

High Technology in Dentistry The Best at Any Cost

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Received: March 08, 2016; **Published:** March 09, 2016

Since 2005 I work with CAD/CAM system in my private practice, and in the last years, with the rise in popularity of this technology, specifically in Dentistry, I see many dentists in my country willing to do anything to acquire their own CAD/CAM equipment, either for everyday's office production of ceramic restorations or simply as a marketing tool in an attempt to attract more patients; even if the acquisition of this equipment implies making a strong initial investment and committing to long-term banking financing, or taking a specific training course to learn how to work with it correctly.

Also I see Dentists who cannot buy their own CAD/CAM system, and seek specialized prosthetic laboratories that have this technology, in order to help them with the production of their prosthetic restorations, and thus announce that they work with CAD/CAM technology in their clinics. Unfortunately these colleagues can barely differentiate between the CAD/CAM systems, and many confuse the type of ceramic with the form of processing, leaving the responsibility for the choice of material to the prosthetic. For these colleagues, it really does not matter if the restoration is made with feldspathic, lithium disilicate or zirconia ceramic; for them all what matters is that it was milled in a CAD/CAM system!... Of course, if there is any failure afterwards, they blame the CAD/CAM system. They never realize that the failure could be due to wrong selection of the material, because they hardly know that a single CAD/CAM system can mill various types of ceramics, and that there are different clinical applications for each type of ceramic.

Also I see dental technicians buying last generation, top of the line CAD/CAM equipment, to equip their labs hoping to make super complex jobs with sophisticated materials, but regrettably over time they end up using their machines to perform simple procedures that could have been done with basic CAD/CAM equipment.

Also I see well equipped prosthetic laboratories with respect to CAD/CAM technology, but fall short in additional peripheral equipment. What good is having a beautiful CAD/CAM system and work with modern ceramics, if we do not have the appropriate oven for its correct sintering? Let us not forget that regardless whether it was milled in a CAD/CAM system or not, the proper sintering of the ceramics is one of the important factors to obtain its final desired properties, and succeed at achieving long-lasting restorations.

After all I've seen, I ask myself: Why is this? ... Is it lack of knowledge? ... lack of planning? ... or simply desire to have the best, at any cost, just to say I have!.

Volume 3 Issue 6 March 2016

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