

Riding the Digital Technology Wave Enables Vast Expansion for NY-Based Podiatry Practice

By Drs. Lewis and Erik Sims

When I opened my first podiatry practice in Poughkeepsie, NY, in 1973, my goal was to deliver the best care, with a personal touch, for my patients. My passion was medicine. However, over the course of 42 years, and with the partnership of my son, Erik, who has joined me, it has been our ability to strike the balance between providing excellent care and keeping up with the right technological advancements that has propelled our success and facilitated our practice expansion. Specifically, our partnership with 20/20 Imaging for digital x-ray technology has fueled our efficiency, enhanced our diagnostic abilities, and enabled us to provide better patient care.

In my first office—no surprise—film was the only option. What was a necessity then—taking nearly an hour to acquire the image, process the film and wait for it to completely dry—was something I was only too happy to quickly say goodbye to the moment we switched to digital imaging. In fact, we're confident we were the first podiatry practice in the state of New York to adopt digital x-ray.

To look at it on a timeline, the technology went from film in the early 1900's, to computer radiography (CR) in the 1980's, to direct radiography (DR) in 1997. We use P-DR 715 in the two offices and an 812 (CR) in the satellite office.

Among the three podiatrists in our practice today, we see approximately 90 patients a day for various exams, including heel pain, stress fractures, diabetic foot ulcers, ankle exams and sports medicine. We really see it all. And for more than a decade, we have been working with 20/20 Imaging to satisfy the needs of the practice. We plan to purchase another DR in the future for our new office in Pleasant Valley, N.Y. The DR is efficient and quick, the quality of the images is great, and transitioning from CR to DR has provided a dramatic difference in speed and efficiency. For example, if we have two patients in the office—one with heel pain and the other with a stubbed toe—there used to be a delay due to the image processing time. Now, we can take the image and it will

be waiting for us in the exam room for review. When we are busy, it makes us much more efficient and enables us to avoid long wait times for our patients.

When we converted to digital, we were quickly introduced to the advancements that enabled us to see subtle fractures and other diagnostic elements that were not possible with film. Additionally, the ability to enhance images and provide contrast gives us complete control over the images. Even with the best aspects of film—when the automatic developers came into play and took significantly less time—we still had no control over the images.

The DR system has improved image quality, with auto-contrast during processing and image auto-shutter and cropping. We also don't need to worry about storage—all of the images are stored within the system. An added benefit is that patients are amazed at the speed in which images are taken and then delivered to the exam room—the images are usually waiting

for the patient when they arrive back in the room. Additionally, patients appreciate the ability to view pre-op and post-op images on the same screen. In a society that demands instant results, we can provide that with this technology. We were told that training would take one day but we found the technology to be intuitive and our staff was up and running the same day.

Our decade-plus-long partnership with 20/20 Imaging has fueled our growth and enhanced our patient care. While our practice is growing, we are seeing technology grow leaps and bounds as well and that is why we continue to work with 20/20 Imaging. We are very pleased with the technology and service offered by the company. And both of us agree that if we had to pick one thing that we purchased over the years that really made sense, it was the 20/20 Imaging technology. The CR and now the DR have made a major difference in our practice.

Drs. Lewis and Erik Sims are part of Sims Podiatry in New York.

For more information on 20/20 Imaging technology call 866-734-6234, visit www.2020imaging.net, or *click here*.



Dr. Erik Sims (at left) and Dr. Lewis Sims in front of 20/20 Imaging technology.