

Research Paper: Frequency of Peri-implant Bone Loss and Related Factors in an Iranian Population



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ABSTRACT



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Keywords:

*Bone Resorption *Dental Implants *Radiography **Introduction:** Bone loss can lead to aesthetic complications, impaired hygiene, excessive forces, improper occlusion and severe cases of implant loss and severe bone damage. Multiple factors contribute to bone loss around implants. This study aims to assess the frequency of peri-implant bone loss and its associated factors in Bandar Anzali in 2023.

Materials and Methods: This analytical cross-sectional study was conducted on 207 panoramic radiographs of patients with dental implants retrieved from the archives of an oral radiology clinic in Bandar Anzali, Iran, in 2023. The radiographs were evaluated by a calibrated dental student under the supervision of a radiologist for presence/absence of peri-implant bone loss. Additionally, patients were contacted and surveyed regarding related factors. The data were analyzed using the Chi-square test, with a significant level of P<0.05.

Results: Gender, age, tooth type, implant prosthesis design, opposing occlusion, history of bone grafting, and time passed since prosthetic treatment showed no statistically significant association with peri-implant bone loss (P>0.05). However, bone loss was significantly greater around maxillary implants (P=0.012), in smokers (P=0.024), in patients with underlying systemic diseases (P<0.05), and in those with a history of sinus floor augmentation surgery (P<0.05). A direct correlation was observed between bone loss and time elapsed since surgery (P<0.05).

Conclusion: The results revealed a higher prevalence of peri-implant bone loss in the maxilla and among smokers within the study population. Additional influential factors included a history of sinus floor augmentation, time elapsed since surgery, and underlying systemic diseases.

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1. Introduction

ental implants are commonly used for replacing missing teeth, with a high success rate. Nonetheless, similar to other surgical procedures, dental implant placement may be associated with complications such as bone loss, periodontal pocket formation, puss discharge and exudation, mobility, sensitivity to percussion, and periimplant pain and bleeding, which can ultimately result in treatment failure (1). Peri-implant bone lead to aesthetic complications, loss may complicate oral hygiene practice, overloading and improper occlusion, and even lead to implant failure and severe alveolar bone destruction (2).

Dental implant survival rates vary across studies, ranging from 73.4% to 100%, with a mean survival rate of 94.6% (3). The primary criteria for evaluating dental implant success include implant stability, absence of peri-implant radiolucency, minimal bone loss (defined as an average vertical bone loss of less than 0.2 mm per year after the first year of function), absence of pain or infection, and no evidence of nerve damage (4). Ross et al. (5) reported a maximum marginal bone loss (MBL) of 1 mm during the first year for successful implants.

The success and survival of dental implants depend on multiple parameters, including patientrelated factors, surgical technique-related factors, prosthesis-related factors, and implant-related factors (3). Patient-related factors encompass genetic susceptibility, bone quality, age, diabetes mellitus, smoking, and occlusal forces, among others. Recent studies emphasize the critical role of these factors in influencing implant outcomes. For instance, dental implants placed immediately after tooth extraction demonstrate survival rates as high as 98.5%, while those placed in healed sockets exhibit comparable rates of 98.9%. Moreover, conditions such as diabetes and smoking can negatively impact healing and osseointegration (3,6-9). Implant-related factors include the implant surface, macro-design, and dimensions (length and diameter). Prosthesis type can also affect the type and rate of complications and failure. For instance, single crowns are different from fixed partial dentures, and removable dentures differ from fixed prosthetic restorations in this regard.

As previously discussed, MBL is an important parameter is a critical parameter in evaluating dental implant success. Progressive bone loss leads to peri-implantitis and ultimately results in implant failure. Crestal bone loss may occur at any stage

post-implant placement either before or after restoration and arises from multiple etiologies. These factors may include local inflammation or infection, as well as mechanical stresses on the bone surrounding the implant. Traditional clinical indicators such as bleeding on probing or probing depths often fail to accurately reflect the extent of crestal bone loss (CBL). Several strategies can help minimize CBL. Platform switching, which involves using a narrower abutment compared to the implant platform, has been shown to reduce marginal bone resorption (10,11).

