



REVIEW ARTICLE

Fresh frozen bone in oral and maxillofacial surgery



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Abstract The aim of the current study was to review the use of fresh frozen bone (FFB) in oral and maxillofacial surgery. We performed a review of the articles published in the literature between 1976 and May 2014 analyzing three medical databases (PubMed, Cochrane Library, and Embase) and using specific search terms. Literature analysis on FFB applications in oral and maxillofacial surgery revealed 47 articles between 1976 and May 2014. There are 46 clinical articles and one review. Clinical articles are represented by 22 case reports and case series and 24 retrospective studies. Classifying the scientific production by year of publication, it is evident that especially during the last 6 years there was an increase of FFB graft use in oral and maxillofacial approaches. The literature analysis on FFB's use shows that its application in oral and maxillofacial surgery began slowly in 1992 with Perrott and since 2006 it had a real development. The recent significant increase emphasizes the importance of FFB for bone regeneration in oral and maxillofacial surgery. This review found consistent evidence of FFB's use increase in oral and maxillofacial surgery suggesting a valid instrument for bone regeneration. To date, risks connected to the infections' transmission and to the immunogenic

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potential are extremely low and could be considered practically absent. So, this is an important alternative in the preimplant reconstructive surgery.

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Introduction

Bone reconstruction techniques are extensively used in oral and maxillofacial surgery.^{1–5} The most important applications include the maintenance of postextraction alveolar volume, maxillary sinus elevation, restoration of the maxilla and mandible ridge, treatment of odontogenic cysts, and orthognatic surgery.

With the exclusion of the osteogenetic distraction techniques and grafts of vascularized flaps, all the other bone reconstruction procedures involve the use of bone or bone substitute materials.^{6–8} Osteogenetic graft material directly stimulates osteoblasts inducing the production of bone tissue, osteoinductive material induces differentiation of mesenchymal cells into chondroblasts and/or osteoblasts, and finally, osteoconductive material facilitates the proliferation, cell migration, and apposition of new bone tissue on its surface or, if it has adequate porous structure, in its interior.^{9–11}

The bone grafts can be classified into two major groups: bone blocks and particulate bone. Bone blocks can be subdivided as follows: cortical, cancellous, and cortical-cancellous.¹² In addition, on the basis of their structure, even if with some differences in their mechanical characteristics, all these type of bone can be adequately modeled and adapted to the defects.

The integration of bone grafts is a sequential process involving inflammation, neovascularization, osteogenesis, and bone remodeling in which graft stabilization and vascularization play a pivotal role.¹³

Bone grafts can additionally be classified into heterologous bone if it is transferred from one species to another; autologous bone if it is transferred on the same patient; and bone allografts or homologous bone if transferred between members of the same species.

Autologous bone graft material has always been considered as the gold standard because it showed osteogenic osteoconductive and osteoinductive properties.¹⁴ In addition, no immunological reactions are expected.¹⁵ Nevertheless, it presents some disadvantages, including increased operating time that must include the time of bone harvesting, and an increase in morbidity and post-operative risks in case of extraoral sampling. The autograft is widely used both as particulate and blocks, alone or in combination with osteoconductive materials. Those grafts are implanted either with or without membranes for the guided regeneration or together with preparations intended to improve the regeneration such as platelet-derived growth factors.¹⁶

Heterologous bone is mainly represented by deproteinized bovine bone and deantigenated equine bone.^{17,18} Contrary to autologous bone it is available in unlimited

quantities, but it is not osteogenic and osteoconductive.¹⁹ In addition, it is associated with high costs and the possibility of pathogen transmission.²⁰

Homologous bone is obtained from cadavers or from patients undergoing hip replacement surgery with removal of the head of the femur. femoral head. It has osteoconductive properties and it is potentially osteoinductive because its matrix contains growth factors such as bone morphogenetic protein (BMP) or vascular endothelial growth factor.^{21–23} However, freezing causes almost total loss of cell viability; therefore, it has no osteogenic properties. Nevertheless, some authors showed a residual cell viability.²⁴

Homologous fresh frozen bone (FFB) has already been widely used in orthopedic surgery and neurosurgery; recently, its advantages in oral and maxillofacial surgery could be shown.^{25–27}

The sterility and the antigenicity represent two critical points. Regarding the sterility, irradiation increases the degree of safety. Regarding immunogenicity, no complications related to histocompatibility have been reported.²⁸ This could be due to the loss of viable cells by freezing.

