

# Radiation Exposure

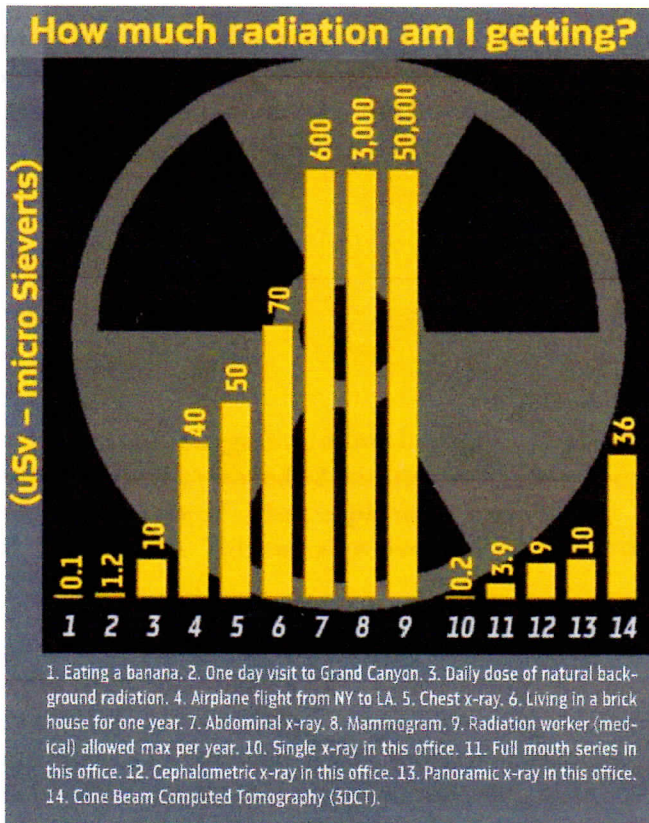
A common topic the media discusses from time to time is the amount of radiation exposure that occurs in a dental or orthodontic office. On November 22, 2010, *The New York Times* published an article titled, "Radiation Worries for Children in Dentists' Chairs." In the article they discussed the usage of cone beam CT scanners on children, and quoted Boston periodontist, Dr. Nicholas Dello Russo saying "The parents of these children have no idea about the amount of radiation used in these CT scans, and even more frightening, neither do the dentists." These types of articles are typically catered to the lay public, where a quote from an expert will convey the message that there is no such thing as safe radiation. While this might be true to an extent, dental radiography is safe, minimal and has an important role in a person's overall health when used judiciously.

To address the concerns and allay the fears of patients and their parents who object or question the use of X-rays in dentistry and orthodontics, the Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health Postgraduate Orthodontics Program Class of 2013 created an educational visual aid under the direction of their instructor, Clifford Running, DDS. The goal of the graph is to be simple and informative, comparing the radiation we encounter in our daily lives and common medical tests to dental radiography. Through visual aids such as this one, skeptical parents and patients can be clearly informed of the amount of radiation exposure for all the types of X-rays used in the orthodontic office, even cone beam CT. As one can see, the amount of exposure in an orthodontic office is quite low when compared to other common sources of radiation.

The information in the graph was gathered from a variety of sources, the majority from the organizations Radiologyinfo.org and Health Physician Services. The graph assumes the use of digital dental radiography. *The members of the orthodontic residency*

program who created the graph are the following: Brad Milde, Blake Hillstead, Ryan Bullen, Shruti Oruganti, Tien Srisurapol and Trent Cox. ■

References  
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