

Panographic Radiograph Guidelines

Section 4, U.S. Army Dental Command (DENCOM) Policy Letter 03-26, Periodic Oral Evaluation Requirements

... A panographic radiograph is required to be present in the dental record and that it is of adequate quality for diagnostic/identification purposes. There is no time requirement on updating panographic radiographs. However, the panographic radiograph will adequately represent the current oral condition of the soldier.

Guidelines by the current DENCOM Consultant in Forensic Dentistry

Christopher G. Fielding
LTC(P), DC
Consultant in Forensic Dentistry
(706) 787-2478/2606
DSN 773-2478/2606
Fax (706) 787-1907

08 Jan 2003

All service members should have at a minimum at least one panoramic radiograph of **diagnostic quality** in their dental health records taken IAW AR 40-66. This panoramic radiograph should be sufficient in most cases to capture many of the important anatomic features that may be crucial in the identification process. FDA/ADA guidelines recommend that bite-wing radiographs be prescribed about every 2-3 years, even in patients with a low caries rate. It would, therefore, seem logical that at least one panoramic radiograph capturing static anatomic detail combined with the bite-wing radiographs in a service member's dental health record, potentially showing more recent radiographic evidence of dental treatment and/or disease, would suffice in providing enough antemortem radiographic data to assist in remains identification in most instances.

03 November 2003

It may be further recommended to administratively prescribe a panoramic radiograph on Class 3 service members requiring multiple dental extractions and/or restorative therapy upon completion of the service member's treatment as their status is upgraded from Class 3 to Class 1 or 2. From a practical standpoint, Class 3 service members requiring only periodontal therapy or only 3rd molar surgery would be exempt from this recommendation. This would ensure that panoramic radiographs are being periodically taken on the subset of service members whose dental profile is apt to have the most dramatic change with respect to missing and restored teeth. Additionally, service members should have a panoramic radiograph demonstrating the presence of any implant devices, bone plating and/or wire ligatures.

Guidelines by the current DENCOM Consultant in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Michael J. Will, DDS, MD
Colonel, DC
Consultant, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
202-782-6823; fax: 202-782-6987

03 November 2003 The decision to consider third molar teeth for extraction must be generated from a chairside dental exam by a dental officer utilizing the assistance of a current panorex (<12 months old) and an interview of the patient's symptoms regarding the teeth in question.