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Periodontal Microsurgery and Magnified Healing: A New Era in Periodontal Therapy

Shanmuga Shri Vidhya Konda Gokulnath Varalakshmi[1], Dr Saranya M[2], Dr Vijayalakshmi R[3], Dr Burnice Nalinakumari[4], Dr Jaideep Mahendra[5]

[12345] Meenakshi Ammal Dental College and Hospital, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

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Abstract

Periodontal microsurgery represents a significant advancement in minimally invasive dentistry, offering superior precision, reduced tissue trauma, and enhanced aesthetic outcomes. Grounded in magnification, refined instrumentation, and gentle tissue handling, microsurgical techniques improve visualization and surgical dexterity, enabling accurate incisions, meticulous suturing, and optimal wound healing. Its evolution has been shaped by historical milestones, from early lens use to the introduction of operating microscopes in dentistry. The microsurgical triad—magnification, illumination, and precision—forms the foundation of its clinical efficacy. Specialized instruments, fine sutures, and ergonomic adaptations further enhance procedural predictability and patient comfort. Applications in root coverage, regenerative therapy, and soft tissue augmentation highlight its versatility and effectiveness. This review emphasizes the clinical significance, technical refinements, and therapeutic benefits of periodontal microsurgery, reinforcing its role in contemporary, patient-centred care.

Keywords: Periodontal microsurgery, surgical microscope, magnification loupes, minimally invasive dentistry, surgical precision.

Introduction

The success of mucogingival surgical procedures depends on multiple factors, with the surgical technique being a key determinant. Minimizing tissue trauma through an atraumatic approach, combined with surgeon dexterity and excellent visualization, can significantly reduce operative damage. Microsurgical approaches help achieve these objectives [1,2,3].

Daniel (1979) defined microsurgery as a procedure performed under magnification using an operating microscope, while Serafin (1980) described it as a refinement of existing surgical techniques that leverages magnification to enhance visualization. Historical references to magnification date back 2800 years, when simple meniscus lenses were first used in Egypt. In 1694, Anton van Leeuwenhoek developed the first compound microscope. Magnification was introduced to surgery in the late 19th century, with Carl Nylen in 1921 pioneering the use of a binocular microscope for ear surgery.

In dentistry, Apotheker and Jako first applied the microscope in 1978. Later, in 1993, Shanelec and Tibberts presented a continuing education course on periodontal microsurgery at the American Academy of Periodontology. Microsurgery improves visual acuity through magnification and optimal lighting, enhancing predictability, aesthetics, and patient comfort compared to conventional periodontal procedures. The combined benefits of magnification, illumination, and surgical precision are collectively termed the microsurgical triad [1,4].

BENEFITS OF MICROSURGERY IN PERIODONTICS:

Enhanced visual acuity through optical magnification allows for:

1. Greater precision in surgical procedures, resulting in smaller incisions, reduced trauma, and faster postoperative healing [3].

2. Accurate tissue repositioning using smaller needles and sutures, minimizing dead space and ensuring proper wound closure and immobilization [4].

3. Improved visualization of root surfaces, facilitating thorough calculus removal and smoother root preparation [6].

MAGNIFICATION IN PERIODONTAL MICROSURGERY:

The use of binocular loupes in dentistry originated from ophthalmic surgery, introduced by Saemisch. Periodontists now primarily rely on two types of magnification: loupes and operating microscopes [12].

Loupes consist of two monocular lenses angled to provide a stereoscopic, magnified image. Three types exist—simple, compound, and prism—each differing in optical design.

- Simple loupes: Single meniscus lenses offering basic magnification; limitations include trade-offs between working distance and depth of field [1,12].
- Compound loupes: Multiple convergent lenses providing higher magnification, improved depth of field, and achromatic correction.
- Prism loupes: Utilize Schmidt or rooftop prisms to extend light paths, offering advanced magnification.

Magnification below 2× is insufficient for microsurgery, whereas magnification above 4.5× may be cumbersome due to narrow field size and depth of focus [1].

Operating microscopes designed on Galilean principles combine loupes with a magnification changer and binocular viewing system to reduce eyestrain. Features include extensive vertical and horizontal manoeuvrability, inclinable eyepieces, and coaxial fiber-optic illumination [12,13].

MICROSURGICAL INSTRUMENTATION:

Ophthalmic knives, such as crescent, lamellar, blade, beaker, sclera, and spoon knives, are used in periodontics for their sharpness and small size, producing precise wound edges [5,6].

Needles are chosen based on tissue approximation needs; reverse-cutting needles (16–19 mm) are standard, while specialized spatula needles (6.6 mm, 140° curvature) are ideal for microsurgical procedures [6,7]. Smaller needles correspond with finer sutures (6-0 or 7-0), often using materials like poliglecaprone 25 or polyglactin 910 for superior outcomes compared to gut sutures [1,2].

Additional microsurgical instruments—mouth mirrors, explorers, periosteal elevators, curettes, needle holders, and tissue forceps—facilitate atraumatic procedures [5,7].

CONCLUSION:

From both aesthetic and clinical perspectives, achieving complete root coverage remains the ideal goal in soft tissue recession treatment. Microsurgical approaches combined with regenerative periodontal therapy provide a predictable method for primary closure of interdental tissue. Selection of a procedure should consider treatment outcomes, logistics, cost, and patient-centered factors.

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