CBCT and implant surgery: Don’t practice without them

How incorporating these two techniques can help you better put your patient first

By L. Stephen Buchanan
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It is a real honor to give a lecture endorsed by the Massachusetts Association of Endodontics at the Yankee Dental Congress today. Boston is not only the hub city; it is truly the hub of endodontics, influenced by the late pioneer, Dr. Herbert Schilder.

In my opinion, the most exciting technology in our specialty is cone-beam computer tomography (CBCT). CBCT has really been a game changer.

For those well into their career, it will make you want to practice another 15 years, and for those starting out, while the investment is steep, you will quickly find yourself at a disadvantage without moving in this direction.

Scary, I know, but let’s take a look at the reasons why. With the right machine (and they are not all created equal for endodontic needs), your diagnosis is definitive, whether it be deconstructing a failed case or used as information gathering before any treatment commences.

You will never waste one minute hunting for a canal that doesn’t exist, and you can never fool yourself into thinking that not finding one means it doesn’t exist. And competitively, CBCT imaging is the “unfair advantage” for an endo practice.

I will also discuss bone grafting, implant surgery and why I feel endodontists are well-suited to offer this procedure. It’s not endo vs. implants; it’s about which one is the more appropriate choice.

It’s been said implants would be the death-knell of endo, but it is nice to see the downturn in the economy confirmed this to be a myth. With that said, implant surgery is just that: a surgical procedure. Endodontists understand surgery in apical regions near mandibular canals and sinus spaces better than most, and nobody is more precise. We are the “understructure specialists,” and if we can offer the choice of endo or implant surgery to the patient, then we will never make a decision based on what is in our best interest instead of the patients’.

I hope you join me today. If not, let’s talk when I’m back in your beautiful city in April for the AAE meeting.

Here at Yankee
L. Stephen Buchanan, DDS, FICD, FACD, will present “Endodontic Diagnosis and Treatment Planning in the Age of Implants and CBCT Imaging” from 8:30–11:30 a.m. today in room 104A. Cost is $85.