

Distribution Information

AAE members may reprint this position statement for distribution to patients or referring dentists.

About This Document

The following statement was prepared by the AAE Special Committee on the Scope of Endodontics to address issues being raised by some endodontic patients.

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The guidance in this statement is not intended to substitute for a clinician's independent judgment in light of the conditions and needs of a specific patient.

Scope of Endodontics: Dental Implants

AAE Position Statement

Placing of dental implants is within the scope of practice of endodontics. According to the ADA Definition of the Specialty of Endodontics, *"its study and practice encompass the basic clinical sciences including biology of the normal pulp; the etiology, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases and injuries of the pulp, and associated periradicular conditions."* The goal of endodontic treatment is to save the natural tooth.

If a patient visits an endodontist and, during treatment planning, the endodontist determines that 1) the tooth must be extracted, and 2) a dental implant placed, the endodontist may proceed with extraction and placement of the implant if it is in the best interest of the patient. This is congruent with the concept of providing the best possible dental care in the least invasive manner. Patients can avoid multiple dental visits, thus reducing the stresses that dentistry evokes and allowing more expeditious completion of treatment.

Dental graduates receive education and training in dental implants while in dental school. Endodontists receive additional implant training as part of their endodontic graduate program. Implants have been part of Commission on Dental Accreditation Accreditation Standards for Advanced Specialty Education Programs in Endodontics since 1974. In 2006, the CODA endodontic standards were revised, increasing the level of knowledge required from "familiarity" to "understanding" and replacing "endodontic endosseous implants, osseointegrated implants and techniques for placing of implants" with the broad term "implant dentistry."

CODA standards set the minimal educational requirements, and each program can determine how advanced the training should be in any of the areas identified within the document. A number of endodontic advanced education programs significantly exceed the CODA requirements in the area of dental implants.

In addition, courses on implant dentistry are regular features of the AAE continuing education curriculum since AAE members place implants and seek the most current training. From 2008-2011, there were 37 sessions at AAE continuing education events on dental implants, most of which were taught by endodontists. The AAE 2009 Fall Conference topic was “Implants in Endodontics—Treatment Planning and Placement Technique.”

References

1. Commission on Dental Accreditation. Accreditation Standards for Advanced Specialty Education Programs in Endodontics. Chicago: American Dental Association; 2008.
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3. Your guide to treatment options for the diseased tooth: American Association of Endodontists, 2010.
4. Pecora G, Andreana S, Covani U, De Leonardis D, Schifferle RE. new directions in surgical endodontics: Immediate implantation into an extraction socket. J Endod 1996;22:135-9.
5. Iqbal MK, Kim S. A review of factors influencing treatment planning decisions of single-tooth implants versus preserving natural teeth with nonsurgical endodontic therapy. J Endod 1998; 34:519-529.