Patient reported experiences on post operative pain management and impact on daily life following implant placement

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Background: Dental implant is one of the most common treatment option in replacing missing teeth. One of the most common risk of stage 1 implant surgery is post-operative discomfort and pain. Although there have been advances in anaesthesia and developments in the knowledge of pain control, post-operative discomfort and pain is still common. There is limited evidence on the immediate post-operative impact of stage 1 implant surgery on the quality of life.

Aim/Hypothesis: To investigate the level of pain, analgesic regimes and surgical complications experienced by patients who have single and multiple implant placement.

Material and Methods: Participants were recruited from the implant dentistry department in Guy’s Hospital, London. Edentulous patients were excluded in this survey. Partially dentate patients who underwent stage 1 implant surgery were eligible to participate. Participants were then asked to complete a pain diary for recording the time, the type and the dosage of pain relief that they took in the first 4 days after the surgery. They were also asked to complete a visual analogue scale (VAS) every morning and every evening in the first 4 days following the surgery indicating the amount of pain they experienced.

Results: Eighteen non-smoking patients were recruited. There were 9 patients in each group of single and multiple implant placement. 15 patients had implant surgery on the maxilla, the rest were mandibular. Day 1 after surgery, both the single and multiple implants group have similar VAS pain score. Days 3–4, the multiple implants group have higher VAS pain scores than the single implant group. On day 1 and day 2 following surgery, the number of patients with moderate to severe pain in both groups is very similar. There appeared to be significantly more patients experienced no pain on day 4 in the single implant group than the multiple implants group. On the first 3 days following stage 1 implant surgery, the majority of patients required analgesic to control the post-operative pain that they were experiencing. Day 4 following the surgery, the number of patients required analgesia decreased significantly (7 patients). 27–33% of patients experienced some complications, commonly swelling.

Conclusions and Clinical Implications: Patients appeared to experience more pain following multiple implant placement when compared to single placement. By day 4, the need for analgesia drops significantly. Post-operative swelling is most likely on the first 2 days after implant surgery.