

The Importance of Front Teeth X-rays on Preschoolers

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Why Should A Dentist Take Upper Front X-Rays In The Baby Teeth For Preschool Children? In most cases, it is not to diagnose cavities. The dentist is often able to see all surfaces of the teeth due to gaps between baby front teeth to diagnose cavities. Usually, a dentist should take front teeth x-rays to screen for extra permanent teeth and absent permanent teeth.

The incidence of congenitally missing permanent teeth (permanent teeth that never formed), not counting wisdom teeth, is approximately 5%. The incidence of supernumerary teeth (extra teeth) is approximately 3%. Therefore, about 1 in every 12 children will either have or have had one of these abnormalities.

Children that have an extra permanent tooth must be followed closely because the extra permanent tooth can block the normal permanent teeth from coming in. This can result in an impacted permanent tooth that can only be treated by oral surgery and braces. Often, if an extra permanent tooth is recognized early and handled correctly, the normal permanent teeth will come in normally without the need for oral surgery and braces.



Figure 1

The child in Figure 1 has an extra tooth (see arrow) that is blocking the permanent front tooth from coming in. Note that the other permanent central incisor is fully erupted into the dental arch. This condition requires attention right away if a possible surgical procedure is to be avoided.



Figure 2

The patient in Figure 2 is congenitally missing maxillary permanent lateral incisors. The circles indicate where the missing teeth should be located. Compare that picture to Figure 3 that demonstrates a normal compliment of four permanent incisors.



Figure 3

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends that children be examined by a dentist by age one. Detection and prevention of cavities is an important part of that examination. However, there are several other issues, including screening for extra and missing front teeth, that should be checked out in the preschool years.

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