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## BookReview

**Panoramic Radiology.** By Vivian E Rushton and John Rout. New Malden: Quintessence Books, 2006 (145pp., £28 h/b). ISBN 1-85097-080-7.

This small book is part of the Quintessentials for General Dental Practitioners Series, and is the second of the series to concentrate on imaging.

The book is clearly aimed at all members of the dental team as each has their part to play in the production and utilization of quality panoramic radiographs. The style is quite easy reading but, inevitably in a book this size, not always to the same depth as larger texts. References at the end of each chapter guide readers to other sources of information.

The seven chapters are each written by one of the two authors and cover the full range, from history, through technique, to interpretation of panoramic images.

Aim/s and outcomes are provided with each chapter. Chapter 1 covers the background to the technique and probable future developments. The description of radiographic technique in Chapter 2 is quite simplified but sufficient to explain the importance of correct positioning; this is strongly reinforced in Chapter 6. In the chapter on radiographic anatomy, a number of useful reproductions of radiographs and line drawings assist the reader in understanding the portrayal of normal anatomical features and also ghost images. Unfortunately, the illustrations and their matching text are not always on the same page.

Radiation dose and risk are important considerations when deciding on the need and appropriateness of any radiographic examination. The chapter devoted to this commences with a brief explanation of the biological effects of ionizing radiation. Risk changes in relation to age are clearly explained

in a table. Key points in reducing dose are highlighted and reference to the simple and effective use of field limitation is particularly welcome, as this requires operator intervention. The reference to constant potential x-ray generation indicates that this enables a shorter exposure time, thereby reducing dose to the patients; whilst true for intra-oral machines, the exposure time of panoramic machines is an independent factor. Tables explain the sources of background radiation and the effective dose and estimated risk of cancer for a number of radiographic techniques. A useful addition in a future edition would be a table showing the dose reduction resulting from the various methods proposed.

The short chapter on the use of panoramic radiography in general dental practice addresses, amongst other things, the issue of 'routine screening'. There is some confusion for the reader in relation to this. Whilst the introduction states the practice of 'routine' oral screening radiography cannot be sanctioned, further on the author states "the routine practice of supplementing the clinical examination of a new adult patient by a 'screening' DPR is well established". Should the reader see this but not the earlier statement they could be misled into thinking that this is an accepted practice.

There is extensive reference to quality assurance, including a detailed explanation of the technique to be followed in the positioning of a patient and the impact on the image of incorrect positioning. The importance of the patient's head position is reinforced on a number of occasions and diagrams illustrate the various relevant reference lines/planes. Unfortunately, the image showing the Frankfort plane shows its anterior end at

a slightly higher level than its true position, although the text correctly describes its clinical application. This is a particularly helpful chapter as the result of poor technique has such an influence on the diagnostic value of the image. Issues relating to the care of cassettes and the processing environment are also covered.

The final chapter concentrates on radiographic interpretation of disease. For a small book there is a surprising amount of information. This is very helpful as quite an extensive number of conditions are covered without the extensive detail of larger texts, encouraging the practitioner to dip in for help.

In general, this is a useful and handy book, pitched at a suitable level for the whole dental team.

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