CASE REPORT/CLINICAL TECHNIQUES

Fully Guided Tooth Autotransplantation Using a Multidrilling Axis Surgical Stent: Proof of Concept

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Digital technology has been progressively introduced into tooth autotransplantation to enhance both treatment planning and surgery. The aim of this report was to describe a novel protocol for fully guided tooth autotransplantation. Methods: This report includes 10 consecutive patients treated with a complete virtual planning and a multidrilling axis surgical guide in combination with the computer-aided rapid prototyping model. Results: All transplanted teeth fulfilled the criteria for success over a mean follow-up duration of 13.1 months. No signs of progressive root resorption or pain were found during follow-up. One case required minimal adjustment of the surgical stent to allow correct seating, whereas a second case could not be performed fully guided because of limited mouth opening. Conclusions: Our protocol for fully guided tooth autotransplantation is a viable option that involves minimal bone preparation in a short surgical time. Future research should focus on further investigation of the benefits of this novel protocol in a larger sample. (J Endod 2020;46:1515–1521.)

KEY WORDS

Computer-aided rapid prototyping model; guided surgery; tooth autotransplantation; virtual planning

Digital technology has been progressively introduced into this therapy to enhance both treatment planning and surgery. Lee et al.† first described the use of computer-aided rapid prototyping (CARP) models in tooth autotransplantation, which allow the clinician to prepare the recipient site without the need of the donor tooth itself, thereby minimizing further complications. For its part, surgical planning software enables the design and manufacture of a 3-dimensional (3D)-printed surgical template for guided preparation of the recipient socket during surgery, as used in dental implants. Some authors have proposed the use of multiple surgical templates for preparation of the recipient socket during tooth autotransplantation. However, to the best of our knowledge, no protocols include fully guided socket remodeling with a single and milled surgical template. The aim of this case series was to present a new protocol for tooth autotransplantation based on fully virtual planning and a milled, sleeveless, multidrilling axis surgical guide in combination with the CARP model.

SIGNIFICANCE

Digital technology has been steadily incorporated into tooth autotransplantation to improve both treatment planning and surgical outcome. This novel protocol for fully guided tooth autotransplantation can be beneficial for patients, offering a predictable and minimally invasive approach to this technique.
MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ten consecutive healthy patients were treated using a new protocol for tooth autotransplantation at a private dental office in Barcelona, Spain. A thorough oral and dental examination was performed after medical and dental history was obtained. All patients were informed about the potential benefits and risks before starting treatment. All patients provided informed consent before the surgery.

Virtually Guided Planning

An intraoral scan of the recipient arch (Trios3; 3Shape, København, Denmark) and an 8 x 8 cm field of view cone-beam computed tomographic scan (Newtom 5GXL; Newtom, Verona, Italy) were acquired. Both registers were overlapped in order to allow a single radiation exposure and favor further file alignment.

Both STL and Digital Imaging and Communications in Medicine files were imported into the implant planning software (BlueskyPlan, Libertyville, IL). Files were aligned with the aid of the software alignment tool by selecting 3 common distant reference areas present in both files as tooth cusps and incisal edges. For selection of the donor tooth, 2-dimensional linear measurements of each possible donor tooth were obtained for a preliminary size assessment.

A donor tooth mesh was created by segmenting the Digital Imaging and Communications in Medicine file into an STL file. The donor tooth STL generated was then virtually displaced out of its original position into the recipient socket using the surface alignment tools (Fig. 1A). We carefully evaluated the final position of the donor tooth to estimate the size discrepancy between the transplant and recipient sites (Fig. 1C and D). At this stage, in the absence of an ideal candidate donor tooth, further surgical planning was aborted, and other treatment options were presented to the patient.

Surgical Stent Design and Manufacture

A sequential drilling axis was planned as follows: custom implants with an active length and diameter equal to that of the guided surgery burs were virtually orientated to cover the external outline of the digitally transplanted teeth (Fig. 1E). Two to 4 drillings were required depending on the tooth dimensions. The sleeve space diameter was set to be 100 μm wider than the one on the nonactive side of the burs.

