Implant impression techniques comparative review: Transfer impression versus direct abutment level

By Zvi Fudim, DDS

The inaccuracy in dental implant impression is a vast and unsolved problem. It is so serious that the high rate of osseointegra-
tion of the majority of implants is absolute-
ly meaningless. Knowing that traditional transfer impression techniques seldom deliver a passive fit of a framework means that most bridges will end up with a failure (Fig. 1).

Different studies show that transfer tech-
nique is almost four times worse than the official requirement. Therefore, besides the mechanical issue, it is also a patient’s right to know that transfer impression method is extremely inaccurate, and requires at least a warning and a legal consent. Patients are often misled by widely accepted sources that state:

"Success rates of dental implants vary, depending on where in the jaw the implants are placed but, in general, dental implants have a success rate of up to 98 percent. With proper care (see below), implants can last a lifetime" (WebMd.com).

Numerous in-vitro studies have examined implant restoration accuracy. There is no doubt about the fact that the transfer impression is to blame for the misfit of the framework, but what exactly causes the distortion has not yet been pointed out.

What is wrong in the transfer impression?
The first problem is that the transfer, which is mechanically caught in the impression material (such as PVS), does not become an integral part of the impression. In fact, it can be easily moved. However, due to the friction between the surfaces of the transfer and the impression material, it does not return back to its original position (Figs. 2a, 2b, 2c). That displacement cannot be avoid-
ed when the technician engages analogs into the impression. In other words, forces in the impression take place even due to the gravity forces and mobilize irreversibly the imbedded im-
plant parts.

Fastening in the screw into the analog should be done avoiding any contact with the tray. however, that cannot be always guaranteed. The shift of the transfer can take place even due to the gravity forces of the impression tray especially in the molar areas. A tray that weighs 100 grams generates in the molar area a torque of 5.8 Ncm by only its own weight; that’s enough to rotate the transfer. The polyether impression materials are characterized by a serious amount of expansion, making the transfers lose and mobile in the impression (Figs. 3a, 3b, 3c). The implant manufacturers should indicate that polyether impression materials are not suitable for the tech-
niques using impression transfers.

Splintering transfers with acrylic resins may lead to displacement of the transfers due to the shrinkage of the acrylic materi-
als. Even a splintered complex of impression transfers does not become an integral part of the impression. The second problem, is due to the uneven amount of the stone around the analog. The expansion of the dental stone during its setting causes a se-
rious inclination of the abutment from its original position. The third problem is also related to the dental stone expansion. Un-
like the stone, the analog does not have any expansion. The analog becomes lose and mobile. Gripping firmly a one-piece analog with a hemostat, one can see with a naked eye how it rotates in the model around its own axis (Fig. 4a, 4b).

Almost always, sectioning of an implant stone model is very difficult to perform because of the presence of the hard steel an-
logs in the body of the model. Additionally, a small amount of the dental stone around the analogs often leads to breakage of the die and doubt about whether it is a rest of the dental model or working on an unsectioned mod-
el. These difficult working conditions pre-
vent precise fabrication of the restoration.

Implant manufacturers have invested a lot of resources in the implant improve-
ment. The accuracy of the PVS material is very high, it has high volumetric stability and a good resistance for tearing. Addition-
ally the PVS by its slight rate of shrinkage and a good resistance for tearing. Addition-
ally the PVS by its slight rate of shrinkage can partially compensate the expansion of the dental stone and with aid of a rigid impression tray provides fabrication of ac-
curate restoration. The main concern with the direct impression is the abutment’s sub gingival area registration. In 2008 IADA Dr. Vincent Bienanni published a review called Gingival retraction techniques for implants versus teeth. Bienanni covered most gingival retraction means for natural teeth and discussed the possibility of ap-
ply them in the impression of the implant restorations. His conclusion was that there is no existing device or method for gingival retraction that practically can be used for direct impression of the implant abutment.

Aluminum Chloride Expasy™ was re-
cently tested for use with the titanium e-
ndosseous implants and was found as a harsh material for the polished surfaces of the implant and implant parts. Bicon Im-
plants™ uses oversized healing abutments or custom oversized temporary abutments to expand the surrounding tissue. This method has little predictability because the rebound of the tissue varies from pa-
tient to patient.

Recently, a Canadian company, Stomato-
tech came up with a simple idea to retrait the gingival tissue by using a disposable plas-
tic collar that is inserted on the apical end of the abutment before the abutment is en-
gaged to the implant (Fig. 5).

Following the abutment’s engagement to the implant, the plastic collar is found be-
 tween the apical part of the abutment and the gingival soft tissue (Fig. 6). Shortly after the removal of the impression from the mouth, the plastic collar is pulled out and removed permanently.

The plastic collar creates a perfect gingi-
val retraction with a valve factor prevent-
ing the liquids from contaminating the area of the finish line of the abutment.

It is undeniable that the plastic collar eliminates the need of the impression transfer and the analog. However, the main advantage of that device is the fact that it does not impact the accuracy of the final restoration (Fig. 7).

- See IMPRESSION page A13
WE SPEAK ACCURACY
WHAT LANGUAGE DO YOU SPEAK?

