



Making the Right Call: Implants or FPDs? Rethinking Anterior Maxillary Restorations

Jessica Vu, DDS Candidate, Marco Bergamini, DDS, MSD

Comprehensive Dentistry, Texas A&M University College of Dentistry



Introduction and Background

The anterior maxilla poses unique challenges for prosthetic rehabilitation due to its high esthetic demands and anatomical complexity. While implants are oftentimes considered the gold standard for replacing missing teeth, they are not universally the best solution. This poster aims to propose a clinical decision-making framework comparing dental implants and fixed partial dentures (FPDs) for rehabilitation of existing edentulous anterior maxillary sites, focusing on four critical factors: patient selection, space requirements, esthetic parameters, and long-term prognosis.

Materials and Methods

A comprehensive literature review was conducted across multiple electronic databases (PubMed, Cochrane and Scopus) to support evidence-based decision-making. Findings were synthesized into a clinical decision tree.

Factors to Consider

Patient Related Factors

Space Requirements

Functional Requirements

Esthetic Requirements

Long Term Prognosis and Complications

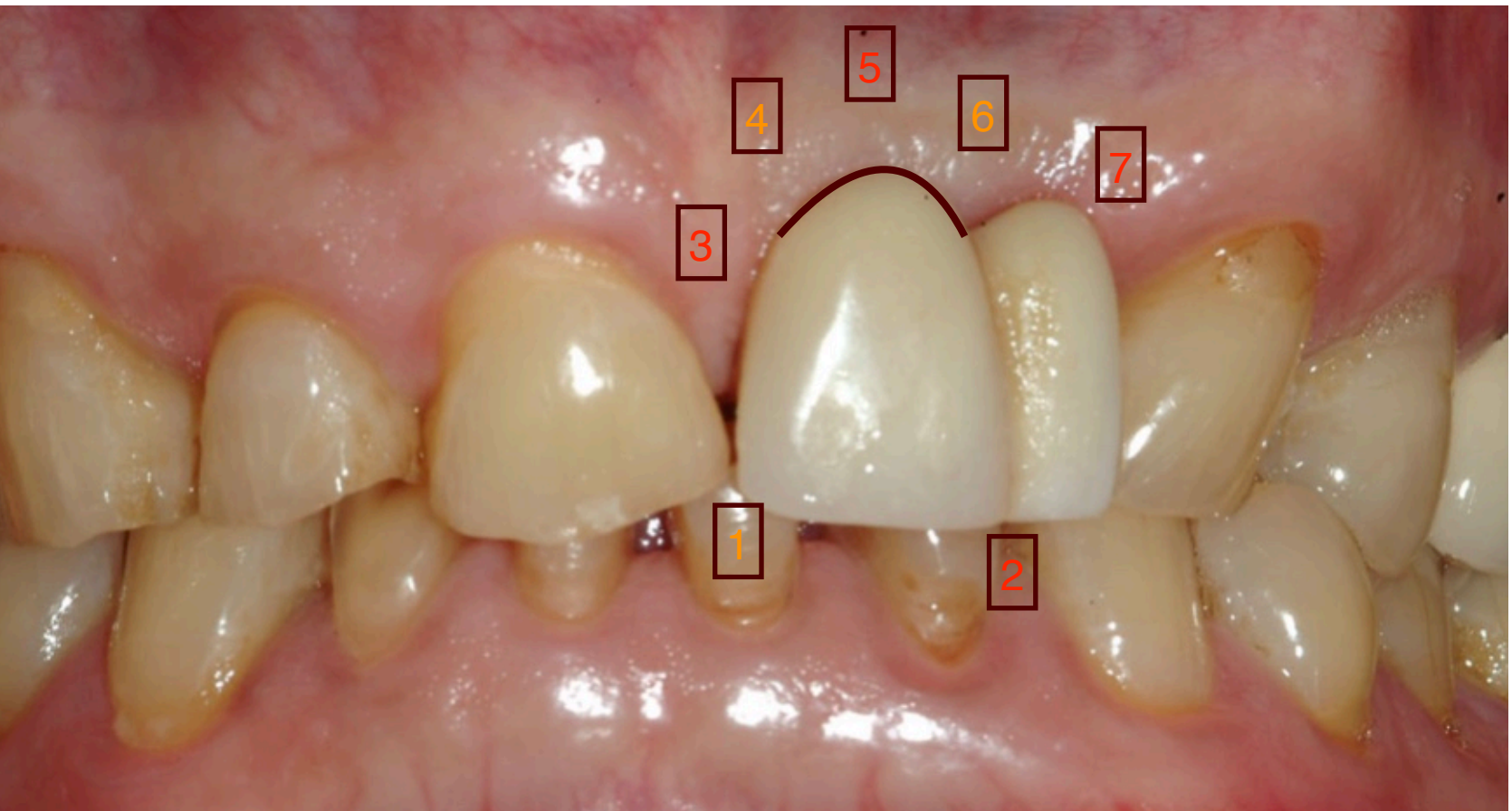
FPD

Implant

Esthetic and Biologic Modifying Factors

Risk Factor	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Recommendations On High Risk Cases
