Artificial intelligence in prosthodontics- A review.

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Abstract

Objective: To evaluate how artificial intelligence (AI) enhances various aspects of modern dentistry, including diagnosis, treatment planning, and patient management, and its impact on patient outcomes and practice efficiency.

Background: AI, with its advanced data processing and analysis capabilities, is moving from theoretical discussions to practical use in healthcare, including dentistry. It offers improved speed and accuracy in handling large datasets, thereby transforming dental care practices.

Method: In dentistry, AI algorithms are employed to analyze patient data, optimize workflows, and aid decision-making. These tools are used for diagnosing dental conditions, planning treatments, and managing patient interactions.

Results: The integration of AI in dental practices has led to more precise diagnoses, enhanced treatment accuracy, and better patient outcomes. Practices adopting AI technologies report improved operational efficiency and more effective patient care.

Conclusion: AI represents a significant advancement in dentistry, improving the efficiency and precision of oral healthcare delivery. As AI technology continues to evolve, its potential to further transform dental practices and enhance patient outcomes is considerable.

Application: AI technologies are streamlining workflows, increasing diagnostic accuracy, and enhancing treatment procedures in dentistry. The growing use of AI in dental practices is expected to lead to ongoing improvements in patient care and operational efficiency.[1 - 7]

Key words: Artificial intelligence, CAD/CAM, innovation, robotics, technology.

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Submitted: 20-Jun-2024 **Revised**: 01-Jul-2024 **Accepted:** 15-Jul-2024 **Published:** 16-Aug-2024
Bibliographic details: Journal of Orofacial Rehabilitation Vol. 4(2), Aug 2024, pp. 33-39.

Introduction

Prosthodontics, the specialized branch of dentistry focused on the diagnosis, treatment planning, rehabilitation, and maintenance of oral function, comfort, aesthetics, and health in patients with missing or deficient teeth and oral and maxillofacial tissues, is increasingly benefiting from AI integration. AI offers several advantages across different stages of prosthodontic treatment. AI enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of prosthodontic practices in the following ways [1, 2]:

1. **Diagnosis**: AI algorithms are capable of analyzing dental images, such as X-rays and intraoral scans, to aid in diagnosing oral health conditions like tooth decay, gum disease, and structural abnormalities. By identifying subtle patterns and anomalies in diagnostic images, AI enhances the accuracy and efficiency of dental diagnosis, allowing for earlier detection and intervention. [3, 5, 6, 9]
2. **Treatment Planning**: AI-driven software platforms assist dental professionals in creating personalized treatment plans that consider patient-specific factors, such as oral health status, medical history, and treatment preferences. By processing complex datasets and providing evidence-based recommendations, AI supports

informed decision-making and optimizes treatment outcomes.[8, 9]

3. **Designing Prostheses**: AI tools contribute to the design process by analyzing patient data, including dental scans and facial structures, to develop customized prosthetic solutions. This technology optimizes design based on individual patient needs and anatomical factors, resulting in better-fitting and more functional prostheses.[10 - 13]
4. **Fabricating Maxillofacial Appliances**: AI-driven manufacturing technologies, including 3D printing and computer-aided manufacturing (CAM), enable the precise fabrication of maxillofacial prostheses, as well as crowns, bridges, and dentures. These technologies streamline production, reduce errors, and enhance the quality of prosthetic devices. [13 - 16]
5. **Patient Documentation**: AI-powered software automates the process of patient documentation, including electronic health records (EHRs), treatment plans, and progress notes. By digitizing and organizing patient data, AI improves accessibility, accuracy, and security, facilitating better communication and coordination among dental team members. [17 - 19]
6. **Patient Management**: AI-based patient management systems streamline appointment scheduling, reminders, and follow-up communications, thereby improving patient engagement and adherence to treatment plans. Additionally, AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants provide personalized oral health education, guidance, and support, enhancing the overall patient experience. [20 - 22]

Overall, AI is significantly improving the efficiency, accuracy, and quality of care in prosthodontics, enabling dental professionals to deliver more personalized and effective treatments. As AI technology continues to advance, its integration into prosthodontic practice will further transform the field, driving improvements in patient outcomes and experiences.

