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Authors
[1*]Vjona Zekolli
Dentist
Department of Faculty of Medicine
Specialization: Dentistry
University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Prishtina
ORCID ID- 0009-0002-6273-5814
vjona.zekolli@hotmail.com

[2]Dr Vineet Gupta
Consultant Endodontist, MDS (Conservative Dentistry & Endodontics), Faculty of Dental Sciences,King George's Medical University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Email ID: vineethegupta@gmail.com
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0000-7382-4594?lang=en

[3]Dr. Mitulkumar Kantilal Bhut
Associate Professor, Department of Dentistry, SMIMER Medical College Surat, Veer Narmad South Gujarat University. ORCID ID - 0000-0002-4437-4114 Email ID: drmitulbhut22@gmail.com

[4]Dr Aishwarya M U
Lecturer
Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Nitte (Deemed to be University), AB Shetty Memorial Institute of Dental Sciences (ABSMIDS), Mangalore, India, 575018.
Email ID: draishwarya.mu@nitte.edu.in
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7080-9484

[5]Dr. Mohammad Jalaluddin
Professor and Head.
Department of Periodontics and Implantology, Kalinga Institute of Dental Sciences, KIIT DEEMED UNIVERSITY, Bhubaneswar.
Email ID: drjalal1979@gmail.com
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-0090-8740

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Innovations in Dental Biomaterials for Periodontal Regeneration and Restorative Applications

Abstract
It is in the field of periodontal restoration and restorative dentistry that dental biomaterials have become the focal point of discussion because it is now possible to consider something beyond passive restoration in the current approaches, which facilitate the enhancement of biologically directed healing and functional restoration. This review synthesizes current evidence on the biological basis of periodontal regeneration, the classification of natural and synthetic biomaterials, and recent innovations in advanced regenerative systems. Particular attention is given to guided tissue regeneration membranes, hydrogels, injectable matrices, nanomaterials, bioactive ceramics, smart polymers, and restorative biomaterials with remineralizing, antimicrobial, and regenerative potential. The review also examines the expanding role of bioprinting, digital dentistry, and controlled drug delivery in improving the precision and personalization of treatment. Although these developments have substantially enhanced the therapeutic potential of modern dentistry, important barriers remain, including challenges related to biocompatibility, long-term clinical predictability, regulatory approval, economic feasibility, and translational validation. Current evidence indicates that advanced biomaterials can improve tissue healing, restoration longevity, and regenerative outcomes when appropriately designed and clinically applied. It is hoped that future advancements will be based on the creation of multifunctional, patient-specific systems, which combine regenerative, bioactive, and intelligent capabilities. In general, dental biomaterials have emerged as a very dynamic area of research with great potential to transform periodontal and restorative treatment with more predictable, less invasive and biologically integrated treatments.

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INTRODUCTION

Periodontal disease is a highly prevalent form of chronic inflammatory disease that affects the periodontal structures of teeth and is currently being reported as a systemic condition with even greater concerns that extend way beyond the mouth cavity [1]. It encompasses a continuum of reversible gingivitis to irreversible periodontitis, which is the progressive degradation of periodontal ligament, alveolar bone and other connective tissues [2]. Not only does the disease impair the health of the oral system regarding functionality and appearance, but it also causes systemic complications in the health, which indicates the significance of the disease as a multifactorial and complex disease. Periodontal disease has been reported to be a hefty burden on the overall health of society, with the percentage of individuals who contract the disease being very high in the global society, and it is an issue of concern regarding the health of the population [3]. It has become so rampant, which is further made worse due to the absence of proper surveillance systems, particularly in the developing regions, and it has become difficult to diagnose and treat properly. In addition to socioeconomic differences, differences in access to oral care and differences in health literacy complicate the development and morbidity of diseases, resulting in the need to undertake more preventive and curative actions [4].

Conventional means of periodontal intervention relate mostly to mechanical debridement and infection control as approaches to disease progression prevention. Whereas these methods are practical in the eradication of microbial overload and inflammation, they tend to produce tissue healing but not regeneration of the periodontal apparatus. The structure of periodontal tissues is complicated, and since periodontium is complex, cementum, periodontal ligament, and alveolar bone reformation should be carried out in a very well-structured manner to regenerate periodontal tissues. The biological complexity of this process requires state of the art treatment processes that are capable of replicating a natural healing and developmental process [5]. Today, regenerative dentistry is emerging as a science, as a result of advances in the science of biomaterials and tissue engineering. Periodontal regeneration has assumed a different path whereby the biologically-mediated approaches are now being used in an attempt to restore the architecture and the functions of the damaged tissues. It is the combination of scaffolds, cells and bioactive molecules to provide a favorable microenvironment in tissue regeneration. The biological basis of regenerative therapies, such as cellular signaling, interactions between cells and extracellular matrices, and the activity of growth factors, needs to be understood to develop efficient regenerative therapies [6].