The use of homologous FFB represents a promising alternative to autologous bone for bone reconstruction in oral and maxillofacial surgery. The purpose of this study was to review the scientific literature in order to define the state-of-the-art use of FFB in surgery.

Materials and methods

Three medical databases were used to analyze the articles published in the literature until May 2014: PubMed, Cochrane Library, and Embase. The keywords and medical subject headings used were: “*fresh frozen bone, FFB, deep frozen allogenic, maxillofacial, oral, human*”.

Publications were divided by year of publication and type of article; the articles were subdivided by:

- clinical trials: these studies included case reports, case series, and retrospective studies;
- review.

For each clinical trial were considered the following parameters:

- patient number;
- bone type used;
- donor site;
- presence of irradiated bone;
- surgical procedure site: upper maxilla, lower maxilla;
- surgical procedure type: preprosthetic surgery with implant rehabilitation;

- maxillary sinus elevation, removal of cysts/benign neoplasms;
- histological and/or molecular analysis;
- follow-up.

Results

We found 47 articles in the time period between 1976 and May 2014.

There are 46 clinical articles and one review.

Clinical articles are represented by 22 case reports/case series and 24 retrospective studies.

In Table 1 the number of patients included in each respective article is reported.^{29–73}

Thirty-nine articles regard preprosthetic surgery with implant rehabilitation; five articles concern maxillary sinus elevation (three articles cover both the preprosthetic surgery for implant rehabilitation that the maxillary sinus elevation), four articles concern removal of cysts/tumors, and one regarding correction of deformities.^{50,70,73}

Twenty-nine articles are about the maxilla, 18 on the mandible, and 12 about both districts (Fig. 1).

Classifying the articles by year of publication we showed an increase of FFB use in clinical practice (Fig. 2). This increase was found mainly during the past 6 years. Most of those publications regard preprosthetic surgery (Fig. 3).

Concerning the type of grafted bone, the main donor sites are the iliac crest, and the head of the femur and tibia with a preference for the iliac crest. However, in several studies the type of bone used was not reported. In most of the articles, the bone grafts were nonirradiated. Irradiated bone was used only in one study and in 24 articles there are

no data about the tissue irradiation.⁵⁹ Histology of the bone graft was analyzed in 24 studies describing the type of regenerating bone.

With regard to surgical technique and the type of surgery, most of the studies concerned the preprosthetic surgery and the maxillary sinus elevation. The surgical technique used was highly variable, comparing the different articles as well as within the same study. Both increases in vertical and horizontal volume carried out with techniques of bone apposition and interpositional grafts were described. The use of morcellized bone was also reported.

Thirty-four studies described the use of bone blocks: three inlay, 17 onlay, and two veneer. In 25 studies implant surgery was carried out and in 15 of these studies an implant failure was reported.

The follow-up of the patients in the different studies was highly variable, even in the same study, with a minimum of 1 month and a maximum of 134 months.^{30,55} Also, the time between bone regeneration and the implant surgery was highly variable, ranging from a minimum of 4 months to a maximum of 11 months.^{35,36,62} In two studies the implant surgery was made in the same session of the bone regeneration.^{41,50}

Discussion

Bone regeneration is the objective of several surgical fields. Although there are different materials of natural and synthetic origin, some preparations also containing bone growth factors such as BMP2Rh, the use of both autologous and homologous bone grafts is an important tool in

Table 1 Number of patients for clinical article.

