

Questionable or Hopeless.. Thinking Outside the Box

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When to extract a tooth and place an implant? Assuming a patient has adequate financial ability to do either treatment, when should a questionable tooth be extracted, and when should it be retained?

In the past, when implants were not available, the decision was easier. However, now that placement of an implant in a healthy patient with adequate bone is relatively easy, the decision is more difficult and complicated by a second question: When to decide that a questionable tooth is a hopeless one?

More importantly, once the decision to save a tooth is made, how could we, as successful service providers, achieve a reliable result consistently every time we decide to save a tooth? Especially those heroic attempts to maintain teeth with questionable prognosis are currently being doubted.

This presentation aims to answer these questions from several angles. The reasons of why goes the extra mile to save a questionable tooth are explored. The patient role in making that decision is highlighted. Factors influencing the joint patient/dentist decision are discussed. These include; patient age, the general health of the patient, the strategic value of the tooth, the amount of tooth structure remaining, occlusion, financial limitations in relation to long-term prognosis, patient desire to keep the natural tooth, and patient acceptance of other needed procedures to retain the tooth.

Moreover, a discussion of potential reported success rate, longevity, survival, given the conflicting evidence-based dental literature with its varying definitions of 'success/failure' is included.

Questions and doubts abound in the decision making process in regards to the prognosis of an individual tooth. In dentistry, as in all biologic sciences, there are no straightforward answers to questions. This presentation will attempt to aid the practitioner in the decision making process and clinical management of compromised questionable tooth.

Biography:

Dr. Ahmad Imam is a prosthodontist, Assistant Professor and Clinical Director of the 6th year Comprehensive Care Clinic, Prosthodontics Division, Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Rehabilitation, Faculty of Dentistry, King Abdulaziz University and previously his holding the position of Assistant Professor and Chairman of the Intern Clinical Training, Prosthodontics Division, Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Rehabilitation, Faculty of Dentistry, King Abdulaziz University.

Ahmad is also a prosthodontics instructor at King Abdul Aziz University's Faculty of Dentistry (KAUFD) at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition to his academic and teaching roles, Ahmad works in private practice as a Consulting Prosthodontist in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.