Undoubtedly, over the years, there have been advancements in technology that were not even thought of when I was a student in dental school almost 50 years ago. The advancements transverse from restorative materials we use day-to-day, to hard-and soft-tissue lasers, to advancements in the field of implant dentistry, to name a few. But by far, and probably the most significant of all the advancements to me over the years, are the diagnostic advancements.

There are many diagnostic advancements that have been introduced into the field of dentistry over the past decade. The one in particular that has significantly impacted my practice capabilities is 3-D cone beam technology. For me, the specific cone beam CT scanner from PreXion has been the best purchase and investment in myself since the inception of my dental practice.

When I purchased my PreXion 3-D scanner approximately two years ago, the scanned images it reconstructed of my patients allowed the diagnostic and treatment planning to be achieved with greater certainty and more resolve. No longer did I depend on two-dimensional radiographs, but I now had a diagnostic aid that enabled me to step into another “dimension” of unimaginable dental views.

The PreXion 3-D has afforded me much flexibility with my dental care. As a CBCT scanner, it has enabled me to perform endodontia, periodontal therapy, oral surgical procedures and everyday general dentistry at a higher level and with more predictability. For example, a 3-D scan can pinpoint the exact location of each canal within a tooth and the root(s) morphology prior to initiating endodontics that a 2-D radiograph could never give you. The point here is that a CBCT scanner is a valuable tool for general dentists—not just specialists who focus on surgical modalities.

The guaranteed image quality that the PreXion 3-D produces with each scan is unattainable with any other cone beam scanner in the industry. The PreXion 3-D features the highest resolution images as well as the fastest processing time of those images once the actual scan on a patient is complete. This is quite useful when you want to illustrate to a patient a specific problem or need without having him or her wait. I can quickly show my patients their anatomic structures (around 30 to 90 seconds after scan is complete) and with an image quality of resolution that has not been reproduced yet by any other CBCT scanner to date.

The PreXion 3-D scanner’s flexibility allows me to perform four different scanning modes and two different field-of-view options. This enables me to specifically tailor each scan based on my need as a practitioner.

When I first placed the PreXion CBCT scanner into my dental office, the understanding I had of its value was clear to me as a dentist. As I started before, it has certainly been a valuable tool for me in my multidisciplinary general dental practice. The quality and predictability of oral surgical procedures because of the scan’s diagnostics, from exodontia of teeth to implant placement, has made my life easier knowing exactly what I am up against, each and every time, with certainty, before commencement of a procedure.

But what also has transpired within my rural dental practice was unforeseen.

The PreXion scanner has created a “buzz” with people in and around the community in which my dental practice is located. It seems to be one with a rippling effect. The number of new patients that have become part of my dental practice has dramatically increased. The reaffirmed commitment of my already established patient base and retention of them has also been impacted.

The response seems to be “wow” to the capabilities this new technology offers and to their understanding of how it can benefit their dental care. They are commenting how glad they are that I “keep up with the new technology for their benefit.”

Although we as professionals have seen this type of technology at dental meetings, and it is still impressive to us, imagine the visualization of 3-D data to a non-dental person; it can be truly remarkable.

I would encourage any dental practitioner to look closely at incorporating a CBCT scanner into your practice—in particular the PreXion 3-D. The company’s training enabled me to start taking scans and properly using its diagnostic software very quickly.

The training afforded to me by the company is ongoing, and the service has been outstanding. Being able to take 512 or 1,024 cone-shaped images in a 19-second scan and reconstructing these images for patient presentation in less than one minute is impressive.

You owe it to yourself to look closely at the PreXion 3-D and see how it can make your dental life easier and more enjoyable.

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By Dr. Domenick DeFrancisis

Dr. Domenick DeFrancisis is a 1982 graduate of Temple University School of Dental Medicine. He is a member of the ADA and PDA, an associate fellow in the American Academy of Implant Dentistry and a fellow in the International College of Oral Implantology. He has been in private practice in Pennsylvania for 26 years.