Early marginal bone loss (MBL) is a significant concern in both dental implantology periodontics. It refers to the initial bone loss surrounding dental implants or natural teeth, typically occurring within the first year after implant placement or in the early stages of periodontal disease (8). The significance of early MBL lies in its potential impact on long-term implant stability and success, aesthetic outcomes in dental restorations, overall oral health and function, and the etiology of early marginal bone loss. Key causes of early MBL in dental implants include surgical trauma during implant placement, excessive occlusal loading, microgap formation between the implant and abutment, peri-implantitis (bacterial infection), poor implant positioning, and inadequate bone quality or quantity (13,14).

Evidence shows that peri-implant soft tissue thickness, the location of the implant-abutment connection, and the position of the border between the rough and smooth parts of the implant relative to the bone crest affect the location of biologic width formation and subsequent bone loss. A systematic review conducted by Lombardi et al. (15) investigated the factors influencing early marginal bone loss around dental implants confirmed that peri-implant soft tissue thickness significantly affects early MBL. Implants with thicker, soft tissues (>2 mm) showed less bone loss compared to those with thinner tissues (16). Furthermore, subcrestal placement of the implantabutment connection resulted in less early MBL compared to equicrestal placement. This supports the observation about thicker biologic width in subcrestally placed implants (15). However, a comparative study on early MBL in maxillary versus mandibular implants confirmed that early MBL is more common in the maxilla than in the mandible. This difference was attributed to variations in bone density and quality between the two jaws (17).

The microgap between the implant and transmucosal component (abutment) is a



significant factor contributing to early marginal bone loss. Kim et al. (18) found that the presence of a microgap can lead to bacterial colonization and subsequent inflammation. Also, microgaps as small as 10 µm can harbor bacteria, leading to perimplant inflammation and implant systems with tighter connections showed less marginal bone loss over time. Other reasons for peri-implant bone loss include occlusal trauma, implant placement timing, bone grafting at the implant site, implant macrodesign, implant neck design, implant surface topography, implant shape, implant-abutment connection design, prosthesis design, and soft tissue thickness (19).

Radiographic imaging is essential for assessing bone loss in dental implantology. Cone-beam computed tomography (CBCT) is utilized for preoperative evaluation and treatment planning. panoramic Subsequently, and periapical radiographs are employed for follow-up assessments. For single implants, periapical radiography is preferred due to its lower radiation dose and higher precision, particularly in areas of bone resorption. Conversely, panoramic radiography offers a comprehensive overview for patients with multiple implants across the dental arch, despite its lower accuracy in specific regions (20).

Considering the issues raised and the conditions that may cause bone loss around the implants post-placement, this study aims to determine the frequency of peri-implant bone loss in patients referred to a specialized oral and maxillofacial radiology center. Panoramic radiography was selected due to its common clinical use and ethical considerations regarding radiation exposure. Additionally, the frequency of bone resorption, if present, was assessed. It should be noted that due to the artifact resulting from the implant in CBCT images and the subsequent reduction in accuracy in assessing bone resorption, this modality will not be used in this study.

2. Materials and Methods

This analytical cross-sectional study (approved under ethical code IR.GUMS.REC.1402.442) was conducted on 207 panoramic radiographs of patients with dental implants, retrieved from the archives of a radiology clinic in Bandar Anzali, Iran, in 2023. The sample size was calculated to be 161 based on a study by Merheb et al. (21), assuming an alpha level of 0.05, a beta level of 0.2, and a margin of error (dd) of 0.07.

$$p = \frac{20}{28} = 0.71 \qquad q = 0.29 \qquad z = 1.96 \qquad d = 0.07$$

$$n = \frac{z^2 p(1-p)}{d^2} = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.71)(0.29)}{(0.07)^2} = 161$$

The inclusion criteria for the study consist of all patients with dental implants who have been prescribed panoramic radiography. The minimum time elapsed since implant placement or prosthetic lading was less than 12 months. Additionally, all patients with implants were questioned regarding influencing factors such as diabetes, hypertension, and osteoporosis. These conditions can significantly impact the healing process and stability of dental implants.

