

EDITORIAL

Impressions are the seeds of successful prosthesis: Digital or conventional?

The outcome of a prosthesis depends on how meticulously the impression had been made. In the modern world of dentistry every day we come across digital innovations and devices. The conventional methods which primarily uses elastic impression materials are still regularly used for everyday clinical purposes. With the increase in the number of fixed partial dentures the need for accurate impressions and techniques are also gaining importance.

The popularity of digital impressions is increasing day by day because they provide a 3D image of the site of operation in a short period of time, with high precision. They also remove some of the drawbacks of conventional impression methods like, tray selection, poring, distortion, damaged cast, disinfection and transport to labs etc. Digital impression also takes out the works of a dental technician like wax-ups, investing, casting, and firing of ceramic restorations. They can be easily saved for future and retrieved easily when required.

The marginal fit and internal fit determine the final outcome and the overall success of a prosthesis. An incorrect fit can lead to a number of problems like poor oral hygiene, plaque retention, secondary caries, periodontal breakdown and finally loss of the luting agent.

It has been seen that the accuracy of digital impression is almost equal to those of the conventional impression methods when used for single crowns and short span fixed prostheses. They fall within the clinically acceptable range of 120 μ m. The accuracy is again acceptable for implant-supported crowns and bridges. But, in long span cases like full-arch impressions, conventional impression methods rise above the digital ones.

Thus, more research and development are needed to make digital impression methods flawless. Also, we should never ignore the hard work and human skills behind making excellent impressions using conventional impression materials.



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