



THE EFFECT OF DIODE DENTAL LASER ON DENTINAL TUBULE OCCLUSION – A TREATMENT MODALITY FOR DENTINAL HYPERSENSITIVITY

Dr. Shaheen C

BDS (Mar Baselios Dental College, Kothamanagalam, Kerala), MBA Hospital Administration, MDS - Periodontology

(Divya Jyothi Institute of Dental Sciences and Research, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh – Delhi NCR)

Address for Correspondence: *Dr. Shaheen C, Divya Jyothi Institute of Dental Sciences and Research, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh – Delhi NCR*

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Introduction:

Dentinal hypersensitivity (DH) is characterized by a short, sharp, pain of rapid onset arising from exposed dentin in response to thermal, osmotic, mechanical or chemical stimuli that cannot be attributed to any other form of dental disease or defect. The prevalence of Dentinal hypersensitivity range from 4 to 73 percentages with highest occurrence in 20yr to 40 yr age group and with incisors, canine and premolars being the most commonly affected teeth.¹ Its occurrence seems to be the consequence of the presence of open dentinal tubules on exposed dentinal surfaces.

It is a common problem associated with gingival recession, incorrect tooth brushing habits, parafunctional habits, abrasion due to brushing, dietary erosion, abnormally positioned tooth in the arch, periodontal disease, periodontal surgery, crown preparation, wasting diseases, occlusal wear and aging.² Following periodontal therapy, increased root sensitivity is encountered due to the removal of 20-50 µm of cementum during scaling and root planing thus exposing the dentinal tubules. The exposure of dentinal tubules after removal of supra and/or subgingival calculus and the removal of diseased cementum from exposed root surfaces is likely to increase the sensitivity experienced in such patients.³ Patency and permeability of dentin tubule in hyper sensitive dentin was confirmed by several studies and explains why patients with exposed cervical dentine exhibits dentine hypersensitivity.^{4,5,6} The

hydrodynamic theory states that movement of fluid in the dentinal tubules stimulates the mechano receptors in or near the pulp, which is the reason that the tubule occlusion reduces dentin permeability and proportionality decreases, the degree of dentin hypersensitivity.⁷

Various agents and methods have been recommended to reduce Dentinal hypersensitivity including chemical compounds such as, Silver nitrate, Formalin, Glycerin, Strontium chloride, Dicalcium phosphate, chemical methods such as use of dentifrices or gel containing fluoride, potassium nitrate, oxalates and physical methods such as dentin bonding agents, etc. However, most of these treatments are either ineffective or only last for short period of time.⁸

Recently a bio active glass Calcium sodium phospho silicate (Novamin) and Fluoro calcium phospho silicate (Biomim) has been incorporated as mineralizing ingredient in dentifrice for treating Dentinal hypersensitivity with better results. The use of lasers also opens a new dimension in the treatment of dentin hypersensitivity. Laser mediated treatment of exposed dentine has been used to address the patency of tubular openings, causing closure of tubule openings to a depth of several microns, or to coagulate the tubular contents. The most commonly explored lasers are the low level diode (He-Ne 633 nm, Ga-Al-As 810 nm) group and moderate powered diode and Nd:YAG laser wavelengths. The effectiveness of the low-level group (Diode laser) is

thought to be through bio stimulatory effect and the higher powered lasers through heat-welding of tubule openings.⁹

High intensity laser (ErCr:YSGG, CO₂, Nd:YAG and Diode) work on dentin via photothermal effects, heating and melting the surface of the hard tissue. Not only the diode lasers act by occluding the dentinal tubules but also by depressing the nerve transmission by blocking depolarization of C-fiber afferents.^{10,11,12}

Combined use of Diode laser along with desensitizing tooth paste has shown encouraging results.^{10,13} So we wanted to test hypothesis whether Diode Dental Laser provide better relief from dentinal hypersensitivity. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effects of desensitizing by Diode Dental Laser on dentinal tubule occlusion in extracted teeth.

Relevance

From previous studies we could make out that Diode Dental Laser resulted in significant decrease in dentin hypersensitivity, but less studies have been reported on the tubular occlusion of the dentinal tubule as an in vitro study. Hence this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of Diode Dental Laser.

In this study we were comparing dentin specimens treated with Diode Dental Laser and control (Distilled Water) which will be more significant. Hence this study would definitely add to the existing informations available on dentinal tubule occlusion by the agents which could be extrapolated into clinical use.

Materials and methods

Study design: In vitro study using extracted sound premolar human teeth.

Study setting: SEM analysis was done at sophisticated test and instrumentation centre, Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), Kerala.

Study Population:

Specimens were obtained from sound premolars extracted for orthodontic purpose from the patients of age group 13 to 40 years. All the teeth were stored in 0.2% thymol at room temperature

Materials

1. 40 Dentine specimens : Specimens were obtained from sound premolars extracted for orthodontic purpose from the patients of age group 13 to 40 years.
2. Double sided diamond disk
3. 18% EDTA
4. Battery powered tooth brush
5. Diode laser(Epic 940nm – Biolase Inc)
6. SEM (Scanning electron microscope)-JEOL Model JSM-6390 LV

Experimental group

Group 1-Diode Dental Laser

Group 2-Distilled water (control)

Exclusion and Inclusion criteria

Tooth with caries or fractured during the extraction will be excluded from the study.

Sound premolars extracted for orthodontic purpose from the patients of age group 13 to 40 (Adult age group) years are included in the study

SEM Analysis:

After the desensitizing by diode laser and brushing session of specimens dentine specimens coated with thin layer of gold sputter, photomicrographs were taken using Scanning Electron Microscope from dentine blocks at 3000X magnification to calculate total number of tubules, number of open tubules, number of completely occluded tubules and number of partially occluded tubules.