Applications of AI in Prosthodontics

CAD/CAM Technology

The use of computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) in prosthetic dentistry has become increasingly widespread. The integration of AI with CAD/CAM systems has significantly enhanced their functionality, particularly for chairside applications. These advanced systems allow dental professionals to design and produce dental prostheses, such as crowns, bridges, inlays, and onlays, directly in the clinic. This technology streamlines the process, reducing the need for multiple appointments and eliminating the time-consuming and error-prone traditional casting methods. CAD/CAM systems create detailed two- and three-dimensional models that are then manufactured using precision-controlled machinery.[23]

The adoption of CAD/CAM technology has simplified prosthetic repair procedures by replacing traditional casting with a more efficient digital workflow that minimizes the likelihood of errors. This technology enables the creation of custom prosthetics tailored to the unique needs of each patient, considering factors such as facial structure, ethnicity, and specific aesthetic desires. As a result, the prosthetics produced are not only functionally superior but also visually pleasing.

Key applications include:

1) **Integration of CAD/CAM**: These systems enable the direct design and fabrication of dental prostheses at the

point of care, streamlining the process by eliminating traditional casting techniques.

2) **Customization for Patients**: CAD/CAM technology supports the creation of personalized prosthetics that consider individual patient characteristics, including facial dimensions, cultural background, and aesthetic preferences, ensuring both functionality and visual appeal.
3) **Diverse Prosthetic Applications**: This technology is used to produce a variety of dental prostheses, such as inlays, onlays, crowns, and bridges. Both additive manufacturing (3D printing) and subtractive manufacturing (milling) techniques are employed to ensure precision in the final product.
4) **Enhanced Denture Quality**: The design and production of removable dentures have also advanced with the use of AI and CAD/CAM, leading to higher-quality outcomes and more streamlined laboratory processes. This reduces the reliance on manual methods and improves consistency.
5) **Faster Rehabilitation**: The efficiency of CAD/CAM technology reduces the overall time required for patient rehabilitation, allowing for quicker delivery of prosthetics and improving patient satisfaction and quality of life.
6) **Intraoral Scanning**: Intraoral scanning technology, combined with sophisticated dental software, allows for a detailed analysis of dental scans, aiding clinicians in accurately verifying preparations and ensuring that cases are managed by skilled technicians. This technology also facilitates precise margin marking, which is essential for accurate digital design and milling.
7) **AI-Enhanced Solutions**: AI-powered software further optimizes the design and manufacturing process, such as automatically generating designs for single posterior crowns, which increases the efficiency and accuracy of laboratory work.

The integration of AI with CAD/CAM technology is revolutionizing prosthodontic practice, making it more efficient, precise, and tailored to the individual needs of patients. This leads to better treatment outcomes and enhances the overall patient experience. [23 - 25]

Tooth-Supported Fixed and Removable Partial Dentures

Removable partial dentures (RPDs), whether supported by natural teeth or implants, offer a less invasive and more economical option for replacing missing teeth. The design phase of RPDs is crucial for ensuring a well-fitting and functional prosthesis. Recent advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) have introduced algorithms that assist in optimizing RPD design by providing tailored recommendations based on the specific needs of each patient.

In fixed prosthodontics, such as crowns, AI is also driving significant improvements. Traditionally, the preparation of tooth margins was performed manually using handpieces and burs, a process that was both time-consuming and required considerable technical skill. The integration of AI into this process has streamlined and enhanced its efficiency.

A notable advancement is the application of deep learning (DL) models to accurately extract marginal lines during dental preparation. Research by Zhang et al. utilized a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) model known as Sparse Octree (S-Octree) for this purpose. Their approach involved generating a sparse point cloud with labels, constructing an octree structure for analysis, and training CNN models to accurately detect and delineate dental preparations.

By automating the extraction of tooth preparation lines, AI technologies, particularly DL models, address the limitations of manual methods. This reduces errors and improves efficiency in the production of fixed dental prostheses, marking a significant step forward in dental technology. These advancements enhance the quality of patient care and optimize workflows for dental professionals.

AI and Implantology

The combination of cone-beam computed tomography (CBCT) and intraoral scanning, supported by artificial intelligence (AI), enhances the predictability and durability of dental treatments. AI applications in implantology are revolutionizing various aspects of dental implant therapy, from planning to execution.