Biomaterials have become the foundation of these regenerative approaches as they can provide the support as well as the capability to control cellular behavior and induce tissue healing. More recent advances in biomaterial design, such as the creation of bioactive, nanostructured, and multifunctional material have greatly increased their regenerative capability. Such high-tech materials have the potential to enable localized drug delivery, enhance cell adhesion and growth, as well as offer antimicrobial characteristics, thus overcoming several issues related to periodontal and restorative treatment [7].

Considering such developments, there is a rising demand to critically analyze the existing scenario of dental biomaterials and how they may be utilized in periodontal regeneration and restorative dentistry. The aim of the review is to provide the overview of the latest novelties and to listen to their biological foundation, material characteristics, and clinical consequences, taking into account the potential to apply them in the context of the influence that they have on the patient outcome and evolution of the contemporary dental practice.

2. REVIEW METHODOLOGY

It is a comprehensive review, which is carried out to summarize the available information on dental biomaterials regarding periodontal regeneration and restorative procedures. PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science databases were used to perform the search of the literature, and the search was restricted to the studies published in the recent past. The keywords used were periodontal regenerating, dental biomaterials, guided tissue regenerating, hydrogel, nanomaterials and bioactive restorative materials. The selection of articles was determined based on their interest in the biological processes, type of materials, regenerative features, and their use in the clinic. They included both experimental and clinical research, and the quality of the review articles was high. Studies that were irrelevant, repeated, and those in non-English were dropped. The selected sources were analyzed and sorted by their topics critically to provide a worthwhile and up-to-date perspective on the developments, clinical implications, and prognosis in the topic.

3. BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF PERIODONTAL REGENERATION

Periodontal regeneration is a complex biological process that is likely to recapitulate the structural and functional integrity of periodontium, alveolar bone, periodontal ligament (PDL), and cementum. It requires true regeneration, which is the coordination of reformation of these independent yet interdependent tissues in their initial structure, which is not simply a repair. This is regulated by tightly regulated cellular and molecular processes that manifest developmental and wound-healing processes [8]. Periodontal tissue structure is closely valued with regard to the principle of regeneration. The periodontium contains a row of specialized tissues, including the gingiva, cementum, alveolar bone and the PDL that perform a special purpose in the support and function of the teeth. One of them is the PDL, which is a highly dynamic connective tissue that secures the tooth to the rest of the bone, besides providing progenitor and stem cells that are required during tissue regeneration [9]. These tissues are very complex and functionally integrated, hence very hard to foresee the regeneration process. Cellular components are central to periodontal regeneration, and fibroblasts can be regarded as the major regulators of the wound healing process and tissue remodeling. The populations of fibroblasts are differentiated with regard to the formation of extracellular matrix, collagen reuse, and control of inflammatory responses, thereby integrating the healing conditions. In part, their functional heterogeneity enables them to interact with many cell types because they repair and regenerate tissues [10]. Another aspect, which is worth mentioning, is that periodontal ligament fibroblasts have a multipotent nature and may also be converted into osteogenic and cemento-blastic lineage, which is highly significant regarding regenerative effects [11].

A complex system of tissue signaling pathways and growth factors controls periodontal regeneration at the molecular level and assumes control over cell proliferation, differentiation, and matrix development. The growth factor connective tissue (CTGF) has been published to stimulate intercellular communication and regenerative events of periodontal ligament stem cells by activating intracellular pathways [12]. In addition, the mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) signaling pathways also play a role in osteogenic differentiation and cellular modification to environmental signals and consequently influence the entire regeneration process [13]. These signaling cascades highlight the importance of the existence of a fine-tuned molecular environment in order to regenerate tissue. The healing of periodontal tissue wounds is described as having overlapping periods of inflammation, proliferation, and remodeling that must be well coordinated to achieve functional restoration. Regeneration is effectively achieved through selective re-population of the defect site with the appropriate type of cells, namely the PDL ones, and suppression of epithelial downgrowth and development of a stable extracellular matrix. However, this is usually ruined by unremitting inflammation, microbial and cellular dysfunction that may disorder the tissues and produce an incomplete or erratic outcome [14].