The exclusion criteria including poor-quality radiographs that did not clearly visualize the implant site and the adjacent marginal bone. The acceptable resolution for panoramic radiographs should be sufficient clarity that details of the bone and structures surrounding the implant are clearly visible and the images should be free of noise. Patient positioning and the radiation angle is important. In addition, patients with active infections or inflammation in the implant area that could affect the study results. Patients with severe underlying diseases that could impact healing and bone resorption processes.

The confounding variables for the present may include surgical techniques, prosthetic factors, implant characteristics such as the type, length, and material of the implant, and time variables (the duration since surgery and the time elapsed since prosthetic placement) can influence the assessment of bone resorption. Also, differences in patient compliance with oral hygiene can affect perimplant health and bone loss.

Panoramic radiographs were evaluated for the presence or absence of peri-implant bone loss. Exposure of implant threads at the mesial and distal surfaces served as an indicator of bone loss. Patients were surveyed (via questioning) with potential influential factors, including age, gender, smoking status (current smokers), underlying systemic diseases (diabetes, hypertension, osteoporosis), time elapsed since surgery (months), time elapsed since prosthetic treatment (months).

The jaw type, tooth type, prosthesis type, occlusal relationship of the opposing tooth, history of sinus lift, and history of bone grafting were identified via panoramic radiography.



The radiographs were initially evaluated by a radiologist. Subsequently, the radiologist trained a dental student in the detection of peri-implant bone loss. Following calibration of the dental student, who demonstrated proficiency and accuracy exceeding 90%, the remaining radiographs were evaluated by the student under the radiologist's supervision.

The analysis was done at two descriptive and inferential levels. At the descriptive level of qualitative variables, frequency indicators and frequency percentage, and in quantitative variables, average indicators, standard deviation were reported. At the inferential level, if the normality of the data from Chi-square test is used and otherwise, the non-parametric Mann–Whitney test is applied. The tests were performed using SPSS software version 26 (SPSS Inc., IL, USA) and P< 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

3. Results

Of 207 patients, 115 (55.6%) were males and 92

(44.4%) were female. The mean age was 51.81±11.23 years (range 24-73 years). Age distribution showed 29.5% (n=61) between 40-50 years (Figure 1). Molars were the most common type of replaced teeth with dental implants (n=102. 49.3%), followed by premolars (n=62, 30%) and anterior teeth (n=43, 20.8%). Implant placement occurred in the maxilla for 53.6% (n=111) and the mandible for 46.4% (n=96). Opposing occlusion types included natural teeth (59.9%, n=124), opposing implants (33.3%, n=69), and no opposing occlusion (6.8%, n=14). Prosthetic treatments treatment (34.3%, comprised no n=71), overdentures (10.6%, n=22), prosthetic bridges (12.1%, n=25), and single crowns (43%, n=89). A history of sinus floor augmentation was reported in 24.2% (n=50), while 52.2% (n=108)undergone bone grafting.

Figure 2 shows the frequency of different underlying diseases. Hypertension was the most common condition found in 39.6% (n=82) of cases. Smoking prevalence was 30.9% (n=64).

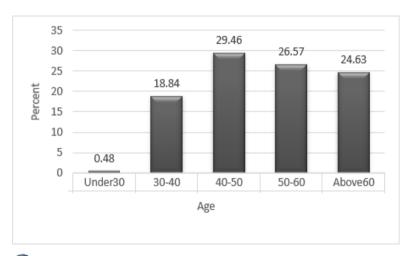




Figure 1. Frequency of different age groups in the study population

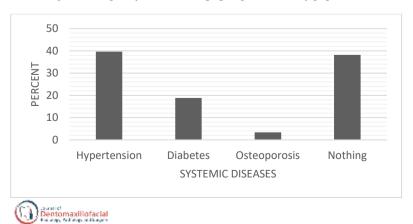


Figure 2. Frequency of different underlying diseases



Figure 3 displays the frequency of time elapsed since surgery, with a mean of 24.85±18 months (range 5-60 months). The frequency of time passed since prosthetic treatment is represented in Figure 4,

averaging 24.85±18 months (range 1-55 months). The results revealed that 41.5% of the cases (n=86) exhibited peri-implant bone loss.