Statistical Analysis:

Percentage of occluded tubules was obtained by dividing the total number of occluded tubules by total number of tubules in each photomicrography. This result was then multiplied by 100 to obtain the percentage of occluded tubules for each photomicrography. Results were statistically analyzed by one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Results

The present study evaluated effectiveness of Dental Laser on dentinal tubule occlusion. A total of 40 dentin specimens were taken for this study. The percentages of dentinal tubule occlusion were evaluated by scanning electron microscopy. The data were statistically analyzed with one way analysis of variance of the four groups with respect to the percentage of completely occluded, partially occluded, not occluded tubules. The study showed that number of occluded tubules in the experimental group (Group 1) was significantly higher than in the control group (Group 2-Distilled water).

Completely occluded tubules

Highest mean completely occluded tubules was observed in Group 1 (8.77%) followed by Group 2 (2.68%). (Table - 1, Graph - 1)

Hence, with the above mentioned data obtained from our results we report that combination treatment Group 1 Diode Dental Laser showed highest mean value of complete tubule occlusion followed by Group 2 (control).

Partially occluded tubules

Highest mean partially occluded tubules was observed in Group 1 (81.88%) followed by Group 2 (28.43%). (Table - 1, Graph - 1)

Not occluded tubules

Highest mean unoccluded tubules was observed in Group 2 (68.89%) followed by Group 1 (9.36%). (Table - 1, Graph - 1)

When mean complete occlusion/ partial occlusion / non occlusion was compared between groups, all the results showed statistically significant difference ($P < 0.001$).

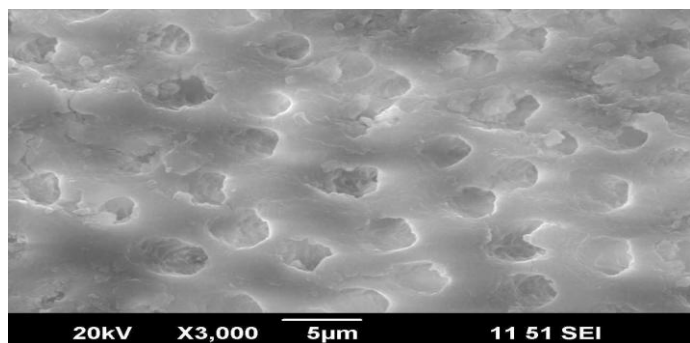


Fig. 1 - DENTIN SPECIMEN IRRADIATED WITH DIODE LASER (GROUP 1)

Discussion

Dentin hypersensitivity is a painful condition that is highly prevalent in the world's adult population. The condition is characterized by acute, rapid and localized pain of variable intensity, which is triggered by a variety of irritants such as cold, mechanical or tactile, chemical and bacterial stimuli.^{14, 15}

Dentine hypersensitivity continues to be a problem in the adult dentate population. Relatively little is known of the etiology of dentine hypersensitivity, the nature of the lesion, or the status of the pulp. This lack of knowledge makes the management of the condition difficult and recurrences appear common.¹⁶

Dentin hypersensitivity was found to be much higher in periodontal patients, ranging between 72.5–98%.²¹ In a systematic review conducted by *Von Troil et al*, it was concluded that root sensitivity occurs in approximately half of the patients following scaling and root planing.¹⁷

Several methods and agents have been studied for treatment of dentinal hypersensitivity. Not many studies have combined the efforts of multiple agents in the treatment of sensitivity. The aim of the present study was to evaluate the effect of Diode Dental Laser on dentinal hypersensitivity. It was an *Invitro* SEM study conducted on a sample size of 40 dentin discs divided into 2 groups.

Prepared dentine disc specimen were observed under SEM. Photomicrograph of the dentinal specimens were obtained at 3000X magnification and number of completely occluded tubules, partially occluded tubules, and non occluded tubules were studied.

In present study highest mean completely occluded tubules was observed in Group 1 (8.77%) followed by Group 2 (2.68%).

Conclusion

Dental professionals have a variety of regimens to manage patient dentinal hypersensitivity, including both in-office and patient applied products for home use.

Based on principles of hydrodynamics theory, any decrease in dentin fluid movement should result in reduction of sensitivity. In accordance with this theory Pashley in 1986 reported that dentine

hypersensitivity might be reduced physiologically by formation of intratubular crystals from the dentinal fluids and saliva minerals or by the application of therapeutic chemical agent to occlude the exposed dentinal tubules. It is thought that most of these chemical compounds reduce dentinal hypersensitivity either by crystallizing inside the dentinal tubules or by forming a precipitate at the entrance of the tubule, thereby decreasing the dentinal tubular flow.⁴

The treatment of dentine hypersensitivity must match its severity. The treatment options are often dictated by the clinical condition. Home-use OTC-desensitizing products appear to be the most realistic and practical means of treating most patients with tooth hypersensitivity and should be the first step in routine management. On the other hand, in-office products should be used in all cases of severe hypersensitivity, especially if the condition has changed the patients' lifestyle (e.g. they cannot jog in cold air, must avoid cold drinks even in a hot climate, etc.)

In our invitro study the treatment with Diode Dental Laser (Group 1) exhibited significantly higher percentage of tubule occlusion compared to control group. Hence from the results, it can be stated that Diode Dental Laser can be considered as the best effective method in office treatment modality for dentinal hypersensitivity because of its ability to occlude more tubules. However the results should be extrapolated with caution clinically as in clinical situation various parameters like brushing habits, salivary constituents, acidic pH may influence the tubule occlusion. Clinical studies of longer duration are required to validate the findings of this in vitro study.

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