



WHAT'S A CBCT SCAN?

3D Cone Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT) is an imaging technology that allows dentists to evaluate the underlying bone structure, as well as the nerve pathways and surrounding soft tissues. During a CBCT scan, the imaging machine rotates entirely around the patient's head. In less than a minute, about 150-200 images are captured from a variety of angles and compiled into a single 3D image.



CBCT scans are quick and in most cases, a full mouth scan only takes about 20-40 seconds. When having a CBCT scan taken, you can expect to be seated while an x-ray arm slowly rotates around your head. To ensure your head remains still during the scan, your dentist may have you rest your head against part of the machine and/or use stabilizers in or around your ears to gently hold your head in place. The scan should cause you no discomfort.

Now that you have an understanding of what a CBCT scan is and how it works, let's take a look at just why you may need one. For starters, your dentist will often recommend a CBCT scan if you are considering dental implants because it provides a detailed picture of your bones, nerves, and soft tissues. A single CBCT scan can show potential dental issues such as tooth decay, bone loss, abnormal growths, facial fractures, periodontal infections, irregularities of the temporo-mandibular joint, and problems with the tooth roots or dental pulp. This allows your implant dentist to determine if dental implants can be safely and effectively placed.

CBCT scans are used as part of the treatment planning phase, involving careful planning before the actual procedure. They allow your dentist to establish their approach before beginning the procedure. Not only that, but it also allows them to identify possible complications ahead of time so that they can take the necessary steps to avoid or minimize these complications.