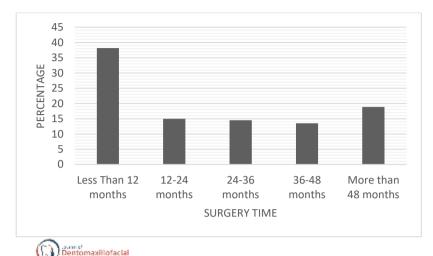


Figure 3. Frequency of time passed since implant surgery

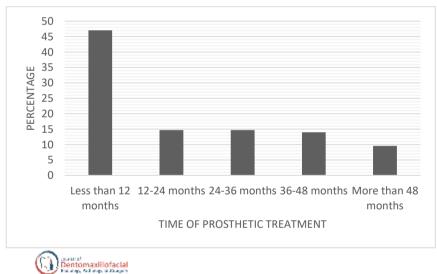


Figure 4. Frequency of time passed since prosthetic treatment

Table 1 examines the association between perimplant bone loss and variables including gender, age, jaw, tooth type, prosthesis type, and opposing occlusion. As shown, gender (P=0.138), age (P=0.297), tooth type (P=0.316), prosthesis type (P=0.135) and opposing occlusion (P=0.471) demonstrated no significant association with perimplant bone loss. However, maxillary implants showed a significant higher frequency of bone loss (P=0.012).

Table 2 evaluates the relationship between perimplant bone loss and smoking, underlying diseases, history of sinus floor augmentation, and

history of bone grafting. As indicated, perimplant bone loss was significantly associated with smoking (P=0.024), while underlying diseases (P=0.049) and history of sinus floor augmentation (P=0.049) showed borderline significance. No significant association was observed with bone grafting (P=0.244).

Table 3 assessed the association between perimplant bone loss with time elapsed since surgery and prosthetic treatment. A borderline significant association emerged with time since surgery (P=0.049), whereas time since prosthetic treatment (P=0.178) showed no significance.



Table 1. Association of peri-implant bone loss with gender, age, jaw, tooth type, prosthesis type, and opposing occlusion

Parameter	Category -	Presence of bone loss		Absence of bone loss		Total		D1*
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	- P value*
Gender	Male	53	46.1	62	53.9	115	100	0.138
	Female	33	35.9	59	64.1	92	100	
Age (yrs)	<30	1	100	0	0	1	100	0.297
	30-40	12	30.8	27	69.2	39	100	
	40-50	29	47.5	32	52.5	61	100	
	50-60	25	45.5	30	54.5	55	100	
	>60	19	37.3	32	62.7	51	100	
T	Maxilla	55	49.5	56	50.5	111	100	0.012
Jaw	Mandible	31	32.3	65	67.7	96	100	
	Anterior	20	46.5	23	53.5	43	100	0.316
Tooth type	Premolar	29	46.8	33	53.2	62	100	
7.1	Molar	37	36.3	65	63.7	102	100	
Prosthesis Type	Single crown	32	43.8	50	56.2	89	100	0.135
	Bridge	11	44	14	56.0	25	100	
	Overdenture	4	18.2	18	81.8	22	100	
	None	32	45.1	39	54.9	71	100	
Opposing	Natural Tooth	50	40.3	74	59.7	124	100	
	Implant	28	40.6	41	59.4	69	100	0.471
Occlusion	No occlusion	8	57.1	6	42.9	14	100	



*Chi-square test

Table 2. Association of peri-implant bone loss with smoking, underlying diseases, history of sinus floor augmentation, and history of bone grafting

