

Endodontics Vs Implants: The Incessant Battle

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Abstract

The unsaid war is going on in the field of dentistry for choosing between retaining the infected tooth by utilizing the procedure of Endodontics or extracting it and replacing with a dental implant. Several factors govern this crucial decision making and an astute clinician must consider all the parameters while offering the treatment plan to the patients and finally executing it.

Keywords: Implants; Endodontics; Treatment Planning

Dentistry is going through a drastic transition this decade. The dilemma continues in the operator's mind whether to attempt the salvation of an infected tooth or just simply replace it with an implant. While many practitioners are overwhelmed with the facile option of Implantology, there are many who have firm belief in the science of Endodontics.

It is quite clear that decision making regarding saving a tooth or extracting it depends on several factors such as severity of tooth structure loss, periodontal considerations, possibility of performing post and core etc [1]. The procedure of Endodontics is quite systematic and therefore requires lot of skill, effort and patience [2]. It is for this very reason, that the trend amongst dental professionals world over is shifting towards the relatively easier mode of extracting a tooth and placing a dental implant [3].

However, an astute clinician must not fall into the trap of the belief that Implants are a plain sailing alternative to root canal treatment. Several factors need to be assessed thoroughly before one decides on this crucial judgement [4,5]. One who clearly understands the pros and cons of each treatment modality, is able to provide the best of treatment to his patients.

There are two major factors associated with the decision making of Endodontics verses Implantology which must be thoroughly understood. One, that placing a dental implant and then subsequently restoring it with a harmonious prosthetic superstructure is not as simple as exhibited often. This modality has its own limitations and complications which must be taken into consideration before offering it to the patients [6]. Implant-supported crowns and bridges may suffer from various mechanical, biological, or technical complications [7] Poor patient selection is one of the important factors that is responsible for failures in implantology [8].

Secondly, there is a general notion that field of Endodontics is only limited to the contemporary root canal treatment, little realizing that Non-surgical endodontic retreatment and surgical endodontics also form an integral component of this conservative approach. The literature clearly suggests that while formulating a treatment plan of an infected tooth, the possibility of performing conventional end-

odontic treatment, re-treatment and surgical endodontics must be duly considered before jumping to the conclusion of extracting the tooth and finally replacing it with a dental implant [9]. Several factors, whether be site related or general patient-related factors should thoroughly be taken into account while formulating a decision in favor of or against tooth retention [10].

Even though the field of implantology has risen by leaps and bounds, still nothing can match the natural tooth structure as such. A judicial treatment planning in this aspect is thus highly essential in the best interest of the patient. After all we all abide by the Hippocrates oath '*Primum non nocere*', first of all do no harm.

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