Retrospective studies	Patients	Case report and case series	Patients
1) Acocella et al, 2011a ²⁹	16	1) Albanese et al, 2011 ⁵²	1
2) Acocella et al, 2011b ³⁰	15	2) Albanese et al, 2012 ⁵³	1
3) Bertossi et al, 2013 ³¹	20	3) Barone et al, 2009 ⁵⁴	13
4) Carinci et al, 2009 ³²	22	4) Boniello et al, 2013 ⁵⁵	20
5) Carinci et al, 2009b ³³	21	5) Borgonovo et al, 2010 ⁵⁶	1
6) Carinci et al, 2010 ³⁴	69	6) Borgonovo et al, 2013 ⁵⁷	2
7) Chen et al, 2008 ³⁵	4	7) Buffoli et al, 2012 ⁵⁸	10
8) Contar et al, 2009 ³⁶	15	8) Chiapasco et al, 2013a ⁵⁹	20
9) Contar et al, 2011 ³⁷	18	9) Chiapasco et al, 2013b ⁶⁰	15
10) D'Aloja et al, 2011 ³⁸	14	10) D'Aloja et al, 2008 ⁶¹	2
11) Franco et al, 2009a ³⁹	16	11) Deluiz et al, 2013 ⁶²	24
12) Franco et al, 2009b ⁴⁰	36	12) Ferraz et al, 2013 ⁶³	1
13) Franco et al, 2009c ⁴¹	81	13) Lumetti et al, 2012 ⁶⁴	24
14) Grecchi et al, 2009 ⁴²	11	14) Pimentel et al, 2012 ⁶⁵	6
15) Hiatt et al, 1978 ⁴³	Not reported	15) Rochanawutanon et al, 2002 ⁶⁶	4
16) Nocini et al, 2011 ⁴⁴	7	16) Spin-Neto et al, 2012 ⁶⁷	33
17) Perrott et al, 1992 ⁴⁵	10	17) Spin-Neto et al, 2013a ⁶⁸	26
18) Rigo et al, 2011 ⁴⁶	17	18) Spin-Neto et al, 2013b ⁶⁹	34
19) Rodella et al, 2010 ²³	6	19) Tetè et al, 2013 ⁷⁰	20
20) Stacchi et al, 2008 ⁴⁷	10	20) Viscioni et al, 2010a ⁷¹	21
21) Viscioni et al, 2009a ⁴⁸	58	21) Vos et al, 2009 ⁷²	1
22) Viscioni et al, 2009b ⁴⁹	41	22) Xavier et al, 2014 ⁷³	15
23) Viscioni et al, 2010b ⁵⁰	17		
24) Viscioni et al, 2011 ⁵¹	12		

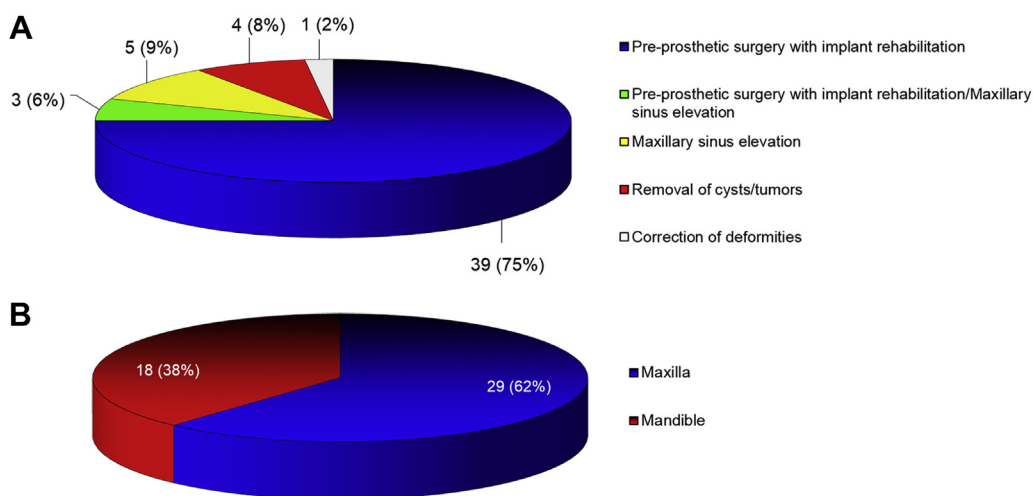


Figure 1 The different applications of FFB (A) and surgical applications in the maxilla and mandible (B).

