

Technology in Dentistry

By Dr Scott Hudimac

Anywhere you look today, in any business or industry, you see technology changing the way things are done. From robots used in assembly lines to smart phones for communication to computer aided product design, technology is always shaping the evolution of almost every business. Dentistry is no different as technology is constantly allowing dental care to better prevent and treat problems and create more beautiful smiles.

The use of lasers is enhancing many areas of dental care. They can be used to detect dental decay in it's earliest stages, allowing for minimally invasive fillings and possibly reversing the process to prevent cavities. The most common type of laser, a diode laser, is optimal for soft tissue procedures such as biopsies, reshaping gum tissues, and treating gum disease. Hard tissue lasers can be used to work on teeth and bone, giving dentists another tool for patient care. It seems that dental lasers are here to stay because they provide dentists with expanded treatment options and are readily accepted by patients.

The area of dental x-rays, or radiography, is another area being affected by technology. Digital x-ray technology replaces the piece of film with a computer sensor that is placed in the mouth to capture the image of the teeth. This allows the image to be seen almost instantly, to be modified to gain the most information, and to do so while lowering the radiation received by the patient by at least seventy-five percent. Digital imaging technology is also changing the way that dental implants are placed. A cone-beam CT scan gives a three dimensional picture of the bone, allowing for important anatomical features to be easily seen and accounted for in the planning and surgical placement of dental implants. This makes an already highly successful procedure even safer and more predictable. Once again it is easy to see that technology is changing how dental care is provided for the better.

A third way that dental care is being affected by technology is in the area of crowns and bridges. Technology now exists that allows a digital image of a tooth to be taken and sent to a dental laboratory to use in making the crown. This is great news for anyone who has had trouble tolerating the mouthful of impression material that is usually needed to capture the mold of a tooth. There is also the capability to take this one step further through the use of a computer aided design and milling machine. This allows the crown to be made and placed the same day the tooth is prepared. Technology is making dental care more comfortable and convenient.

Through the constant evolution of technology used in providing dental care dentistry is always looking for ways to make treatment easier, faster, and better. If you would like more information of this subject you can go to [Know my teeth.com](http://Knowmyteeth.com) or call my office at 724-537-5505. Thank you for taking the time to read this article, and have a great day.

