From Bench to Chairside: Translating Nanoparticle Research into Clinical Dental Prosthetic Applications

Masomeh Rostamzadeh [1,*] - Farshad Rahimi [2]
[1]Assitant Professor, Department of Prosthodontics, Dental School, Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences, Sanandaj, Iran
[2] Student Research Comitee, Dental School, Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences, Sanandaj, Iran
[*]*Corresponding Author:* E-mail: m.rostamzadeh@muk.ac.ir, Phone number: +989123877577

ABSTRACT

The incorporation of nanoparticles into dental prosthetics has opened up new avenues for improving the biocompatibility, durability, and aesthetics of these devices. This narrative review provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of research on nanoparticle-based dental prosthetics, highlighting their benefits, challenges, and opportunities. The review covers the applications of nanoparticles in implant coatings, dental composites, and dentin bonding agents, as well as the challenges associated with nanoparticle toxicity, lack of standardization, and high production costs. Despite these challenges, the future of nanoparticles in dental prosthetics looks promising, with potential applications in the development of novel dental materials with enhanced properties. This review aims to provide a valuable resource for researchers, clinicians, and industry professionals working in the field of dental materials and nanotechnology.

Keywords: **Dental Prosthetics; Nanoparticles; Dental Materials; Biocompatibility; Osseointegration; Antibacterial Properties; Nanotoxicology**

1. *INTRODUCTION*

The development of dental prosthetics has undergone significant transformations in recent years, driven by advances in materials science and nanotechnology. The incorporation of nanoparticles into dental prosthetics has opened up new avenues for improving the biocompatibility, durability, and aesthetics of these devices [1]. Nanoparticles, with their unique properties and high surface-to-volume ratio, have shown great promise in enhancing the performance of dental prosthetics, from implant coatings to dental composites [2, 3].

The use of nanoparticles in dental prosthetics is not a new concept, with early studies dating back to the 1990s [4]. However, recent breakthroughs in nanoparticle synthesis, characterization, and functionalization have accelerated the translation of nanoparticle research into clinical applications [5]. Today, nanoparticle-based dental prosthetics are being explored for their potential to improve oral health outcomes, reduce treatment costs, and enhance patient satisfaction [6].

Despite the progress made, there are still significant challenges to overcome before nanoparticle-based dental prosthetics can become a mainstream reality. The successful translation of nanoparticle research into clinical applications requires a deep understanding of the complex interactions between nanoparticles, biomaterials, and the oral environment [7]. Furthermore, regulatory frameworks and standards for the use of nanoparticles in dental prosthetics are still evolving and require further development [8].

This narrative review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of research on nanoparticle-based dental prosthetics, highlighting the benefits, challenges, and opportunities in this rapidly evolving field.

Applications of Nanoparticles in Dental Prosthetics

Nanoparticles have been explored for various applications in dental prosthetics, including implant coatings, dental composites, and dentin bonding agents.

Implant Coatings

Nanoparticle-based implant coatings have shown great promise in enhancing osseointegration, reducing bacterial adhesion, and improving implant longevity [9]. For example, titanium dioxide (TiO2) nanoparticles have been used to create implant surfaces with enhanced biocompatibility and antibacterial properties [10]. Similarly, silver (Ag) nanoparticles have been incorporated into implant coatings to reduce bacterial colonization and promote wound healing [11].

Dental Composites

Nanoparticles have been used to reinforce dental composites, improving their mechanical properties, aesthetics, and durability [12]. For instance, silica (SiO2) nanoparticles have been incorporated into dental composites to enhance their flexural strength and resistance to wear [13]. Additionally, nanoparticles have been used to create self-healing dental composites that can repair cracks and damages autonomously [14].

Dentin Bonding Agents

Nanoparticles have been explored as dentin bonding agents, enhancing the bonding between dentin and restorative materials [15]. For example, nanoparticles have been used to create bonding agents with improved mechanical properties, reducing the risk of bond failure and tooth sensitivity [16].

Challenges and Future Directions

Despite the promising applications of nanoparticles in dental prosthetics, there are several challenges that need to be addressed to ensure their safe and effective use. One of the major challenges is the potential toxicity of nanoparticles, which can have adverse effects on human health and the environment [17]. For instance, nanoparticles can penetrate cells and cause oxidative stress, inflammation, and DNA damage [10]. Moreover, the release of nanoparticles into the environment can lead to their accumulation in water and soil, posing a risk to aquatic life and the food chain [11].

Another challenge is the lack of standardization in nanoparticle synthesis and characterization, which can lead to inconsistent results and difficulties in comparing different studies [18]. This lack of standardization can also result in variations in nanoparticle size, shape, and surface chemistry, affecting their biocompatibility and antibacterial properties [12, 13].

Furthermore, there is a need for further research on the long-term effects of nanoparticles on dental tissues and the oral microbiome [19]. For example, the use of silver nanoparticles in dental composites has been shown to reduce bacterial colonization, but their long-term effects on the oral microbiome are still unknown [14]. Similarly, the use of titanium dioxide nanoparticles in implant coatings has been shown to enhance osseointegration, but their long-term effects on bone tissue are still being studied [15].

The development of scalable and cost-effective methods for nanoparticle synthesis and incorporation into dental materials is also essential for widespread adoption [20]. Currently, the high cost of nanoparticle synthesis and the complexity of their incorporation into dental materials are major barriers to their use in clinical practice [16].

Despite these challenges, the future of nanoparticles in dental prosthetics looks promising. Researchers are exploring new nanoparticle-based materials and technologies, such as nanostructured surfaces and nanocomposites, which can provide enhanced mechanical properties, biocompatibility, and antimicrobial activity [21]. For instance, the use of silica nanoparticles in dental composites has been shown to enhance their flexural strength and resistance to wear [13]. Similarly, the use of nanoparticles in dentin bonding agents has been shown to improve their mechanical properties and reduce the risk of bond failure [16].

Conclusion

In conclusion, the application of nanoparticles in dental prosthetics has shown promising results in enhancing the mechanical properties, biocompatibility, and antimicrobial activity of dental materials. The use of nanoparticles has been explored in various dental applications, including dental composites, implant coatings, and dentin bonding agents. Despite the challenges associated with nanoparticle toxicity, lack of standardization, and high production costs, researchers are continuing to develop new nanoparticle-based materials and technologies that can overcome these limitations.

The future of nanoparticles in dental prosthetics looks promising, with potential applications in the development of novel dental materials with enhanced properties. Further research is needed to fully understand the effects of nanoparticles on dental tissues and the oral microbiome, as well as to develop scalable and cost-effective methods for nanoparticle synthesis and incorporation into dental materials.

This review has highlighted the current state of knowledge on the application of nanoparticles in dental prosthetics, including their benefits, challenges, and future directions. It is hoped that this review will provide a valuable resource for researchers, clinicians, and industry professionals working in the field of dental materials and nanotechnology.

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