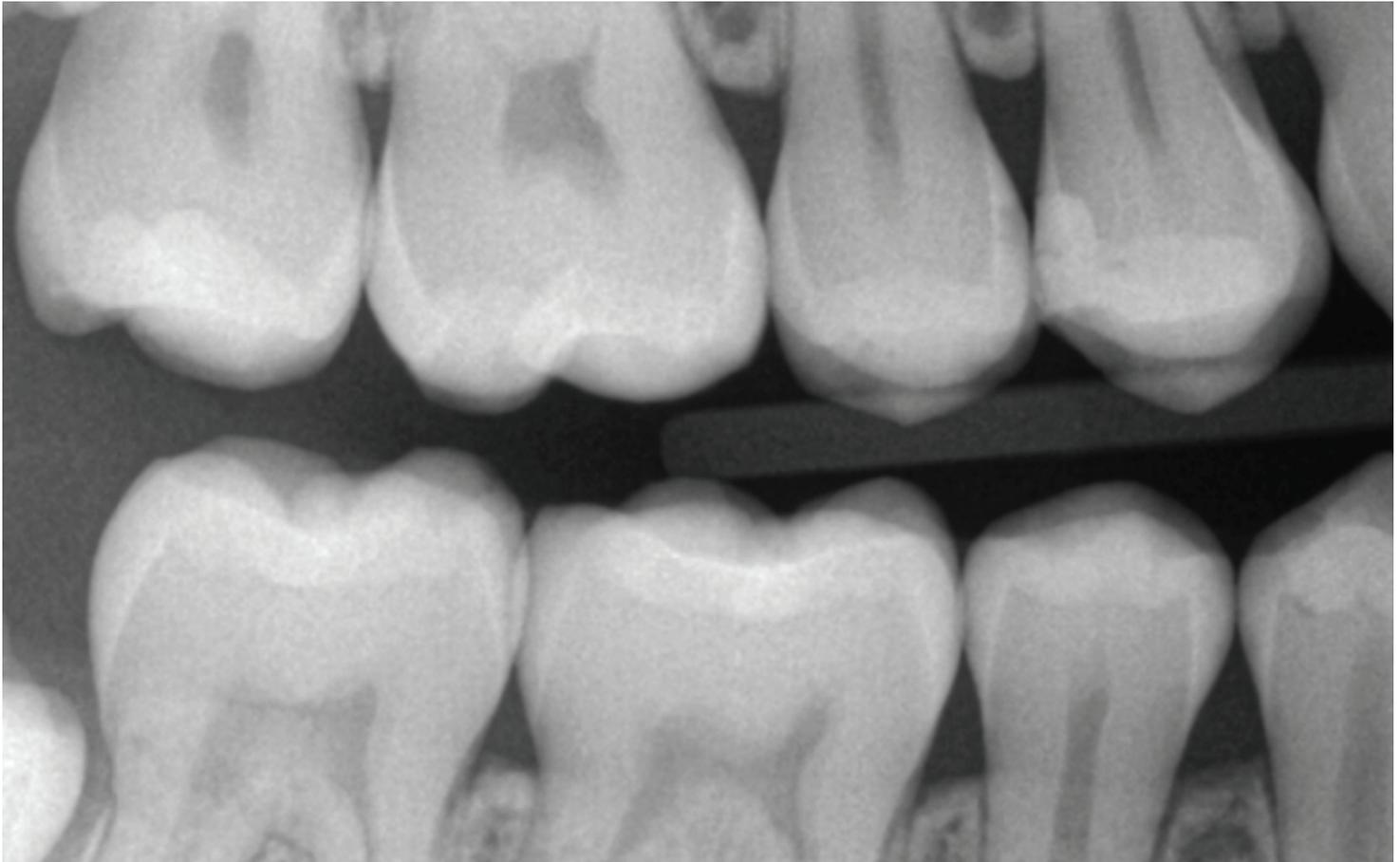


Figure 1—A 17-year-old male presented with radiographic decay on the mesial of tooth No. 4. The radiograph was taken with a Schick 33 digital sensor (Sirona Dental), using the AimRight parallel positioning device (Sirona Dental).



Figure 2—Preoperative view of tooth No. 4. The image was taken with an Iris intraoral camera (Digital Doc) during the preparation of the tooth before refining the preparation, isolation, and placement of the final restoration.



Figure 3—The decay has invaded the enamel and has progressed into the dentin. Note the color change.

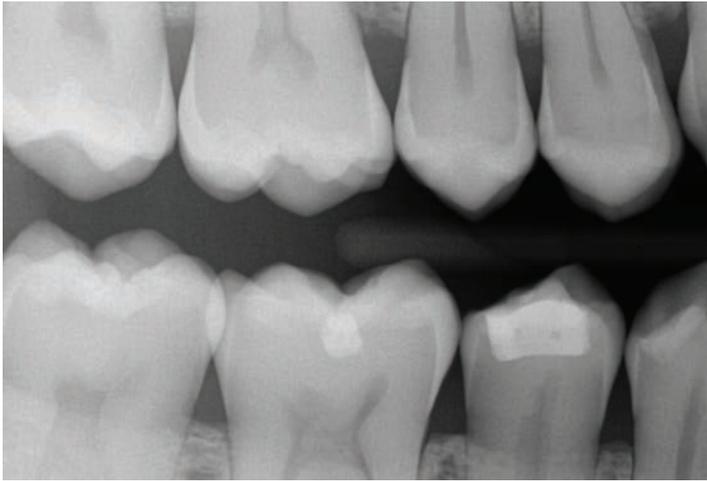


Figure 4—A 24-year-old male presented with decay on the distal of tooth No. 4.



Figure 5—A pre-op view of tooth No. 4, taken during the preparation of the tooth before refining the prep, isolation, and placement of the final restoration.



Figure 6—Decay as it passes the dentoenamel junction.



Figure 7—Decay in the floor of the box. Note the color of the decaying dentin.

GO-TO PRODUCTS USED IN THIS CASE



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