

## Dental x-rays important for health

**Q**uestion: How often should dental X-rays be taken? What are they looking for?



**JUSTIN  
PHILIPP**

ASK THE  
EXPERT

**Answer:** Once a year. All doctors are concerned about radiation exposure for their patients. The key word here is "dental." Dental X-rays have extremely low radiation levels. These are very different than X-rays for broken bones.

A series of digital X-rays emits less radiation than an hour on an airplane.

Twelve months is a long time in dentistry. Cavities can form in as little as

three months and progress to the point of needing root-canal therapy in as little as a year.

Besides cavities, when reading an X-ray, dental professionals also are evaluating the soft tissue and bone. They are looking for changes or abnormalities in these structures, which can be signs of other medical conditions, such as cancer. Therefore, dental X-rays are great for your overall health and well-being. And, just like other types of X-rays, they may be awkward to take in certain positions, but they in no way hurt.

*Dr. Justin Philipp is a Chandler dentist. Reach him at 480-306-5506 or visit [jphilipp.com](http://jphilipp.com).*

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## Dental X-rays can be helpful in assessing overall health, well-being

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