Despite the biological mechanisms that support periodontal regeneration that have been studied, the achievement of a predictable and consistent clinical outcome has proved to be a significant challenge. The heterogeneity of the host response and the limitations of the current treatment methods, in addition to the fact that the interactions between the host cells are multicellular, continue to hinder optimal regeneration. Therefore, the biological processes need to be better comprehended in order to develop advanced biomaterials and technology of curing that will improve clinical results. Figure 1 represents the most significant cellular interactions, signaling pathways, and healing of periodontal regeneration stages.

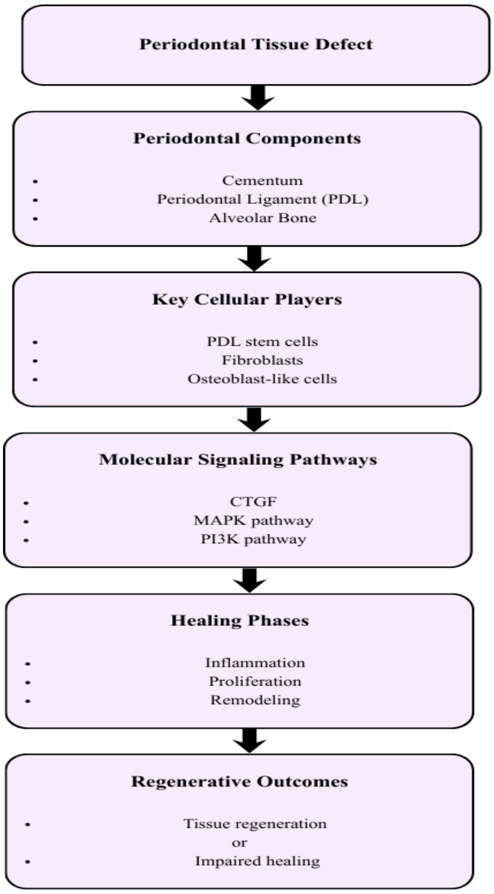

Figure 1. Biological Basis of Periodontal Regeneration

4. Classification of Dental Biomaterials

Dental biomaterials in periodontal regeneration and restorative dentistry may be organized in a tabulated manner based on their source, composition and functionality. Their biological interactions, mechanical behavior and their clinical applicability are easier to comprehend as a result of this classification.

4.1 Natural Biomaterials

Natural biomaterials are biologically produced and are typically known to possess high levels of biocompatibility as well as have the ability to recapitulate the native extracellular matrix. Biocompatible polymers such as collagen, chitosan and other polymers found in nature promote the attachment, proliferation and differentiation of cells and thus make them largely applicable in regenerative therapy [15]. Alginate-derived biomaterials have, in particular, become highly popular and can be applied in tissue engineering strategies since they can be made into gels, easily modified, and loaded with cells and bioactive factors, thus enhancing such strategies [16].

4.2 Synthetic Biomaterials

Synthetic biomaterials have been engineered to have controlled and predictable physical, chemical and mechanical properties. These include a wide range of materials, which include polymers, ceramics and composite systems and have been widely used in the area of periodontal regeneration and bone regeneration. Their degradation rates can be tuned to the specific requirements of the clinical environment, and the tunable degradation rates allow their application in micro-fabrication [17]. In particular, restorative dentistry synthetic composites are manufactured according to the demands of the highest strength, wear, and esthetic outcomes and guarantee adequate biocompatibility [18].

4.3 Bioactive and Smart Biomaterials

Smart biomaterials and bioactive materials represent a new type of biomaterial that are able to interact dynamically with the biological environment. Such materials can react to outer stimuli (pH, temperature, mechanical forces, etc.) so as to enable the controlled release of drugs and control cellular responses. Antimicrobial properties, self-healing, and increased remineralization ability have been introduced by the new technologies and have significantly facilitated clinical practice in the field of restorative usage [19].