Medical & Social Status	Good		Compromised Healing	FPD
Patient Expectations	Low	Moderate	High	FPD or Implant
Lip Line	Low	Moderate	High	FPD or Implant
Pink Esthetic Score	>10	7-10	<7	FPD
Gingival Biotype	Low Scalloped, Thick	Moderately Scalloped and Moderately Thick	Highly Scalloped and Thin	FPD
Infection at Edentulous Site	None	Chronic	Acute	FPD or Implant
Condition of Abutment Tooth	Virgin	Crown	RCT	Implant
Adjacent Teeth Restorative Status	Virgin	—	Restored	Implant
Width of Space	1 Tooth	1 Tooth	2 or More Teeth	FPD
Soft Tissue Anatomy	Intact ST	—	ST Defects	FPD
Bone Anatomy at Alveolar Crest	No Bone Deficiencies	Horizontal Bone Deficiencies	Vertical Bone Deficiencies	FPD
Reason for Tooth Loss	Caries or Trauma	—	Periodontal Disease or Tooth Fracture	Perio: FPD Tooth Fracture: Implant
Occlusion	Good Anterior Guidance, No Parafunction	—	Poor Anterior Guidance Parafunction Present	Implant
General Growth	Vertical Overlap: WNL Completed	—	Deep Vertical Overlap Ongoing	FPD

Pink Esthetic Score



PES Score of 3.

Furhauser et al. (2005)

Age Considerations



Effect of Implants Placed in Young Age. Noticeable Discrepancy of Incisal Edge Position due to continued dento-alveolar growth.

Survival Rates of Restorations

Type of Restoration	Vital Teeth	RCT Teeth	Implant
FDP 3 Unit	83.2%	60.5%	—
FDP 4 Unit	77.4%	56.7%	—
Single	—	—	89.4%
FPD	—	—	86.7%

