

Implant Placement - Education is the Key



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Implants are fast becoming the “standard of care” and the preferred solution for clinical situations involving missing teeth. However, many dentists are reluctant to get into the lucrative implant market due to time, training and cost as well as the dilemma of choosing an implant course (or courses) out of the hundreds out there. As a result, dentists refer these patients to other dental professionals for implant placement and final restorations, missing out not only on a valuable practice revenue stream but also on the satisfaction and control of completing the case themselves.

Even just passing on the implant placement and retaining the restorations themselves can cause complications for a variety of reasons. Yet, the numbers of GPs placing implants themselves is growing! The percentage of general dentists who place implants has grown from 4% in 1995 to 6% in 1999 to over 9% in 2003 and now stands at over 15%.

Here at Aurum Ceramic/Classic, we are often asked by dentists in daily practice about recommendations for implant

courses. Implant companies such as Nobel biocare, Straumann, 3i, Zimmer and others offer training to help the general dentist learn how to place their implants. We understand that choosing the right one for you can be a daunting task as not all teaching approaches are the same. The key we feel is to find the one that you feel best suits you and the way you prefer to learn new techniques. Beginning with this issue of Continuum (and continuing next issue), we will

discuss two examples of courses that our general practitioners have attended and have rated as excellent choices for them.

The first example covers the **LVI Implant Program** presented by Dr. Leo Malin at the Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies. The basic premise of this program is “to control the precise placement of implants.” The program includes *Implant I* (an introduction to both implant theory and a controlled protocol relative to implant placement), *Implant II* (each doctor brings their own patient and places implants using the protocol taught in Implant I), and finally *Bone Grafting*. This program provides three different levels of information based on the level of involvement the GP wishes to have in the overall implantation process:

Implant I - General Practitioners learn how to control the placement of implants and achieve aesthetic reconstructions using computerized tomography in conjunction with a CT scanning appliance fabricated by Aurum Ceramic/Classic. Virtual treatment planning software is then used to convert the CT scanning appliance into a

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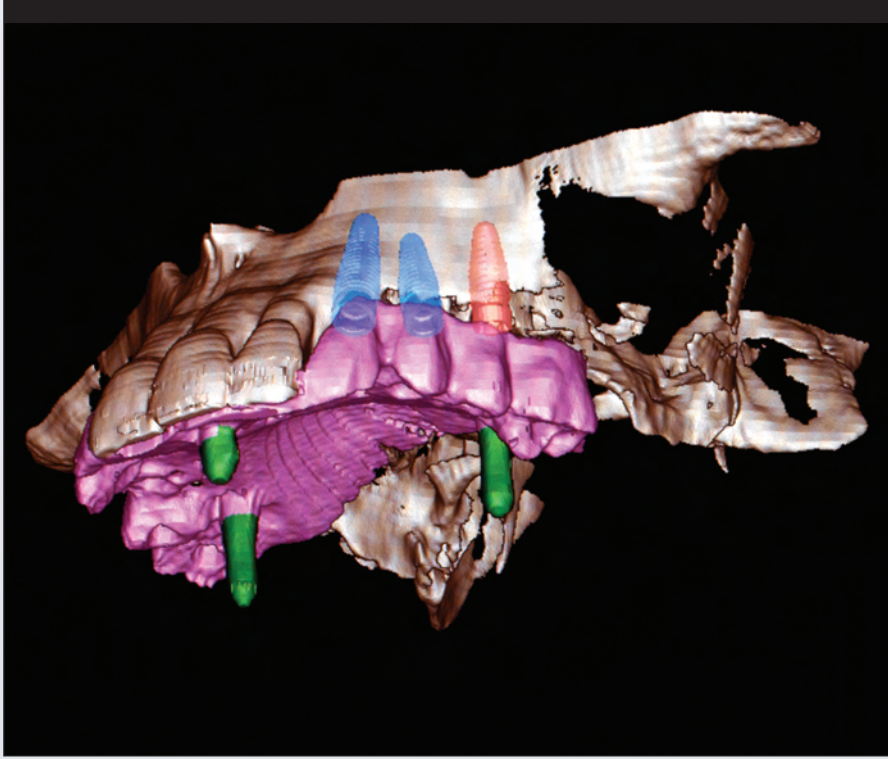


Figure 1: Upper jaw with CT scanning template and two planned implants (blue), currently planned implant (red) and reference pins (green).

precise surgical guide. Dr. Malin brings all these tools together in the treatment planning phase of this class. You will learn a planning and treatment protocol that you can use in your practice to control the implant placements and perform the surgeries yourself - or you can use this protocol to control the surgery by a second party. The Result: a controllable restoration based on esthetics and occlusion.

Implant II - Hands-on experience is the best way to formalize the protocol learned in Implant I. The doctor will bring a patient to the implant course along with intra-oral pictures, x-rays, health histories and consent forms. The first day of the course, the patient will be scanned on an ICAT at LVI, utilizing a CT scanning appliance fabricated by Aurum Ceramic/Classic prior to the class. Each case is then treatment-



Titanium bar.

planned using “IVS coDiagnostix” software (Figure 1) to place the implants virtually in the ideal position. The scanning appliance is then converted by Aurum Ceramic/Classic overnight into a surgical stent (Figure 2) utilizing coordinates honed from the treatment-planning software. The second day of the class is allocated for the surgical placement of the implants performed consecutively to allow you plenty of time for observation when not performing your own surgery. The final day is used for post-surgical discussion.



Implant crown.



Figure 2: CT scanning appliance converted into surgical guide.

Bone Grafting - This class only utilizes non-block methods of grafting, sinus lifts and various methods of ridge augmentation surgery. This class is meant to be an advanced class for those doctors who wish to perform more advanced implant cases.

The most important step after education is to start placing implants yourself without delay, one implant at a time, one patient at a time, to gain the confidence and experience to move on to more complicated implant placements. Utilizing a strong protocol and the support of a team in both Aurum Ceramic/Classic and the implant company of your choice there is no reason you cannot succeed in this new and exciting endeavour.

In the next issue of Continuum, we will discuss Dr. Ronald Zokol's Implant Program at the Pacific Implant Institute.