

Digital Radiography

Peter S. Sakas DVM, MS

Niles Animal Hospital and Bird Medical Center

7278 N. Milwaukee Ave. Niles, IL 60714

Ph 847-647-9325 Fax 847-647-8498

www.nilesanimalhospital.com

In January of 2007, we converted to a new digital radiography system, replacing our older film based system. No longer did we have to worry about x-ray films, developer chemicals, physically storing films and dealing with less than ideal images. Our new system has enhanced our radiographic diagnostic capabilities.

With our digital system we have many tools at our disposal which can help to enhance and improve the images. Digital radiography, in general, produces much better detail and significantly improves the images. However, in addition, there are tools which we can implement which can further “tweak” the details, further enhancing the image quality if needed. We are also able to manipulate the images so we can better visualize any abnormalities noted on the radiograph or enhance them. We have the capacity to magnify the entire radiograph or portions of it so we can get a good look at any abnormalities. We can also adjust the contrast or other manipulations to further clarify abnormalities. We can also apply labels/annotations to help point out the abnormalities to you, as an educational aid.

Another advantage of our digital system is that we can easily make copies of radiographs for you or veterinary specialists who you are referred to if they are needed. We can email you .jpeg images of the radiographs or can put the images on a CD. For the specialists, who like copies of the radiographs of the cases they will be seeing, we can send emails or CDs, but also, if they have the capability to read them, send them .dicom images. DICOM images are of high quality and provide the opportunity to manipulate the images like we do here. On the occasion we are unsure of what we are visualizing on the radiographs, we can send them to board certified radiologists or other specialists who can evaluate the radiographs for us.

Finally, the lack of films is a great advantage as there is no longer a storage problem. For example, in the past when we needed to send a case to a specialist, the radiographs would have to be physically picked up or mailed to the specialist with the resultant risk of loss or misfiling. It used to be a real headache. In addition, if we had wanted to review old radiographs of your pet we would have to go back, find the folder with the radiographs, pick out the ones of interest, bring them up to the viewbox and then view it. With our digital system it is as simple as going to a computer workstation, opening the patient file, clicking on the image icon for the appropriate date and *voila*.....the radiograph is up on the computer screen. We can then manipulate the images as needed.

The digital radiography has been a great addition to our practice. It has improved our diagnostic capabilities and in that regard benefits you and your pet.