



A Reason to Radiograph

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A 6-year-old, neutered, shepherd-mix dog presented for a dental cleaning. Intraoral examination revealed mild gingivitis, mild to moderate calculus, and missing lower left first and second mandibular premolars (#305 and #306; **FIGURE 1**). Full-mouth conventional dental radiographs were obtained. The radiograph of the mandible revealed an unerupted first premolar but no evidence of a second premolar (**FIGURE 2**). The radiograph of the left first mandibular molar (#309; **FIGURE 3**) revealed two small, round opacities within the pulp, which are called *pulp stones* (**FIGURE 4**). The owner was informed that an unerupted tooth may predispose the patient to developing a dentigerous cyst and that the pulp stones would make endodontic treatment of the tooth difficult. Because there was no evidence of periodontal disease of either tooth, the owner decided against further treatment but agreed to closely monitor the affected area.

Some veterinary professionals do not see the value in obtaining radiographs of healthy-looking teeth. However, nearly 30% to 40% of clinically relevant dental disease is undiagnosed without full-mouth dental radiographs.^{1,2} Full-mouth intraoral radiographs are imperative for revealing dental anomalies that the owner and the veterinarian should be aware of if future dental problems develop.

References

1. Verstraete FJ, Kass PH, Terpak CH. Diagnostic value of full-mouth radiography in dogs. *Am J Vet Res* 1998;59(6):686-691.
2. Verstraete FJ, Kass PH, Terpak CH. Diagnostic value of full-mouth radiography in cats. *Am J Vet Res* 1998;59(6):692-695.

Do You Have a Unique Case to Share? Send it to us along with high-resolution clinical images and/or video that help tell the story. Provide a 100- to 300-word description of what the images show, how the case was treated, and the animal's recovery. We pay **\$75** per published case. Send submissions by **e-mail** to editor@VetTechJournal.com, or **mail** to Veterinary Technician, 780 Township Line Road, Yardley, PA 19067.