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## The science of smiles has come miles and miles

With technology in the field becoming more and more advanced each year, local orthodontic offices are giving Peninsula residents plenty to smile about these days.

Dr. Jay Nagamatsu, of White Rock Orthodontics, recently attended a conference of the Pacific Coast Society of Orthodontics, where he said there was plenty of exciting new technology to take in.

One of the most exciting advancements in the world of orthodontics over the past few years has been the development of interactive computer software that allows doctors to digitize and scan patients' teeth.

"It allows us to use a computer to design where the braces go and predict what somebody's smile will look like afterwards," Nagamatsu explained.

This cutting-edge technology allows for a customized smile for each and every patient, and makes the diagnosis, treatment planning and implementation faster, easier and more convenient.

Another area that has come leaps and bounds in the world of orthodontics is the use of X-rays, which are now available completely digitally. Not only does this cut down the amount of radiation a patient is exposed to during the scanning process, it also allows for the images to be stored on computers as opposed to hard copy, which eliminates any chemicals previously used for development.

At White Rock Orthodontics, Nagamatsu and his colleagues have computers at each chair, which allows the



**A great smile is easier than ever to achieve with cutting-edge orthodontic technology.**

team to pull up any photos, X-rays and patient history they might need, cutting back on paper work.

While orthodontic technology has come a long way over the past few decades, so has the demographics of patients seeking treatment to improve their smiles.

Nagamatsu said their practice treats patients of all ages – including some well into their 70s and 80s.

"If the teeth are in good condition and the gums and bone are in a good state, there's no reason why we can't treat them," he said.

However, he did note that the earlier they are able to see patients for an initial diagnosis, the easier the solutions will likely be.

"We do like to see kids around seven years old, because if there's some sort of issue at that time, if we can correct it at an earlier age, it saves us a lot of time when they do need braces."