The ideal insertion axis was set (Fig. 1B). When the drilling axis emergences were too close to each other, 2 guides were designed. Subsequently, the surgical guide outline was determined, and a minimum guide thickness of 2 mm was chosen to ensure adequate resistance without compromising the comfort of the operator. Fitting check windows were then created in order to confirm an adequate seating of the guide in the patient’s mouth.

Both the surgical guide and the donor tooth CARP model were exported as binary STL files. The CARP model file was reimported into the 3D printing software (Preform; Formlabs Inc, Somerville, MA) to generate adequate printing supports and export a sliced 3D printing file. The surgical guide file was reimported into computer-aided manufacturing software (Milbox Sum3D; CIMsystem, Milan, Italy) to generate a safe and efficient milling strategy. Biocompatible resins (Nextdent SG; Nextdent, Soesterberg, the Netherlands) were used for manufacturing on an SLA 3D printer (Formlabs 3, Formlabs Inc). A biocompatible clear poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA) disc (Polident, Volčja Draga, Slovenia) was used to manufacture the guide with a 5-axis milling machine (DWX-51D; Roland, Irvine, CA).

Finally, both the guide and the CARP model were sterilized using a low-temperature H2O2 plasma sterilizer (Plazmax; Tuttnauer, Ebreda, the Netherlands).

Surgical Technique

All patients were periodontally stable before the start of treatment. The patients received antibiotic prophylaxis (amoxicillin/clavulanic acid, 500/125 mg) 1 hour before surgery;18,19, which was performed under local anesthesia (lidocaine 2% with epinephrine 1:100,000) by the same experienced oral surgeon (E.L.T.). In case of immediate tooth transplantation, the tooth at the recipient site was extracted without reflecting a mucoperiosteal flap (Fig. 2A). Instead, a mucoperiosteal flap was reflected when the transplantation was performed in a healed ridge. In both cases, the recipient socket was prepared using the previously milled surgical stent according to the implant drilling sequence (Alpha-Bio Guided Surgery Tool Kit; Alpha-Bio Tec, Petah Tikva, Israel) planned in the implant software (Fig. 2C). Additional alveoloplasty was performed using a tungsten round bur to smooth any irregularity in the alveolar socket when required (Fig. 2D). The suitability of the CARP model was then checked in the recipient site (Fig. 2B). Subsequently, the donor tooth was extractedatraumatically with forceps, minimizing the use of elevators to prevent any damage to the PDL.

After the final position and occlusion of the transplant were checked (Fig. 2E), it was splinted with a semi-rigid appliance, and sutures were placed for correct soft tissue adaptation. Donor teeth stability was successfully enhanced in all cases. Postoperatively, all patients were prescribed 500 mg amoxicillin every 8 hours.

FIGURE 1 – The digital protocol. (A) The donor tooth virtually placed into the recipient socket. (B) The sleeveless surgical guide design according to the ideal 3D position of the donor tooth. Note the implant drilling axis. (C) Initial radiographic examination reveals the replacement resorption and the apical lesion of the recipient site (sagittal view). (D) The donor tooth virtually placed into the recipient socket (sagittal view). (E) The implant drilling sequence virtually planned for the osteotomy of the alveolar socket (sagittal view).
for a week and 600 mg ibuprofen every 8 hours for 3 days. A soft diet for 2 weeks was recommended.

The sutures and splint were removed after 15 days. An endodontic specialist (M.L.) completed the endodontic treatment within 1 month of the surgery in closed apex transplants. Restorative treatment was performed 2–6 months after the surgical appointment. Appointments were scheduled 1 week, 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 8 weeks, 6 months, and 1 year after tooth autotransplantation (Fig. 2F).

RESULTS

Ten consecutive patients (Fig. 3A–J) with a mean age of 16.6 years (range, 9–37 years) were treated from January 2018 to October 2019. Seven patients were female. The mean follow-up duration was 13.1 months (range, 6–27 months). Six premolars and 4 wisdom teeth were used as donors, half of which had an open apex. Eight cases were treated at the same time as tooth extraction (Fig. 4A–L), and the other 2 cases were treated in a healed ridge (Fig. 5A–I).

