



**Dr.
Brian
Sakamoto**
Endodontist
Class of 1993

By Sabrina Hatcher

Dr. Brian Sakamoto is an endodontist, a dental specialist trained in all aspects of root canal therapy. A root canal is done when a tooth cannot be restored by conventional means, such as a filling or crown. Because the tooth has decay, which affects the nerve, or is infected, the dead or diseased nerve must be removed and the space around the nerve, called the canal space, must be cleaned and reshaped and an inert filling material placed in this space. When asked how he deals with patients who come to him with fear and dread, he said that trying to answer all of their questions before surgery is standard procedure. For those who are especially anxious, some pre-med sedation may be used to calm them.

Dr. Sakamoto's father, Ernest, is a retired oral surgeon and his wife is a general dentist, so his interest in dentistry is strongly supported by those closest to him. During dental school, he particularly enjoyed the field of endodontics and decided to pursue it as a career. He has great satisfaction seeing his patients come to him in pain and leaving with some type of relief.

After graduating from Waiakea High School in 1993, Dr. Sakamoto proceeded to Pomona College for one year, then he transferred to the University of Washington where he earned his undergraduate degree in Zoology and his dental degree in 2001. He then entered a one year advanced education program in general dentistry in Tucson, Arizona and to conclude his schooling, went to Indiana University where he completed a two-year graduate endodontic Program. Dr Sakamoto has officially been an endodontist since 2004.

Currently, Dr. Sakamoto works in his Hilo office on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and in Waimea on Thursday. His regular work day consists of consultations, appointments with patients, and surgery on roots called apicoectomies. The number of surgeries he performs varies on different days depending on the procedure needed and the tooth that requires treatment.

Dr. Sakamoto was State singles tennis champion in 1993, his senior year at Waiakea High. He also played tennis at Pomona College and the University of Washington. When asked what he remembered most about Waiakea High School, he answered, "I have many great memories of my friends many of whom I still keep in touch with in Hilo. I also think that Waiakea High School helped lay the foundation for my college education and graduate studies. I thank all my teachers and coaches who guided me on my life path."

Dr. Sakamoto's spare time is spent with his wife, Ramona, and their two sons, Jarren, age 3 and Olin, 8 months. (pictured in the dentist's chair with him.)