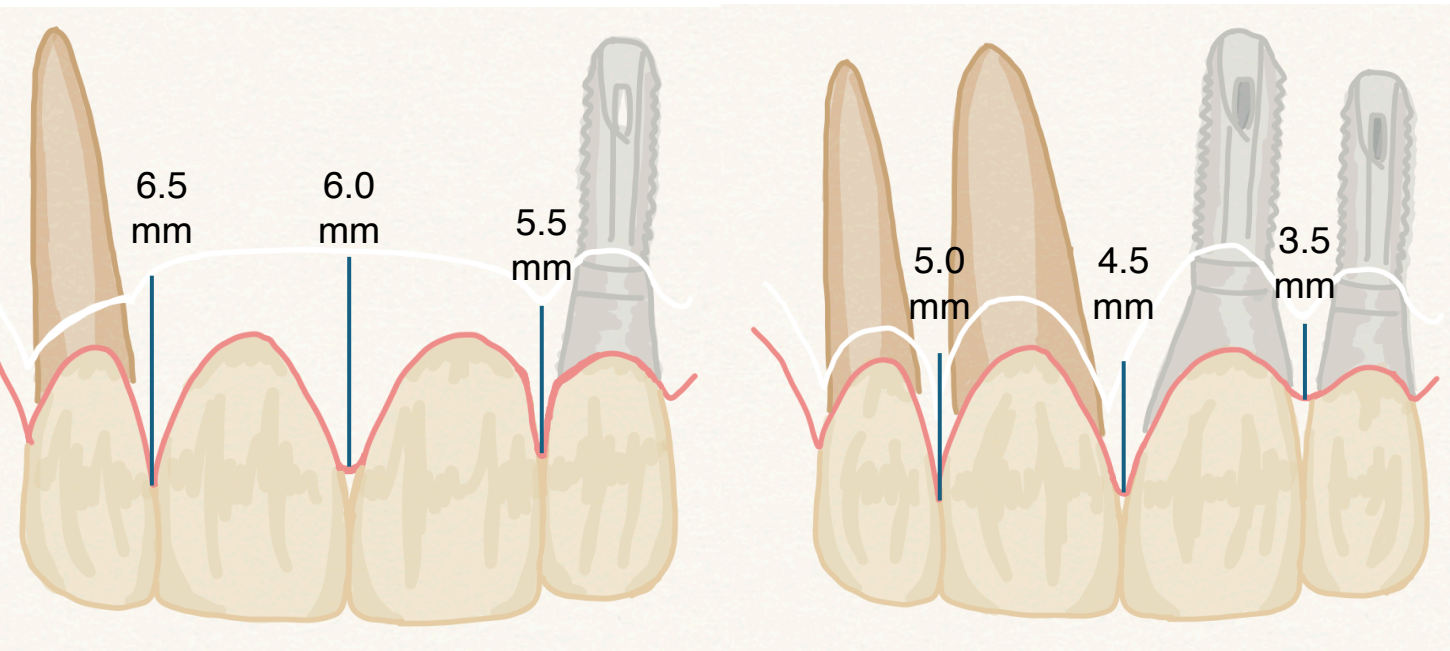
20 years

De Backer et al. (2006)

10 years

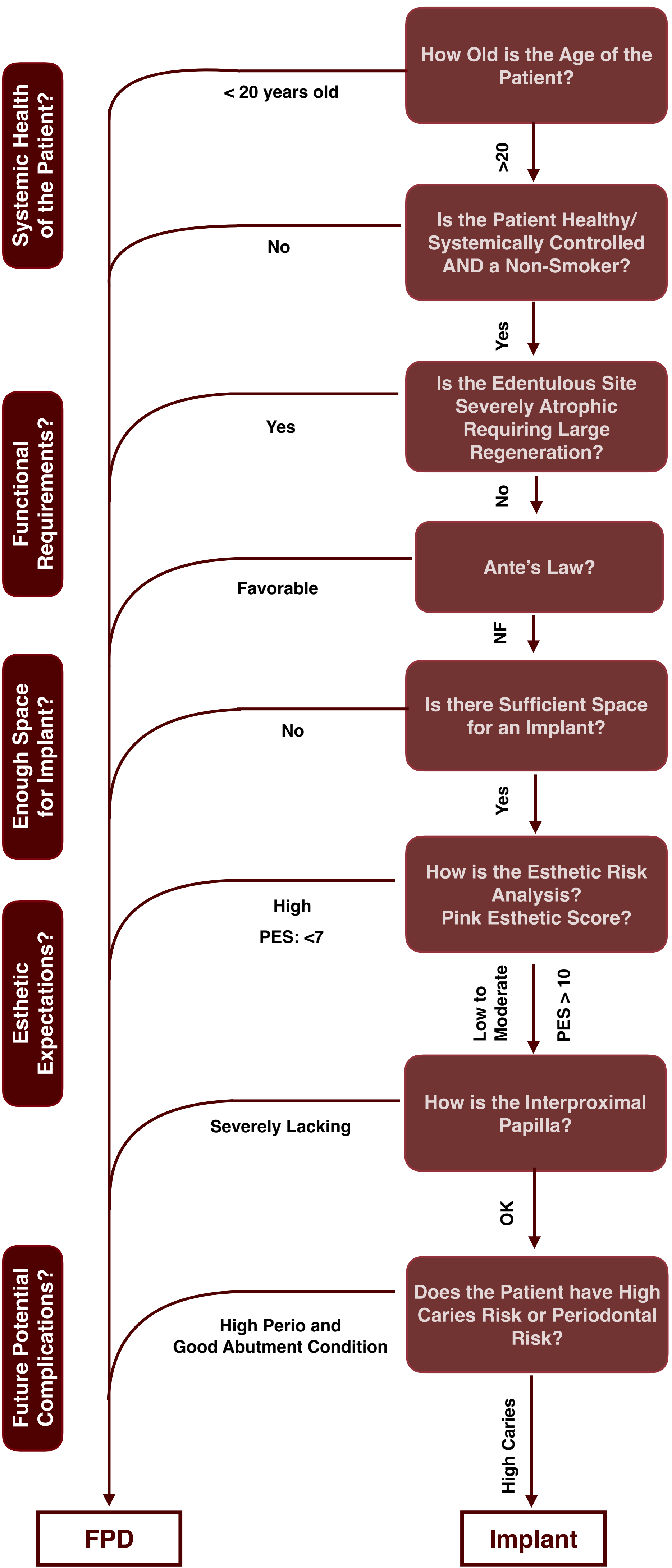
Pjetursson et al (2007)