Parameter	Category	Presence of bone loss		Absence of bone loss		Number		P
1 arameter		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	value*
Con alcin a	Yes	34	53.1	30	46.9	64	100	0.024
Smoking	No	52	36.4	91	63.6	143	100	
TT- desire disco-	Present	44	34.4	84	65.6	128	100	0.049
Underlying disease	Absent	42	53.2	37	46.8	79	100	0.049
Cinus floor arramantation	Yes	15	30	35	70	50	100	0.049
Sinus floor augmentation	No	71	45.2	86	54.8	157	100	
P. G.	Yes	49	45.4	59	54.6	108	100	0.244
Bone grafting	No	37	37.4	62	62.6	99	100	



*Chi-square test

Table 3. Association of peri-implant bone loss with time passed since surgery and prosthetic treatment

Damamastan	Category	Presence of bone loss		Absence of bone loss		Total		D 1 *
Parameter		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	P value*
	<12	23	29.1	56	70.9	79	100	
Time passed since surgery (months)	12-24	14	45.2	17	54.8	31	100	
	24-36	14	46.7	16	53.3	30	100	0.049
	36-48	16	57.1	12	42.9	28	100	
	>48	19	48.7	20	51.3	39	100	
	<12	21	32.8	43	67.2	64	100	
Time passed since prosthetic treatment	12-24	8	40	12	60	20	100	0.178
	24-36	9	45	11	55	20	100	
(months)	36-48	12	63.2	7	36.8	19	100	
	>48	4	30.8	9	69.2	13	100	



*Chi-square test

4. Discussion

This study assessed the frequency of peri-implant bone loss and the related factors in an Iranian population using panoramic radiography. The results showed that 41.5% of cases (n=86) exhibited peri-implant bone loss. Gender showed no significant association with peri-implant bone loss, which was in line with the results of Galindo-Moreno et al. (8). However, Negri et al. (2)



reported higher frequency of peri-implant bone loss in females compared to males, which contrasted with the present findings probably because of higher number of females in their study and their higher mean age compared to the current study. Additionally, menopause may contribute to reduced bone density and osteoporosis in females, potentially influencing peri-implant outcomes (2).

In the present study, peri-implant bone loss showed a higher frequency in patients aged 40-60 years; nonetheless, age demonstrated no significant association with bone loss. Earlier studies reported a significant association between aging and bone loss/osteoporosis, attributed to decreased calcium and minerals in the elderly populations (2,11). These findings contrast with our results due to genetic/nutritional differences or variations in female to male ratios across study populations. Notably, females over 60 years exhibit a higher likelihood of bone loss and osteoporosis compared to males, which may explain discrepancies in reported results across literature (2).

According to the present results, peri-implant bone loss in the maxilla was significantly higher than that in the mandible, which was in line with findings by Negri et al. (2), despite their larger sample size. Di Fiore et al. (23) reported higher peri-implant bone loss compared to the mandible than maxilla, contrasting with the present findings, probably because of their smaller sample size. In contrast, Galindo-Moreno et al. (8) showed that jaw had no significant effect on peri-implant bone loss. Beyond sample size variations, this difference can be due to variations in duration of edentulism, implant height, genetic factors, and dietary habits, all of which profoundly influence bone density (8,11).

Occlusal overload plays an important role in periimplant bone loss, often due to premature contacts and occlusal interferences. This condition may be clinically aggravated in cases involving poor bone quality, inadequate soft/hard tissue volume, suboptimal implant position, or mucosal inflammation. Consequently, parafunctional habits, and soft/hard tissue volume should be preoperatively. Additionally, assessed occlusal contacts, minimizing lateral forces, equal distribution of occlusal forces on natural teeth (if present), and occlusal class should be precisely considered in prosthesis design. In the current study, the type of implant prosthesis showed no significant effect on peri-implant bone loss. Galindo-Moreno et al. (24) reported that external connection of prosthesis played a role in periimplant bone loss. However, our findings revealed comparable bone loss levels between overdenture and single crowns, with the lowest rates observed around bridges, though no statistically significant differences were detected.

