



**VETERINARY VOICE:  
Tips of the Trade**

**Diagnostic Imaging- Digital Radiography**

<p><b>What are the benefits of digital radiography in veterinary practice?</b></p>	<p>Digital radiology can have a dramatic, positive impact on work flow, space storage, and imaging quality in your practice. It enhances image quality making it easier and faster to make radiographs, which will increase the number of radiographic studies, and therefore, increase revenue. You will also have the option of having the images immediately uploaded to a radiologist, therefore improving patient care in a real time fashion; like having a radiologist right in your clinic. In terms of overall exposure, the strength of digital systems is tolerance of a wide range of techniques while producing a great looking, properly exposed image.</p>
<p><b>What are the differences between film and digital radiographs?</b></p>	<p>Digital radiographs have unique problems not observed with film. Many veterinarians find it tough to judge digital image quality when making a purchase decision. It is recommended that you speak with users of the system as well as radiologists using digital images to get a better perspective. It will be too late to change your mind if you note deficiencies in the system you selected after the sale.</p> <p>A good reference is the Animal Insides website (<a href="http://www.animalinsides.com">www.animalinsides.com</a>), whose focus it is to help veterinarians make educated decisions regarding digital imaging purchases. They will send you their Showdown DVD, free of charge, with side by side comparisons of the best images each company can produce for different small animal studies.</p>
<p><b>What are some tips for using digital radiography?</b></p>	<p>Advances in computer hardware and software have made it easier and cheaper to enhance images and your ability to diagnose. You can store digital images at your practice and share them with others via the Internet in DICOM format (jpegs are compressed images and will therefore lose diagnostic information). You may also choose to store the images off-site with guaranteed safe-keeping and easy retrieval.</p>
<p><b>Questions? Diagnostic Imaging Expert: Michael E. Roy, DVM, MS, DACVR</b></p>	<p>The Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson has a board-certified radiologist available to consult about radiographs and to perform inpatient and outpatient ultrasound, CT scans, and radiographs during the weekdays. He is also on call to provide consultations to VSCT emergency doctors and to perform emergency procedures, such as ultrasonography, for patients seen by the VSCT emergency service. Board-certified radiologists have four additional years of training after veterinary school and are certified by the American College of Veterinary Radiology to assure competency in advanced veterinary diagnostic imaging.</p>