

Letters to the editor

Submit your Letters to the Editor via the online submission system: <https://mts-bdj.nature.com/cgi-bin/main.plex>. Priority will be given to letters less than 500 words long. Authors must sign the letter, which may be edited for reasons of space.

Dental implants

Backstreet implantology

Sir, we would like to bring to the attention of your readers our recent experience with a 41-year-old female patient. She had a dental implant placed in relation to her upper right canine tooth, which was missing, whilst on a visit to India. The implant placed with the coronal restoration 'fell off' whilst eating when she returned

to the UK. The local dentist took a radiograph which showed that the implant was in fact drilled into the ectopic canine tooth (Fig. 1). She was referred to the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery department where she underwent general anaesthetic removal of the damaged upper right canine tooth (Fig. 2).

Kelleher emphasised the absurdities and callousness of dental tourism recently in your esteemed journal.¹ However, the

deeper issue remains that the dental system in the UK is decaying. Post-pandemic effects on inflation and costs have further increased this burden on the people and our beloved NHS. It cannot be doubted that the expensive treatment in the UK is pushing the general population to take a 'risk' and seek help elsewhere with an added holiday at 'reduced' costs. Although general dental treatment may sound 'catchy' overseas, complex treatments such as dental implants come with increased physical, economic and psychological impact to the 'bargain-hunting' patient. Lack of follow-up appointments add to the insult for these vulnerable patients.²

We urge the government and Department of Health to take measures to restore patients' confidence in the NHS and dentists in particular to prevent the pandemic of charlatans making easy money from susceptible patients.

S. Mumtaz, S. Singh Dubb, A. Camilleri,
Luton, UK

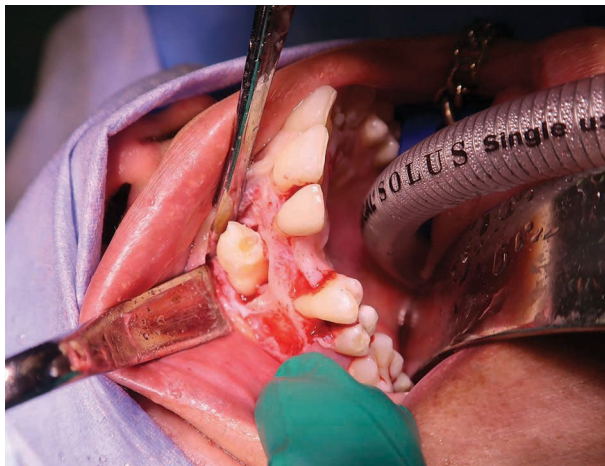


Fig. 1 Radiograph showing iatrogenic damage to ectopic upper right canine tooth



Fig. 2 Damaged ectopic upper right canine tooth

References

1. Kelleher M. Controversies about so-called 'Turkey teeth'. *Br Dent J* 2023; **235**: 804–805.
2. Misch C M. Editorial: Dental tourism for implant treatment: Dream vacation or nightmare? *Int J Oral Implantol (Berl)* 2020; **13**: 203–204.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-024-7134-0>

Minimal intervention dentistry

Interceptive minimal intervention

Sir, further to the Editorial of 12 January,¹ two points about minimal intervention came immediately to mind.

While at dental school in the 1960s and immediately on entering general dental practice in the 1970s, it was very clear that minimal intervention very rarely answered the pressing need for dental care in the community, and that the mantra 'Teeth for Life' was no more than a dream.