Cigarette smoke-elicited cellular senescence may play a crucial role in the development and progression of periodontal disease. Furthermore, cigarette smoke-induced cellular senescence may hinder the repair processes and lead to abnormal wound healing following periodontal treatments. This phenomenon of smoking-induced cell senescence significantly contributes to the pathogenesis of periodontal disease (25).

The study conducted by Tatsumi et al. (26) demonstrates that long-term repeated exposure to nicotine or cigarette smoke condensate (CSC) significantly suppresses cell proliferation in human gingival fibroblasts (HGFs), reduces their wound healing ability, modulates extracellular matrix (ECM) protein homeostasis, stimulates the inflammatory response, and induces a senescent phenotype. These findings imply that chronic and repeated exposure to cigarette smoke may play a critical role in cellular senescence within HGFs.

In the present study, smoking had a significant association with peri-implant bone loss which can be due to the presence of multiple toxic compounds and cytotoxic materials in cigarette smoke that impair blood circulation and tissue healing. Clementini et al. (27) reported that smoking increased the peri-implant bone loss by 0.164 mm per year, consistent with the present results. Thus, smoking can be considered an influential factor in peri-implant bone loss. However, a history of bone grafting and time elapsed since prosthetic treatment showed no significant association with peri-implant bone loss.

Underlying diseases such as diabetes mellitus and osteoporosis affect alveolar bone density and increase the risk of crestal bone loss around dental implants (28). Underlying diseases showed a borderline significant association with peri-implant bone loss in the present study. Al Zahrani et al. (29) reported greater bone loss in diabetic patients compared to non-diabetic patients over a 7-year period. A literature search by the authors revealed no prior studies investigating the association between hypertension and peri-implant bone loss. Due to the small number of patients with osteoporosis in the present study, no definitive conclusion could be reached regarding its association with peri-implant bone loss.

Reduction in bone volume due to resorption (especially in long-term tooth loss), poor bone



quality, and anatomical problems such as sinus pneumatization in the posterior maxilla complicate dental implant placement or compromise its long-term success (30-32). Galindo-Moreno et al. (22) in their 12-month study, pointed to the negative effect of sinus floor augmentation on peri-implant bone loss. Thus, their results were in line with the present findings regarding significant association of sinus floor augmentation and peri-implant bone loss.

In the current study, the highest bone loss was noted in patients who had undergone implant surgery less than 12 months earlier, and a borderline significant association was found between the time passed since surgery and perimplant bone loss. Galindo-Moreno et al. (8,11) reported an increase in peri-implant bone loss over time, which can be due to a number of factors such as history of bone grafting, implant height, connection design, smoking, and underlying bone condition. It appears that time passed since surgery cannot serve as an influential factor in bone loss around dental implants, and some other factors are also involved in this process.

This study was limited to a single city and relied solely on panoramic radiographs, which may not capture subtle bone changes as precisely as CBCT. Additionally, patient-related factors were self-reported, and economic variables influencing treatment outcomes were not evaluated. The exclusion of patient perspectives also limits the comprehensiveness of the findings. Future research should include multicenter data, incorporate objective clinical measures, and explore financial, behavioral, and patient-reported outcomes to better understand peri-implant bone loss.

5. Conclusion

The results highlighted a higher frequency of perimplant bone loss in the maxilla and among smokers within the study population. Other influential factors included a history of sinus floor augmentation, time elapsed since surgery, and underlying diseases.

Ethical Considerations

The study was approved by the internal ethical review board of the Guilan University of Medical Sciences (IR.GUMS.REC.1402.442).

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Authors' Contributions

Farnaz Hanafi: Writing — original draft, Investigation Farzaneh Ostovarrad: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Project administration, Validation, Visualization Hadi Ranjzad: Supervision Amin Rajabzadeh: Supervision, Methodology Maryam Latifi Douabsari: Resources, Writing — review and editing.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Availability of Data and Materials

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study will be available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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