Key advancements include:

1. **CBCT and Intraoral Scans**: Integrating CBCT images with intraoral scans through AI algorithms allows for precise planning and placement of dental implants. This combination improves the accuracy of implant positioning and prosthetic development.
2. **Deep Learning for Object Recognition**: New models utilizing deep learning (DL) are being used to accurately identify the location of the mandibular canal in implant surgeries. DL algorithms enhance the detection of implant systems from panoramic radiographs, improving both efficiency and accuracy in implant placements.
3. **Digital Planning and Placement**: Digital technologies facilitate the planning and placement of implants, including the use of surgical stents and the design of maxillofacial prostheses. Clinicians can visualize ideal implant placements and create surgical guides through rapid prototyping (RP), optimizing treatment planning.
4. **AI Models for Error Reduction**: AI models are being developed to minimize errors in implant prosthesis cementation. These models address factors such as abutment margins, tooth preparation, and contact maintenance, thereby reducing errors and improving treatment outcomes.
5. **Predictive AI Models**: AI models can predict bone levels, clinical outcomes, and the mechanical properties of implants. Machine learning algorithms optimize implant designs and predict success rates, which enhances planning and reduces computational costs.

Overall, AI integration in implantology enhances treatment precision, procedural efficiency, and prosthetic outcomes, leading to better patient care and improved success rates in dental implant therapy. [26 - 31]

AI in Maxillofacial Prosthetics

Maxillofacial prosthetics play a crucial role in restoring both function and aesthetics for patients with facial deformities or injuries. These conditions, resulting from hereditary diseases, cancer, or trauma, require high-quality prosthetic solutions to address aesthetic and psychological concerns.

Recent advancements include:

1. **Digital Design and Production**: The shift from hand-carved wax casts to CAD/CAM technology has transformed maxillofacial prosthetics. Imaging techniques like MRI and CT scans are used to create detailed digital models, which are then fabricated using rapid prototyping (RP) and silicone elastomers. This method significantly reduces fabrication time and improves precision.
2. **Instant Prosthetics**: CAD/CAM technology enables the rapid production of

maxillofacial prosthetics, particularly for facial structures such as the nose, offering a quicker alternative to traditional methods.

3. **AI-Powered Sensory Augmentation**: AI is also enhancing sensory capabilities through devices such as bionic eyes and artificial skin. Bionic eyes can help visually impaired individuals detect text and faces, while artificial skin provides temperature feedback for individuals with limb amputations. AI-driven olfaction systems simulate the human sense of smell, useful in robotics and various industries.

4. **Tongue-Controlled Devices**: AI-driven tongue-controlled interfaces offer significant advancements for individuals with severe disabilities. These non-invasive devices allow users to control functions like computer access or wheelchair operation by translating tongue movements into commands.

The integration of AI with maxillofacial prosthetics and assistive devices is expanding possibilities for enhancing sensory capabilities and improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities. [32 -34]

Future Scope

The future of AI in healthcare, particularly dentistry, holds exciting potential for enhancing patient care and operational efficiency:

1. **Remote Therapy and Diagnosis**: AI enhances remote therapy and diagnostic accuracy, leading to improved patient outcomes through more accurate disease predictions and diagnoses.

2. **Integration with Dental Practice**: AI will continue to enhance all aspects of dental practice, from precision diagnostics to comprehensive treatment planning, benefiting from quick information sharing and evidence-based treatment recommendations.

3. **Advancements in CAD/CAM**: Innovations in CAD/CAM technology will drive demand for AI-integrated design algorithms. AI will assist in creating aesthetically pleasing prostheses and optimize design variables for fixed prostheses, including for partial edentulism.

4. **Dental Insurance Processes**: AI will streamline dental insurance claims by enabling faster approval processes, improving accountability, and enhancing the overall patient experience.

5. **Enhanced Patient Experience**: AI will contribute to a better patient experience by personalizing services and improving overall care, leading to better oral health and systemic health outcomes. [35 - 41]

Limitations

While AI offers significant advancements in dentistry, it is important to recognize its limitations. AI cannot fully replace the expertise and nuanced decision-making of dental professionals. The effectiveness of AI depends on . the availability of high-quality data and the ability of dental practitioners to integrate AI insights with holistic patient care. Ensuring accurate data input into AI systems is crucial for optimizing diagnostic accuracy, treatment planning, and prosthetic design. Continued research and innovation are essential for leveraging AI to advance dental care and improve patient outcomes. [42 - 44]

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