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Commentary

The Evolution of Dental Biomaterials: Advancements and Applications in Restorative Dentistry

Emilia Hurner*

Department of Odontology, Sikkim University, Gangtok, Sikkim, India

DESCRIPTION

Dental biomaterials play a pivotal role in modern restorative dentistry, constantly evolving to meet the demands of both patients and practitioners. These materials, ranging from ceramics to polymers, have witnessed significant advancements in recent years, offering enhanced aesthetics, durability, and biocompatibility. This study discusses about the latest innovations and applications of dental biomaterials in restorative dentistry, highlighting their transformative impact on patient care.

Advancements in ceramic biomaterials

Ceramic biomaterials have long been favored for their natural appearance and biocompatibility. However, recent innovations have significantly improved their mechanical properties and longevity. One notable advancement is the introduction of zirconia-based ceramics, renowned for their exceptional strength and durability. Zirconia restorations, such as crowns and bridges, offer superior aesthetics and longevity compared to traditional materials like porcelain-fused-to-metal restorations.

Moreover, advancements in CAD/CAM technology have revolutionized the fabrication process of ceramic restorations, enabling precise customization and rapid production. Digital impressions and milling systems allow for seamless integration of these biomaterials into clinical practice, ensuring optimal fit and aesthetics for patients.

Polymer based biomaterials

Polymer-based biomaterials have also undergone significant innovation, particularly in the area of composite resins. Traditional dental amalgam, once a staple in restorative dentistry, is gradually being replaced by resin composites due to their superior aesthetics and minimal invasiveness. Recent developments in composite technology have led to the introduction of nano-filled and bulk-fill composites, offering improved strength, wear resistance, and handling properties.

Furthermore, the advent of universal adhesives has simplified bonding procedures, enhancing the longevity of composite restorations. These adhesives exhibit excellent bonding strength to both enamel and dentin, ensuring durable and long-lasting restorations.

Bioactive and biomimetic materials

The quest for biomimetic restorative materials has led to the emergence of bioactive composites and biomimetic cements. Bioactive materials, such as glass ionomer cements and resin-modified glass ionomers, release ions that promote remineralization and strengthen tooth structure. These materials are particularly advantageous in pediatric dentistry and minimally invasive restorations, where preserving tooth structure is paramount.

Additionally, biomimetic materials mimic the natural structure and function of teeth, providing optimal biomechanical properties and aesthetics. Nanotechnology has facilitated the development of biomimetic materials that closely resemble the natural enamel, offering superior strength, wear resistance, and optical properties.

Biodegradable and regenerative biomaterials

Innovations in biomaterials extend beyond restorative applications to include biodegradable and regenerative materials for tissue engineering and periodontal therapy. Biodegradable scaffolds composed of polymers or ceramics promote tissue regeneration and facilitate the delivery of bioactive agents to periodontal defects. These scaffolds gradually degrade over time, leaving behind regenerated tissue and promoting periodontal health. Bioactive materials have the ability to interact with the biological environment, promoting remineralization and inhibiting bacterial growth.

Furthermore, regenerative materials, such as growth factors and stem cell-based therapies, hold immense promise in promoting tissue regeneration and wound healing. These biomaterials harness the body's innate regenerative capacity to repair damaged tissues and restore oral health.

Correspondence to: Emilia Hurner, Department of Odontology, Sikkim University, Gangtok, Sikkim, India, E-mail: emilia87@gmail.com

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Applications

The applications of these innovative dental biomaterials extend beyond traditional restorative procedures. For instance, biomaterials are increasingly being utilized in regenerative dentistry to promote tissue repair and regeneration. Scaffolds made from biocompatible materials facilitate the growth of new bone or periodontal tissue, aiding in the treatment of periodontal defects or bone augmentation procedures. Additionally, biomaterial-based drug delivery systems hold promise for targeteddelivery of therapeutic agents, such as antimicrobials or growth factors, to the oral cavity.

The field of dental biomaterials is experiencing a renaissance, driven by continuous innovation and technological advancements. From ceramic restorations to bioactive composites, these materials are reshaping the landscape of restorative dentistry, offering improved aesthetics, durability, and biocompatibility. With ongoing research and development, the future holds even greater promise for dental biomaterials, ushering in an era of personalized, minimally invasive, and regenerative dental care.