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Radiography: Impacted Third Molar Case Study

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In a normal developmental tooth pattern, patients develop thirty-two permanent teeth. The last teeth to develop and erupt are the third molars. A common procedure performed by dentists and oral surgeons is third molar extractions. Third molar prophylactic treatment has been on the increase in many dental offices. Prophylactic treatment means the tooth is not causing any infection or harm to the surrounding tissue and is free of disease, but in any case, the tooth is extracted. This case study will show how leaving a third molar impaction may be detrimental to your patient's health and well-being.

Patient "R's" symptoms gradually continued to decline over a period of a week. A complete dental history, medical history and radiographic assessment were gathered from Patient "R". Pre-surgical and post-surgical panoramic images, along with CT scans were evaluated. The use of alternate views of radiographs (panoramic and CT scan) was extremely beneficial in the interpretation and diagnosis of "Patient R's" condition.

Third molar removal surgery is a procedure that is very specific to each individual. Each patient can present with a variety of risks and implications to consider when treatment planning for removal of third molars.