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Dental implant survival in patients with osteoporosis

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Osteoporosis is very common, particularly in post-menopausal women and is characterized by a decrease in bone mass and strength. Osteoporosis also affects the jawbone and it is considered a potential contraindication to placement of dental implants. The present paper reviews the literature regarding the effect of osteoporosis on osseointegration of implants. Experimental models have shown that osteoporosis affects the process of osseointegration, which can be reversed by treatment. However, studies in subjects with osteoporosis have shown no differences in survival of the implants compared to healthy individuals. Therefore, osteoporosis cannot be considered a contraindication for implant placement. Oral bisphosphonates are the most commonly used pharmacological agents in the treatment of osteoporosis. Although there have been cases of osteonecrosis of the jaw in patients treated with bisphosphonates, they are very rare and it is more usually associated with intravenous bisphosphonates in patients with neoplasms or other serious diseases. Nevertheless, patients treated with bisphosphonates must be informed in writing about the possibility of this complication and must give informed consent. Ceasing to use bisphosphonates before implant placement does not seem to be necessary.

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