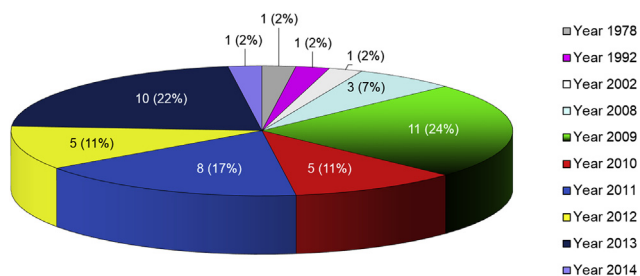


Figure 2 The scientific production regarding FFB per year.

reconstructive maxillofacial surgery.^{8,74–77} Although autogenous bone still represents the gold standard in bone reconstruction, the use of FFB could represent a valid alternative for several reasons.^{78,79} If the graft site is extraoral, general anesthesia is often recommended, which

then increases both the risks for the patient and the costs for the surgery. In addition, some recent studies also showed that the FFB homologous bone grafts undergo a slower remodeling compared to autologous bone grafts.⁸⁰ This evidence could be particularly useful in preimplant reconstructive surgery, because a slower remodeling could allow a more stable maintenance of bone volumes also in the absence of load, as can be found in the months that follow bone graft insertion before the insertion of the implant and its functional load. The use of FFB as an inlay graft in sinus elevation or as onlay graft in the maxillary bone must be carefully evaluated, because, even if valid results have been reported in literature, there are still no long-term evaluations of implant survival.

However, some critical points exist. In addition to a low number of donations, there are some biological aspects, such as the possible transmission of infections and its potential immunogenicity. Concerns about the transmission of

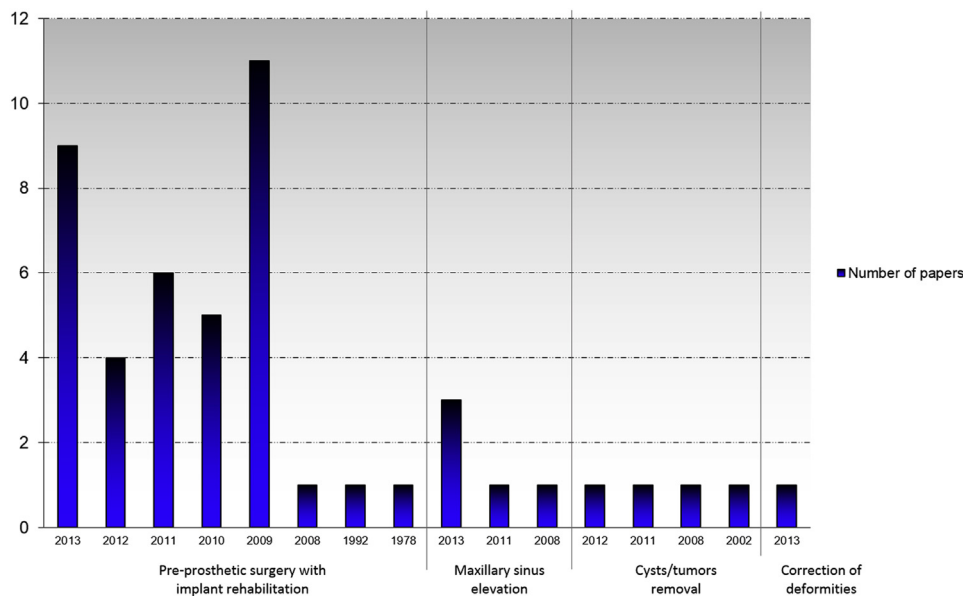


Figure 3 Distribution of different clinical applications by year.

infections with frozen bone allografts include one case of hepatitis B virus (HBV) in 1954, seven cases of hepatitis C virus (HCV) transmission, and nine cases of HIV transmission reported between 1985 and currently.^{81–83} Therefore, even if we cannot exclude the possibility to contract infections, it is important to highlight that these cases have been documented mainly in the early years of FFB-use and currently, thanks to sophisticated screening methods, risks are reasonably smaller. Moreover, recent methods such as irradiation improve graft safety. Nevertheless, the correct limit of gamma irradiation exposure to inactivate viral transmission together to maintain a good BMP expression and osteoblast differentiation needs to be defined. In addition, rigorous background checks on the donor must be deeply performed.^{8,74} Comparing FB to freeze-dried bone allograft (FDB) some authors showed that lyophilized bone, stored at room temperature for 15 days or more, did not transmit HIV, HCV, or HBV.⁸¹ Freezing preserves the infectivity of enveloped viruses and presumably by keeping their lipid membranes intact for years, whereas the process of drying and storing at room temperature results in the collapse of the lipid membrane.⁸¹

