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Severe Bone Loss in Upper Jaw No Longer a Barrier to Dental Implants

[Rosemont, IL, May 1, 2014] Until relatively recently, dental implants were not recommended for patients with severe bone loss in the upper jaw. Such cases often required multiple surgeries over a protracted period of time and were fraught with complications, as well as an unacceptably high failure rate. The development of a host of new procedures and techniques, including zygomatic implant surgery, have dramatically altered this scenario.

Zygomatic implants are long rods placed into the underside of the cheekbones (zygomatic bones) to support a full set of new upper teeth in patients with extreme bone loss. Despite their universal acceptance over the past several years as a predictably reliable technique, scientific studies on zygomatic implants in the literature are virtually nonexistent.

An article in the May issue of the *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*, “Zygomatic Implants for the Management of the Severely Atrophied Maxilla: A Retrospective Analysis of 244 Implants,” features an in-depth discussion of zygomatic implant surgery. Researchers collected data on 80 patients who had received a total of 244 zygomatic implants; 111 in women and 133 in men, and whose progress was followed for 6 to 48 months.

The results are impressive. Only one case of the implant not working was reported, representing 99.6% success rate. The overall complication rate was substantially lower than that associated with previous techniques. Not a single patient developed chronic pain or infection as a consequence of the implant surgery, and all of the patients healed uneventfully and received new upper teeth.

The researchers’ investigation confirmed that the cheek bone, largely as a result of its strong composition, offers a promising approach to anchoring replacement teeth in patients who have experienced severe bone loss in the upper jaw.

Read the complete study findings at *J Oral Maxillofac Surg*; 72:887-891, 2014

<http://download.journals.elsevierhealth.com/pdfs/journals/0278-2391/PIIS0278239114000652.pdf>

The Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery is published monthly by the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons to present to the dental and medical communities comprehensive coverage of new techniques, important developments and innovative ideas in oral and maxillofacial surgery. Practice-applicable articles help develop the methods used to handle dentoalveolar surgery, facial injuries and deformities, TMJ disorders, oral cancer, jaw reconstruction, anesthesia and analgesia. The journal also includes specifics on new instruments and diagnostic equipment and modern therapeutic drugs and devices.