Papilla Fill

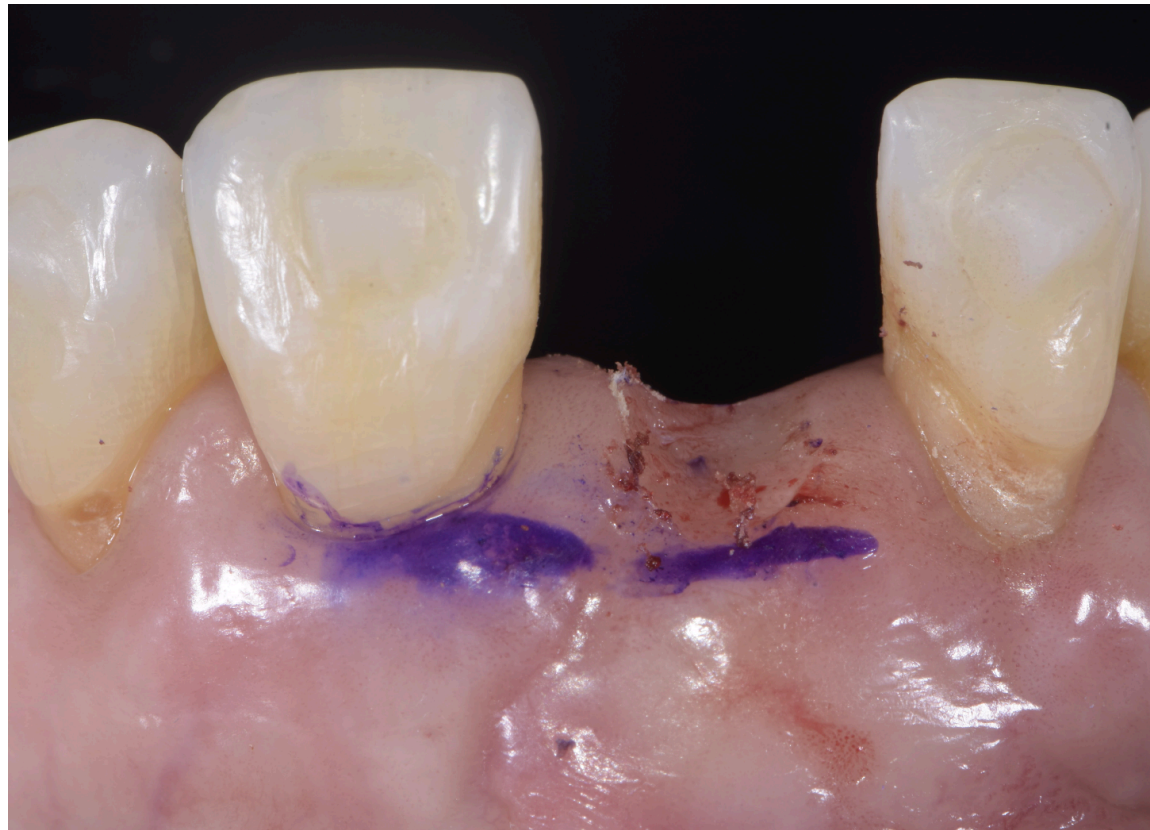
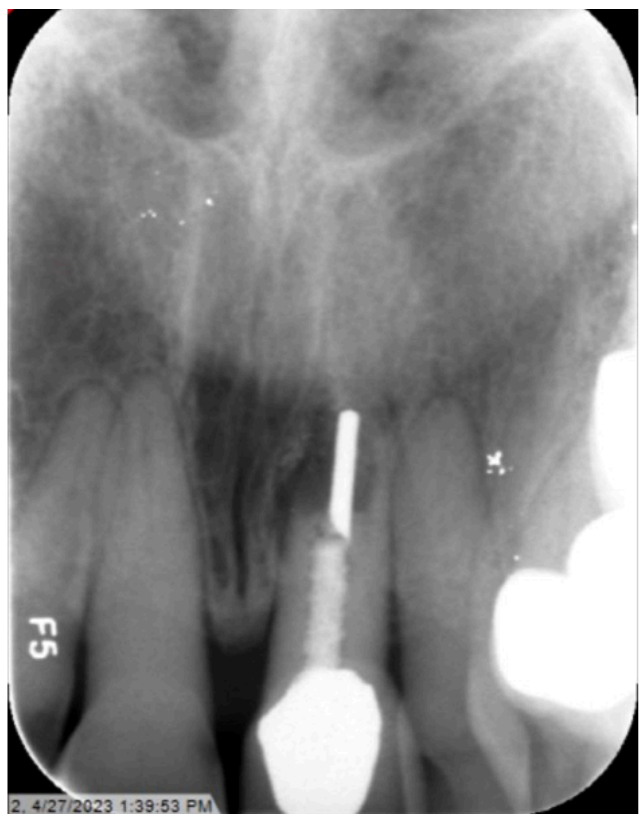
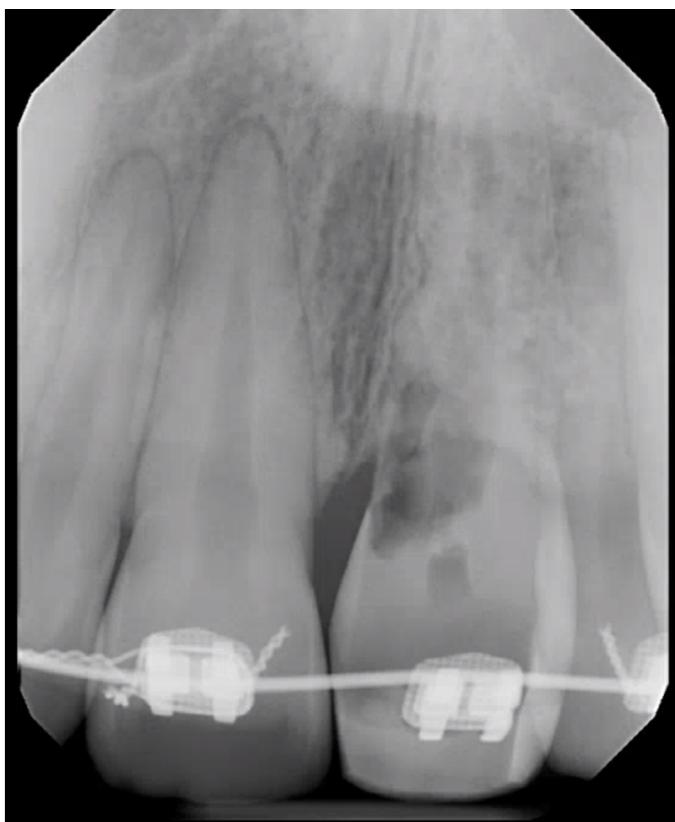


Salama et al. (2003)

Decision Tree: Which is More Favorable?



Similar Case
Different Approach - Different Outcome



Conclusion

This analysis proposes a structured decision tree to guide clinicians in choosing between implants and FPDs in anterior maxillary edentulous cases, thereby ensuring predictable, long-term, and truly patient-centered treatment outcomes.

References