With regard to the immunogenic potential, freezing allows killing of the immunogenic potential by eliminating almost completely vital bone cell component.^{28,84,85} Nevertheless, even if in some experimental studies some authors did not show any detectable antibody response after healing of long-term frozen bone allograft^{80,81}; other authors showed an evoked detectable humoral and cell-mediated immunity with frozen bone, comparing it to FDB (which failed to sensitize the recipients).⁸⁶ Using FDB, in fact, Lingaraj et al⁸⁷ did not report any noticeable immunological activation in patients subjected to periapical surgery and FDB graft; also, studies from Mellonig⁸⁸ and Quattlebaum et al⁸⁹ showed a reduction both of humoral and cell-mediated type of antigenicity up to a not observed incidence of donor specific antibodies and so reporting clinical success in oral and maxillofacial surgeries. Mechanisms concerning the interactions between the host immune system and grafting are not fully understood, but recent studies on animal models show that from the immunological point of view the homologous frozen bone has behavior comparable to autologous fresh bone not inducing any significant response in the recipient.^{84,85}

The literature analysis regarding the use of FFB shows that its application in oral and maxillofacial surgery began in 1992 with Perrott⁴⁵; it had a real development since 2006 and a significant increase only in the past six years.²⁶ In preprosthetic surgery with implant rehabilitation, studies should target increases in horizontal and vertical volume. Also, should the degree of rise be assessed, this would also be of significant importance in maxillary sinus elevation. In fact, there are no randomized controlled trials that would be needed to properly validate the procedure, making it independent of the personal preferences of individual surgeons. The stratification of articles by type proves that most of the articles are case reports and case series or retrospective studies regarding oral preprosthetic surgery. Reports on maxillary and mandibular rehabilitation and the orthognathic surgery currently are numerically limited. These results suggest some considerations. In contrast to orthopedic bone, in reconstruction surgery or

reconstructive maxillofacial surgery, the risk for the patient, although both improving the quality of life of the patient, is considerably higher than in oral preprosthetic surgery. For those, alternative techniques should be considered.

The FFB has different characteristics as it originates from different donor sites. In oral and maxillofacial applications the iliac crest and the femur's head is mainly used. The femur's head consists of cancellous bone coated with a thin layer of compact bone that is not maintained during the bone segment shaping; the iliac crest has both cortical and cancellous parts. This different structural organization, together with different remodeling of cortical bone compared to cancellous bone, could influence graft integration.⁹⁰ However, because of the small sample sizes, further studies are definitely needed to assess how, where, and if there should be specific guidelines regarding the right choice of harvesting the bone from a specific donor site over another. In addition, bones of the splanchnocranium originate through membranous ossification from neural crest cells^{91–93}; they exhibit some special characteristics both concerning innervation and the periosteum as well as repair mechanisms.^{94–96} This diversity, along with more details on the biology of bone tissue and the graft integration mechanisms, should also be investigated further.⁹⁷ This is not the only difference with orthopedics, in which FFB is widely used. Some authors show a certain degree of bone graft resorption.⁹⁸ This resorption, which might depend on the bone type used (cortical, cancellous, corticocancellous, morcellized), may be of little significance in orthopedics but it can assume great importance in oral and maxillofacial surgery where bone thickness is extremely limited. In conclusion, although the overall advantages of the use of FFB have already been outlined in the literature, a better characterization of its use in oral and maxillofacial surgery is necessary. Therefore, it is essential to plan larger studies to transfer the results and current discussions into the evidence-based medicine of the future by providing the necessary guidelines and protocols.

Conflicts of interest

The authors have no potential conflicts of interest.

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