The treatment dilemma of the furcated molar: root resection versus single-tooth implant restoration. A literature review.

Kinsel RP, Lamb RE, Ho D.

Department of Restorative Dentistry, University of California, San Francisco, USA.

Successful treatment of furcated molar teeth presents the periodontist and prosthodontist with a challenging dilemma. Accepted treatment modalities include chemotherapeutic maintenance, root planning, open flap debridement, modified Widman flap, bone grafting with and without guided tissue regeneration, and osseous resection with and without root removal. Determining the appropriate treatment for an individual patient that is both cost-effective and offers the greatest long-term prognosis can be a daunting task. The literature is replete with studies of different therapeutic alternatives for furcated molar teeth. A relatively new treatment option is complete removal of the tooth combined with ultimate placement of an endosseous implant and restoration with a single crown. A review of the relevant literature with special emphasis on root resection therapy and single molar implant placement is presented. The relative merits of each treatment modality and guidelines for their use are discussed.