4.4 Functional Classification Based on Application

Dentally, on functional grounds, dental biomaterials may be categorized as scaffold systems, membrane and injectable systems. The application of scaffolds, particularly the polymeric scaffolds provide a three-dimensional framework that accommodates cell adhesion, growth and differentiation, thereby resulting in tissue regeneration. They are designed to be more responsive in the native microenvironment and can be used together with cells and bioactive molecules in order to get improved regeneration outcomes [20]. The restorative dentistry and endodontics biomaterials must be designed with the purpose of restoring the structural integrity and functionality of the damaged teeth and to have prolonged reliability and biocompatibility. These include resin-based composites, ceramics, and bioactive restorative materials, which continue to evolve with new developments oriented towards the increase of longevity, mechanical behavior and therapeutic efficacy [21]. Figure 2 gives an overview of a further classification of dental biomaterials in their origin, function and clinical use. Table 1 provides a summarization of the key dental biomaterials together with their most significant attributes and examples of their use.

Table 1. Classification and key characteristics of dental biomaterials

Biomaterial category	Representative examples	Key properties	Main dental applications
Natural biomaterials	Collagen, chitosan, alginate	Biocompatible, biodegradable, extracellular matrix-like	Periodontal regeneration, tissue engineering
Synthetic biomaterials	Polymers, ceramics, composites	Tunable mechanics, reproducible composition, controlled degradation	Bone regeneration, restorative dentistry
Bioactive biomaterials	Bioactive glass, calcium phosphates, giomers	Ion release, remineralization, biological interaction	Hard tissue repair, restorative applications
Smart biomaterials	Stimuli-responsive polymers, self-healing systems	Responsive behavior, controlled release, functional adaptability	Advanced restorations, targeted regeneration
Functional biomaterial systems	Scaffolds, membranes, injectable matrices	Structural support, defect conformity, cell delivery potential	Periodontal defects, guided regeneration

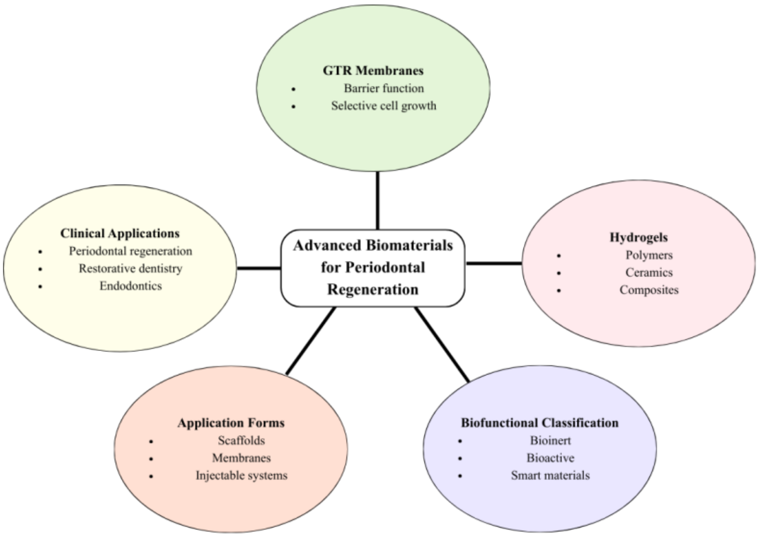

Figure 2. Classification of Dental Biomaterials

5. Advanced Biomaterials for Periodontal Regeneration

Biomaterials have transformed the regeneration of the periodontium significantly because there are some targeted, biologically active, and predictable treatment modalities that are currently available. The new generation of biomaterials is the fact that it is not just destined to provide the structural support, but can also actively regulate and culture cellular behavior, tissue integration, and enhance regenerative success.

5.1 Guided Tissue Regeneration (GTR) Membranes

Guided tissue regeneration is a pillar technique of periodontal treatment, which involves the utilization of barrier membranes to attain selective cell repopulation as well as inhibit epithelial downgrowth. Asymmetric and resorbable membrane has recently been worked on, with properties on either surface in a different manner on the surfaces, maximizing integration of tissues and barrier properties. The membranes are highly advanced and provide space maintenance, biocompatibility and degradation control, hence the clinical outcome of periodontal and bone regeneration processes is improved [22].

5.2 Hydrogels and Injectable Biomaterials

The ability to tune the hydrogels by its high-water content and the ability to mimic the extracellular matrix has made them one of the most versatile biomaterials. These create the perfect microenvironment of protection and delivery of bioactive molecules to cells to promote tissue regeneration. They can be used in periodontal use as they can be incorporated with growth factors, stem cells and antimicrobial agents [23]. Biomaterials Biomaterial assays, and injectable biomaterials can also be used clinically due to the ability to deliver the material into complex defect locations in a minimally invasive manner. These systems are able to follow irregular geometries and deliver localized therapeutic effects to increase tissue regeneration and decrease surgical morbidity [24].

