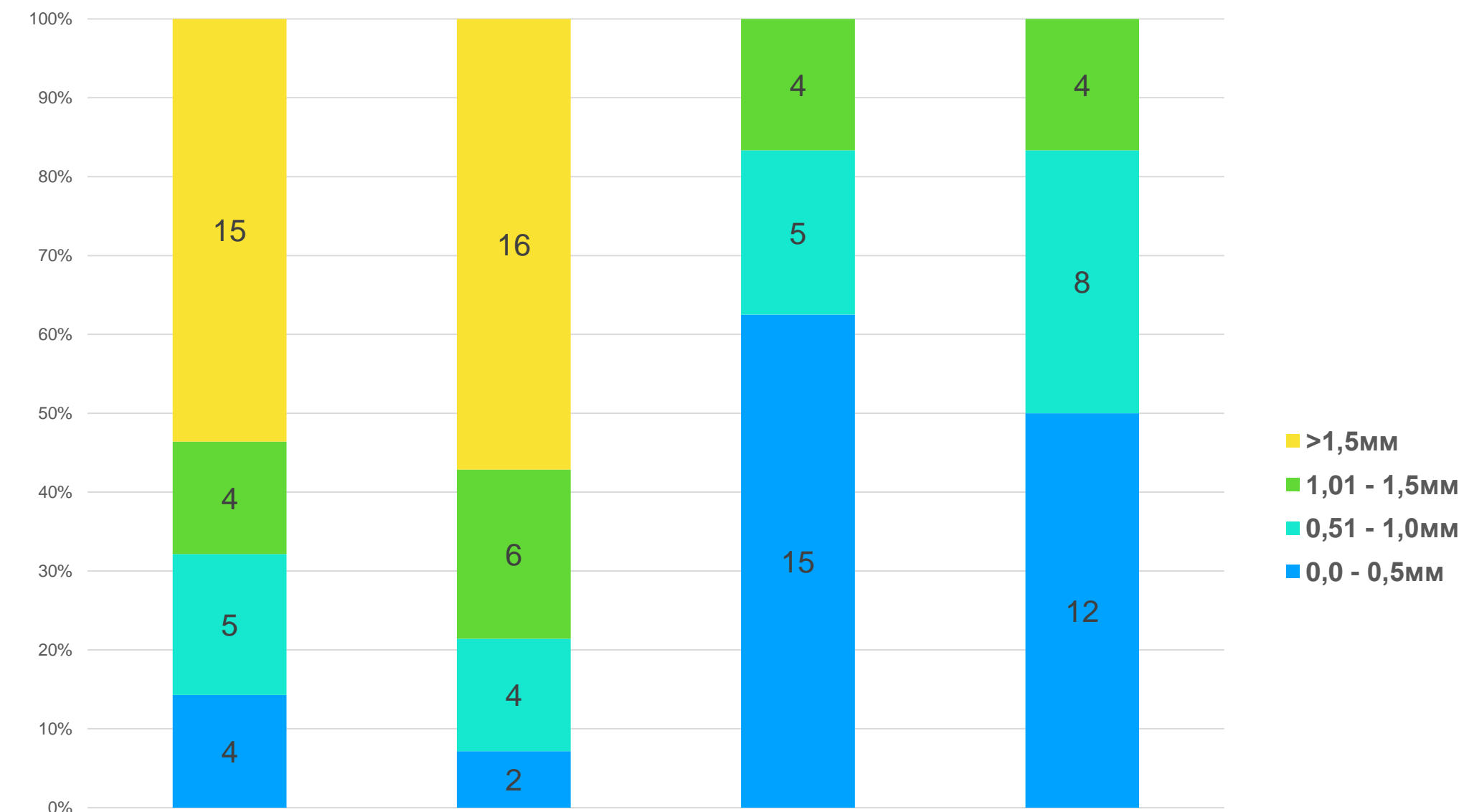


The subcrestal implant placement as factor for crestal bone stability in implant sites with vertically thin gingiva

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Abstract

This prospective comparative study aimed to determine the influence of the implant placement type (subcrestal or equicrestal) on bone level changes in platform-switched implants placed in sites with vertically thin gingiva (<3 mm) and restored with screw-retained or cement-retained restorations. Moreover, the effect of vertical gingival thickness on peri-implant bone loss was analyzed. The clinical significance of the study's conclusions is in determining a modality of implant placement efficient in preserving stable crestal bone.