The success of the transplants was assessed based on the absence of pathologic mobility and inflammation at the recipient site and a lack of continuous radiolucency or root resorption around the transplanted tooth.

All transplants fulfilled the criteria for success. No signs of inflammation or pain were found during follow-up. Moreover, no signs of ankylosis or progressive inflammatory root resorption were found in the controls, except for 1 instance of inflammatory root resorption that was arrested after endodontic treatment in a closed apex case. None of the open apex transplanted teeth showed loss of vitality. Pulp obliteration was observed in all open apex cases. All patients were periodontally healthy with no probing pockets deeper than 3 mm.

Complications

The proposed protocol was not free of complications. One case required minimal adjustment of the inner aspect of the surgical stent to allow correct seating and was probably caused by movement of teeth in a patient who had received orthodontic treatment. A second case could not be performed in a fully guided manner because of limited mouth opening, which impeded access for distally tilted drilling of a first lower molar. No other complications were noted.

DISCUSSION

This investigation aimed to validate our fully guided protocol for tooth autotransplantation. The current evidence underlines the importance of CARP models for the reduction of the number of complications associated with damage to the PDL. Several studies have focused on reducing the extrarotal time of the donor tooth; however, accurate osteotomy and minimal surgical trauma to the recipient socket should also be achieved. The severity of this trauma is directly related to overheating of bone during the osteotomy, which may lead to cell death, preventing the formation of new bone. Furthermore, an excessive alveoloplasty in the recipient socket increases the discrepancy between the donor...
tooth and the recipient area, preventing stability of the blood clot and consequently periodontal regeneration. Different protocols have been described for socket remodeling. Some authors reported shorter surgical times and fewer failures using both CARP models and implantation of surgical stents. In a cadaveric study, Anssari Moin et al. proposed a custom-printed osteotome as an alternative to implant drills, which reduced the number of CARP model fitting attempts. Those authors reported results similar to those achieved by implant-guided surgery when comparing superimposed images of the preoperatively planning and the final donor tooth position. Nevertheless, given that osteotomes have been associated with impaired bone healing when used in mandibular bone, this approach can only have a relevant role in cases with low bone density. Clinical validation of this technique still awaits.

Other authors have described similar outcomes using prefabricated templates based on the most common sizes of wisdom teeth.
instead of CARP models or surgical guides\textsuperscript{31,32}. Their protocol included preparation of the alveolar socket using the corresponding prefabricated template according to the dimensions of the donor tooth. Even though this option is simpler, the exact shape and size of the alveolar socket can be compromised, increasing the extrarural time of the donor tooth.

Our protocol concurs with the recent developments in personalized medicine applied to tooth autotransplantation because virtual planning, the CARP model, and guided surgery are included\textsuperscript{25,33}. Furthermore, the milled PMMA multidrilling axis surgical stent provides benefits over and above the previously described guided approaches\textsuperscript{32}. On the one hand, plastic sleeves have been shown to minimize frictional heating when compared with metal sleeves\textsuperscript{34}. On the other hand, Park et al\textsuperscript{35} showed that the precision of the milled surgical guides was significantly higher than that of 3D-printed ones. Stiffness provided by milled PMMA enables the manufacture of multiple-drilling axis surgical guides with closer drilling whole emergences than conventional guided surgery stents. As a consequence of the employment of a single surgical guide, the clinician is able to prepare a greater osteotomy in a shorter period of time compared with single-drilling axis surgical guides. In those cases in which sleeves are used, the multidrilling axis approach would not be possible with a single surgical guide because overlap and a collision between sleeves would occur. Nevertheless, an ongoing paucity of evidence prevents the formulation of strong recommendations.

Within the limitation of the present results, we conclude that our protocol for fully guided tooth autotransplantation is a viable option that allows less invasive bone preparation in a short surgical time. Future research should focus on further investigation of the plausible benefits of this novel protocol in a larger sample.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The authors would like to thank the staff members of Ismar Clinic for the clinical support and PerioPixel for their graphic contribution to this project.

The authors deny any conflicts of interest related to this study.

**REFERENCES**


