

Technology Integration in Dentistry

There are several new technologies that have been developed in the recent years giving rise to numerous innovative devices enabling early detection of caries.

Intraoral Camera is the most undervalued and underused technology in dentistry. The intraoral camera should be used for every patient appointment, every examination, and every tooth. Only an intraoral camera can produce a screen-sized digital image of a tooth or teeth. Visual detection or even suspicion of early dental caries is enhanced from this digital image. It is this suspicion of possible early decay that leads to further investigation using additional dental digital diagnostic technology. An enlarged color digital image on a computer screen enhances a provider's diagnostic abilities, especially when compared to the naked eye. It is also very important to visually illustrate and educate all patients about their dental health. Educate a patient what you see, what makes you suspicious, and what you intend to investigate further. There are over 25 different intraoral camera systems available in today's dental marketplace. Some features to look for when selecting an intraoral camera are the focusing mechanism (lens), depth of field, image quality, and capturing mechanism (foot or handpiece). An intraoral camera is extremely cost-effective. Initially no dental practice should be without an intraoral camera.



Figure 1: Intraoral Camera

In today's dental practice, the use of digital caries detection technology is the only way to maintain and provide the standard of care for patients with respect to minimally invasive dentistry in both the diagnosis and treatment of dental caries. This technology also eliminates the guesswork in diagnosis, thereby building the confidence and trust that patients deserve.

Prof Meena Perla
Assistant Professor