



The importance of soft tissue augmentation procedures around implants

Daniel Thoma

Treatment strategies using implants and reconstructive means are complex and long-term stability of functional and esthetic outcomes rely on healthy biological conditions. Clinical data suggest that hard tissue regeneration is responsible for roughly 60% and soft tissue augmentation for roughly 40% of the final volume at implant sites. Even though, hard tissue augmentation at implant sites is reported to be successful in terms of implant survival rates, three-dimensional analyses revealed that in many cases, a limited amount of buccal bone is present at the implant surfaces. Still, tissue stability was obtained, mainly through the soft tissues compensating for the missing hard tissue volume. Therefore, the number of soft tissue grafting procedures is increasing. Autogenous soft tissue transplants are considered to be the gold standard. However, recently developed soft tissue substitutes might provide similar outcomes with respect to soft tissue volume, but be associated with less morbidity and complications than autogenous grafts, thereby offering significant benefits for patients and clinicians.