Bone loss distribution (mm) in implant sites with different vertical gingival thickness

Background and Aim

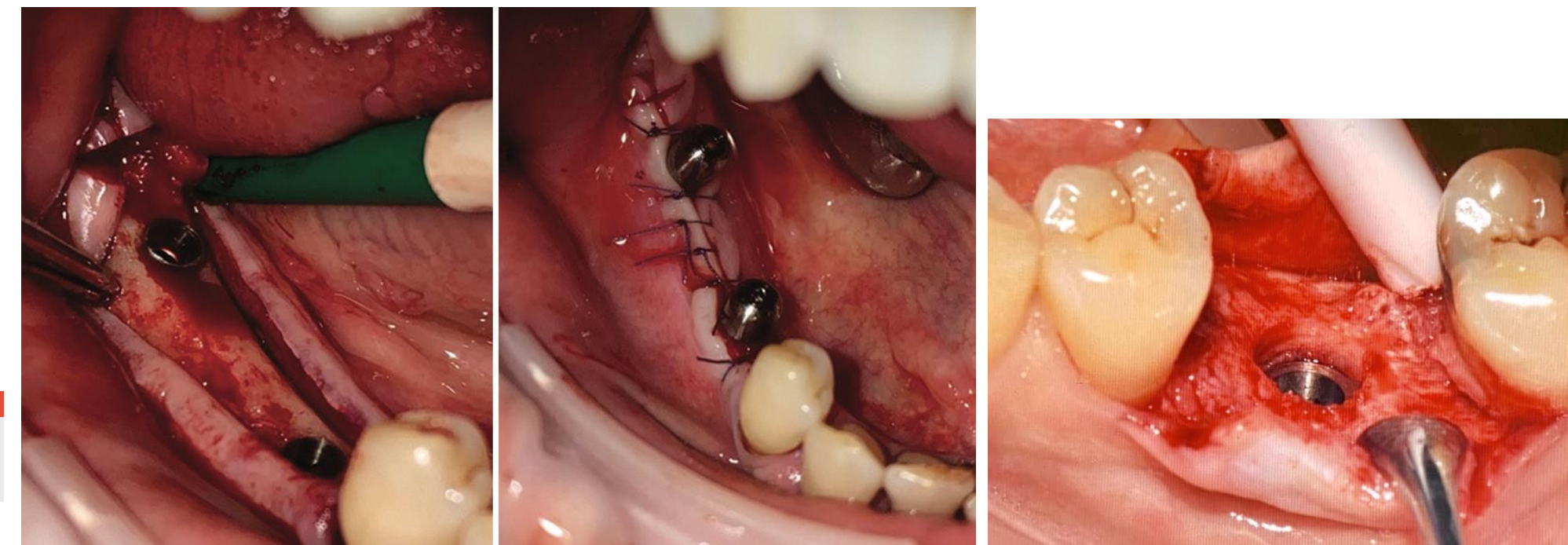
The stable peri-implant crestal bone is a prerequisite for long-term success of the dental implants. The sufficient vertical soft tissue thickness is an important factor in preserving the stable peri-implant crestal bone. One of the proposed methods for minimizing the crestal bone loss is the placement of the implants below the crestal bone level (subcrestally). Platform switched implants are believed to be able to preserve the crestal bone and can be placed subcrestally.

Methods and Materials

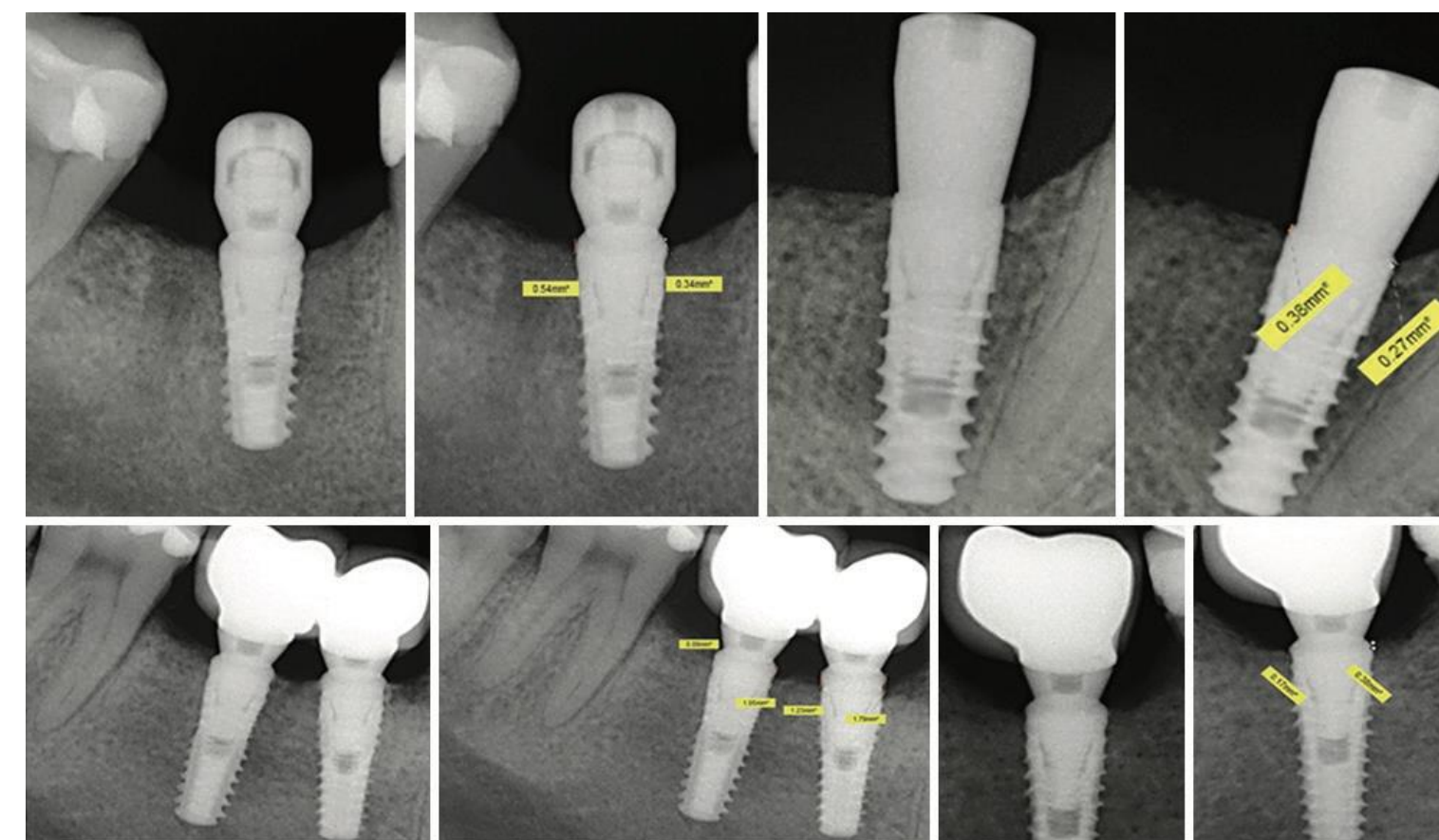
Fifty-two bone-level implants with platform switched prosthetic platform (Implantswiss, Novodent SA, Yverdon-les-Bains, Swiss) were placed in a single stage manner in the posterior mandibular region. The implant sites were divided into control group with vertically thick gingiva (≥3mm) and test group with vertically thin (<3 mm) gingiva. The implants in the control group were placed equicrestally. The implant sites from the control group were randomly allocated to receive equicrestally or subcrestally placed implants. Bone remodelling/loss was radiographically measured at digital peri-apical images using at two reference points: mesially and distally. The measurements were done at two timepoints: three months postoperatively and six months post functional loading.



