Mini Dental Implants for Every Dentist

by Raymond Chai, DDS

In this article, I will discuss the exciting world of mini dental implants that benefit my patients.

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A primary benefit of mini implants is their minimally invasive surgical protocol.

That's all there is to the surgical protocol for mini dental implants. It is quick, minimally invasive, and there is hardly any postoperative discomfort and no need for sutures. Mini implants are self-drilling. Even patients with medically compromised can tolerate this procedure, whereas they could not tolerate the surgery or the invasiveness of conventional implant surgery.

A second benefit of mini implants is that they can be immediately loaded. This means that on the same day that the implant is placed, they can be activated and the crown can be loaded. In most lower edentulous mandibles, four mini implants can be placed and loaded in a single treatment session. Mini implants are ideal for edentulous patients and minimally invasive protocols.

A third, and perhaps the most important benefit of mini implants is their affordability. Very often, patients who are edentulous have lost their teeth because of a lack of financial means. Many people who would not able to afford conventional implant treatment, because they lack the bone anatomy, will be able to benefit from mini implants because of their low fee. I think it is safe to say that lower edentulous cases can be routinely helped when treated with mini dental implants.

Lower edentulous cases — patients who are wearing loose lower dentures — are the No. 1 indication for mini implants.

Of course, very removable prosthetics can be supported by mini dental implants. Patients with upper dentures, complete or partial dentures, are all candidates.

Another indication of mini implants is fixed bridgework. You can place a fixed bridge on four mini implants in a single session. Many dentists have been doing crown & bridge for many years and have had success. Yes, they are smaller, and we do have to be careful in the occlusion in using fewer implants in areas where there are a lot of heavy occlusal forces, such as the molar area. But, for some lower jaw cases, mini implants are ideal and should be performed in areas where there are sufficient bone anatomy and gingival tissue and soft tissue.

Contraindications of Mini Implants

Because mini implants are simply a smaller version of conventional implants, all the contraindications are those of the conventional implants plus one more. I think it is safe to say that minimally invasive surgical protocol of mini implants is a big plus and that it can allow for helped with conventional implants, we should be able to place mini implants in the same areas where we place conventional bone and periodontal forces.

We should be cautious ... about using minis in areas under heavy functional and parafunctional forces.

Case Study:

Surgical Mini Implant Placement for Edentulous Mandible

The patient in our case study has been complaining of loose dentures. There is hardly any mandibular ridge left (Fig. 1).

Mini, locate the position of the lower mandibular anterior. Once you locate the mental foramen, you can place the mini implants in the anterior. There is two areas that are the best for mini implants. The first area is the anterior, and the second area is the posterior. In the anterior, you have two areas