

3D imaging for better patient care

Why 3D imaging provides a better option for patient care and how changes in Dental Insurance Reimbursement make it a good investment for the future. [by Terri Lively]

“This is taking your dental fix-it shop and moves you into diagnosing why you need to fix it. You aren’t fixing something broken without knowing why it’s broken.”



CHRISTINE TAXIN

Christine Taxin, adjunct professor of New York University College of Dentistry, understands how the ADA guidelines on dental radiography affect reimbursement. The dental industry is moving from the routine file-and-pay insurance reimbursements to a model more like medical physicians, where dentists must document the need for certain diagnostics and other procedures. With a changing standard, Taxin has a unique take on dentists’ need to adjust their strategy.

Dentists are concerned with the ROI of the products in which they invest. Many look toward insurance reimbursement as a way to help. What is your take on this?

CT: Insurance companies do not always cover the service. Even though there are so many codes in the dental world at this point for cone beam imaging, they are not covered procedures under most plans. Having a code doesn’t mean that an insurance company is going to cover it. Medical is different, but in dental that’s how it is.

The reason you needed to take the 3D scan becomes the answer for billing. That reason is always about why the person needs a treatment. If you

have that, then it will be covered.

What effects have guidelines from institutions such as the ADA had on insurance billing and reimbursement?

CT: The meaning of X-rays changed two or three years ago to Diagnostic X-rays. However, people that read the CPT or X-rays have not changed how they use them, however. They just look at the insurance program to see if it’s time to take another set of X-rays, and then they take a set of full mouth.

But the insurance companies are not looking at radiology as an “insurance said you could have this” payout. They are looking to see what the reason was for the X-rays. Doctors using 3D modality need to know the diagnostic codes because that’s the difference between billing it and billing it and getting paid.

What do you see as future trends in insurance coding for dental?

CT: The big trend is that there are some plans already that allow you to treat patients that are orally systemically ill, diabetic, pregnant girls, etc., which can access additional dental benefits because of the diagnosis. Doctors need to take patients’ medical history much more seriously if you want to access wellness benefits for patients that have oral systemic conditions because 90% of the dental insurances have some form of wellness benefits.



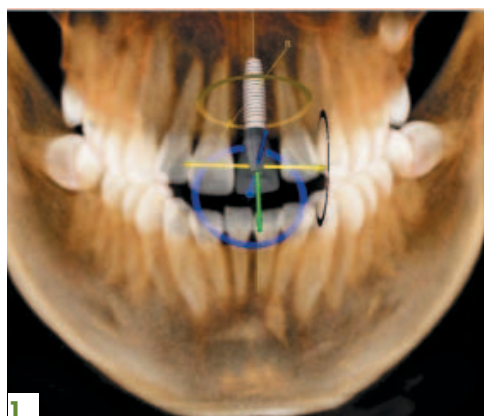
How important is education when using a 3D cone beam system and how does it benefit the practice?

CT: Extremely important. This is taking your dental fix-it shop and moves you into diagnosing why you need to fix it. You aren’t fixing something broken without knowing why it’s broken. These 3D systems are the Diagnostic tool. That’s where the surgeries and the treatments come from, not just what you see visually.

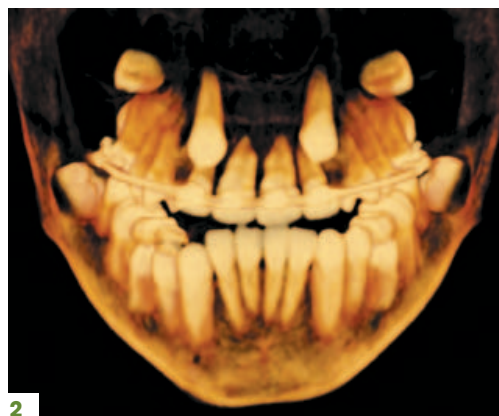
Look at it this way; a car mechanic is going to diagnose your car. Why aren’t we diagnosing our people?

Right now, we diagnose what’s broken to fix it, but we aren’t looking beyond that tooth. We never really diagnose patients beyond that. Now, however, we are being asked to collaborate with the medical world to get the patients healthier.

Another important component of utilizing this technology is continuing education. Christine Taxin will be lecturing on Insurance Coding at the 8th International Congress on 3D Dental Imaging, Nov. 7-8 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. ●



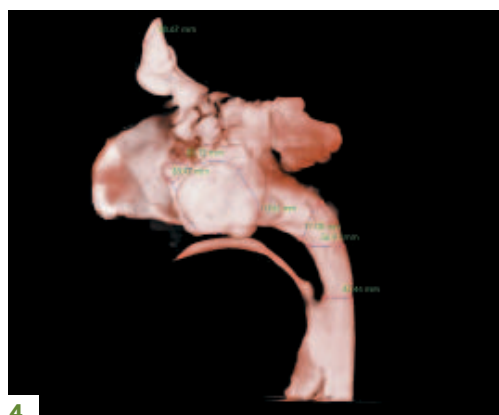
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[**Figs. 1-4**]

Accomplish implant and restoration planning within Tx STUDIO™ software (Fig. 1).

3D progress scans can be accomplished with a comparable dose to a 2D panoramic X-ray with QuickScan+* (Fig. 2).

Calculate volumes for airway studies to better help plan for treatment and successful outcomes (Fig. 3).

Segment out anatomical structures within Tx STUDIO 3D imaging software (Fig. 4).

*Data on file.

WHERE YOU CAN GO FOR GREAT EDUCATION

The 8th International Congress on 3D Dental Imaging,
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.,
Nov. 7-8, 2014

Presented by i-CAT and Henry Schein Dental, the two-day conference demonstrates the applications of 3D imaging for your practice and earns you 11 continuing education credits. With a curriculum designed by dentist for dentists, the i-CAT University educators have extensive knowledge of and experience with the i-CAT system. In addition to the annual Congress, i-CAT offers other continuing education options that include an annual users meeting, online tutorials, webinars, regional classes, and custom onsite training.

Register now at:
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What does the 3D Congress offer?

- Lectures and demonstrations of real 3D imaging applications in dentistry
- Perspectives from knowledgeable industry experts and colleagues
- Real 3D imaging applications in dentistry during lectures and breakout sessions
- Tips and best practices on how to be a 3D dentist and why this technology will help your practice be successful in today's dental society
- Enjoy many opportunities to network and learn!