Vertical soft tissue thickness: Thin versus thick implant sites



Implantswiss "bone-level" implant placement in single-stage manner (equicrestally and subcrestally)



Radiographic measurement of bone loss at different time points

Results

The mean crestal bone loss values three months postoperatively and six months post functional loading were higher at sites with thin than at sites with thick gingiva (p<0.0001). At implant sites with thin gingiva, subcrestally placed implants presented less bone loss than equicrestally placed implants (p<0,0001).

The type of final restoration does not affect the bone loss values at implant sites with vertically thin and thick gingiva.

"Tukey's multiple comparisons test"	mean	95% CI differences	p-value
vertical soft tissue thickness			
3 months thin/ 6 months thin	-0,2517	-0,5076 -0,004259	0,0558
3 months thin/ 3 months thick	0,7973	0,5338-1,061	<0,0001
3 months thin/ 6 months thick	0,6983	0,4348-0,9618	<0,0001
6 months thin/ 3 months thick	1,049	0,7854-1,312	<0,0001
6 months thin/ 6 months thick	0,9499	0,6864-1,213	<0,0001
3 months thick/ 6 months thick	-0,09900	0,3650-0,1670	0,7684

Mean bone loss values (mm) in thin and thick gingiva sites and in subcrestal versus equicrestal implants

"Tukey's multiple comparisons test"	mean	95% CI differences	p-value
subcrestal vs. equicrestal			
3 months mesial subcrestal/ 3 months mesial equicrestal	0,8898	-0,313-0,467	<0,0001
3 months distal subcrestal/ 3 months distal equicrestal	-0,7808	-1,204-0,3580	<0,0001
6 months mesial subcrestal/ 6 months mesial equicrestal	-1,072	1,494-0,6487	<0,0001
6 months distal subcrestal/ 6 months distal equicrestal	-0,7825	-1,205-0,3597	<0,0001

Mean bone loss values (mm) in thin gingiva sites depending on implant placement type and restoration type

"Tukey's multiple comparisons test"	mean	95% CI differences	p-value
screw-retained vs. cement-retained in vertically thin gingiva			
3 months mesial screw-retained / 3 months mesial cement-retained	-0,03754	-0,6618-0,5871	>0,9999
3 months mesial screw-retained / 6 months mesial cement-retained	-0,1291	-0,7533-0,4951	0,9982
3 months distal screw-retained / 3 months distal cement-retained	-0,2089	-0,8331-0,4153	0,9672
3 months distal screw-retained / 6 months distal cement-retained	-0,3004	-0,9246-0,3238	0,8083

Conclusion

The implants are receptive to more bone loss when they are placed in sites with vertically thin gingiva regardless of their platform switched design and the type of final restoration (screw-retained or cement-retained). The subcrestal placement of platform-switched implants can prevent crestal bone loss in sites with vertical gingival thickness < 3 mm.

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