G-Cuff™
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"Thanks to G-Cuff" the implant restoration has never been easier"
xpAPce and XPsquared launched

Dentists create 24/7 online conference, tradeshow, C.E. forum

Dentistry is mired in a perfect storm that challenges the profession from all sides: weak economies in the United States and worldwide, dental trade show attendance declining every year, and dentists reluctant to close their offices or give up personal time (away from their friends and families) in order to take continuing education courses or spend time at trade shows like they did in the past.

On the vendor side, there are more than 150 trade shows in the United States alone that tax vendor resources. While some meetings and shows are as strong as ever, many are in the decline. And when attendance drops at meetings, it is more difficult for vendors to realize a good ROI (return on investment). As a profession, we have come to expect vendor visibility (and often high visibility) at most major events. We ask vendors to support lunches and cocktail hours, supply tote bags and more, so that our thinking: If we have one XP company, why not two? That’s how xpAPce was named, it is the name of our online dental education community. XPsquared is much like a giant box store. It houses the day-to-day workings of our profession under one Internet “roof.” It is a place where vendors display their products in booths just as they do at brick-and-mortar trade shows. There are plasma screens for videos, PDFs, training films, FAQs, company descriptions, contact information for sales reps, chat rooms at every booth in real time that are linked to the vendors’ websites so vendors can take orders, arrange for in-person demonstrations and more. Cost effective, efficient, far-reaching, the XPsquared community members can hold study clubs, host conferences, blog with colleagues in the Network Café, read the latest journals or discover where the next meeting will be in the Resource Center. Use your personal briefcase to collect contacts, training manuals, white papers and more. Together, xpAPce and XPsquared form a unique tandem that brings 21st century dentistry to dental professionals and vendors around the world. The future is now! You can register (without charge) to join the XPsquared community today.

Visit the C.E. and company websites at: www.xpapce.com and www.xpsquared.com or go straight to the online community at: www-2.virtualevents365.com/xpsquared. For more information, email info@xpapce.com or info@xpsquared.com or call (212) 355-5335.

Adaptive learning technology trains new dentists

D4D Technologies, manufacturer of the E4D Dentist™ system, has launched E4D Compare™ — an innovative adaptive learning technology tool for dental teaching institutions. E4D Compare provides evidence-based assessment tools that also document student progression. “The development of E4D Compare and its utilization in teaching institutions provide both students and faculty an innovative method of self-paced learning and a more consistent and objective evaluation of all parameters. This is another example of our commitment at D4D to making dentistry better at every level,” said Dr. Gary Severance of D4D Technologies.

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(Source: Excel Studios)

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(Source: Excel Studios)

**ADAPTIVE, page A12**

Dr. Walter Renne, course director for CAD/CAM technologies and ceramics at the Medical University of South Carolina, College of Dental Medicine. “The E4D Compare software program enables students to learn by challenging themselves against the ‘master’ templates. E4D Compare has proven to be revolutionary in my classes. The students that have used this program have seen fast results and have been engaged from the beginning. The E4D Compare software provides new possibilities for enhancing the learning experience within the dental curriculum.”

E4D Compare is available through Henry Schein Dental and is compatible with E4D Dentist and E4D Labworks systems and PCs meeting certain processing and graphics requirements. For more information, go to www.e4dcotm/compare.

**About E4D Technologies**

E4D Technologies is the creator of the E4D Dentist and E4D Labworks systems, which use high-speed laser scanning technology to produce digital 3-D impressions of teeth without the application of contrast agents. Intuitive Dentalogic software enables operators to customize restoration designs and send them wirelessly to the precision mill that uses the latest restorative materials to produce fine esthetic restorations. E4D also offers E4D Compass for restorative-driven implant solutions and E4D Compare adaptive learning technology for teaching institutions.

(Source: E4D Technologies)

**IMPRESSION, page A11**

The greatest advantage is for optical impression users, because it allows scanning the abutment exactly the same way as a natural tooth. The digital impression is an extremely accurate method for taking impressions, and it is gaining its place in the dental general practice very fast. Still, its use in implant prosthodontics is limited.

A comparative study by J. B. Da Costa published in JOD, shows that there is no difference between direct oral scanning and indirect scanning of a stone model from PVS impression, which confirms the high accuracy of both methods.

**Summary**

The passive fit of the prosthetic framework is extremely important, especially for longevity of an implant. Every implant, even the cheapest one, can last many years in the patient’s mouth if only it is correctly loaded and properly restored. Lack of the passive fit usually leads to serious bone loss and implant failure.

The practitioner has to do everything possible to keep the restoration in the zone of 10 µm of the marginal fit. An implant, unlike a natural tooth, does not have periodontal mechanism that gives the natural tooth a resilience of 50-80 µm. Splinting as many crowns as possible divides evenly the load between the implants but can compromise the passivity due to the poor accuracy. To achieve 10 µm level of accuracy, every single negative cause should be eliminated from the impression procedure. The only recipe for implant-supported restoration success is an accurate impression. Currently, the alternative to the transfer impression is the silicon or optical direct impression of the abutment with G-CuffTM by Stomatotech or with an optical impression with an aid of scanable bodies. These two methods deliver a substantial passive fit that assures longevity of the implants and of the whole restoration.

Note: A complete list if references is available from the publisher.

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