5.3 Nanomaterials and Nanostructured Systems

Nanotechnology has brought a new aspect of periodontal regeneration as it has provided an opportunity to control the properties of materials at the nanoscale. Nanomaterials increase surface area, bioactivity, and cellular interactions, and thus improve cell adhesion, cell proliferation, and cell differentiation. Also, they have the potential to deliver targeted drug delivery, which provides antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory effects critical to periodontal recovery [25].

5.4 Bioactive Glass and Calcium Phosphate-Based Materials

Bioporous materials like bioactive Glass and calcium phosphate composites are very vital in the regeneration of hard tissue owing to their osteoconductive and osteoinductive characteristics. These materials have the potential of releasing biologically active ions that promote the formation of bone and increase mineralization. Recent composite mixes of amorphous calcium phosphate and bioactive glass nanoparticles have shown better mechanical strength and regenerative capacity and can be an excellent choice in periodontal applications [26].

5.5 Regenerative Approaches and Clinical Integration

The prediction of periodontal therapies has also been enhanced by the incorporation of advanced biomaterials and regenerative methods of surgery. The current regenerative strategies focus on the integration of scaffolds, cells, and signaling factors to restore the natural tissue environment. These measures are meant to improve the outcome of the healing process by overcoming shortcomings of conventional therapies, which will bring biologically-based treatments to the fore and a patient-centred approach to the discipline [27].

5.6 Functional Modifications and Adjunctive Innovations

Besides regenerative scaffolds and matrices, changes in dental material systems have also led to better clinical performance, such as adhesive technologies. The improved adhesive systems would facilitate the improvement of the integration between the biomaterials and the dental tissues, which indirectly contributes to the regenerative processes by enhancing stability and longevity of the restorations [28]. Figure 3 shows the larger groups of advanced biomaterials and their applications in the regeneration of the periodontium. The key advanced biomaterials employed in periodontal regeneration, along with their key therapeutic roles, are summarized in Table 2.

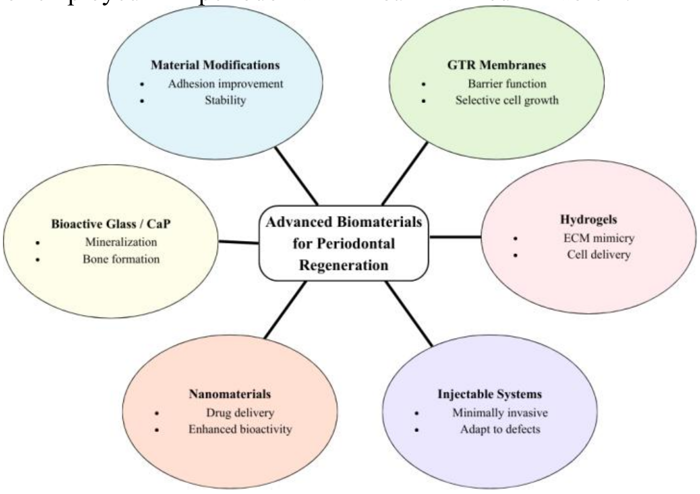

Figure 3. Advanced Biomaterials for Periodontal Regeneration

Table 2. Advanced biomaterials for periodontal regeneration and their functional roles

Biomaterial type	Main function	Major advantage	Clinical relevance
GTR membranes	Barrier against epithelial downgrowth	Selective cell repopulation	Supports periodontal and bone regeneration
Hydrogels	Matrix-like environment for cells and bioactive agents	High adaptability and bioactivity	Useful in soft and hard tissue healing
Injectable biomaterials	Minimally invasive defect filling	Conforms to irregular defects	Enhances localized regenerative therapy
Nanomaterials	Surface enhancement and targeted delivery	Improved cell interaction and drug transport	Promising for antimicrobial and regenerative effects
Bioactive glass/calcium phosphate materials	Mineralization and osteoconduction	Promotes bone formation	Valuable in hard tissue regeneration

6. Biomaterials in Restorative Dentistry

Biomaterials used in restorative dentistry are very important to repair the structure, function, and esthetics of the damaged teeth. Recent developments have changed the emphasis of passive restorative materials to bioactive systems that can respond to the surrounding biological environment, thus improving long-term clinical outcomes.

6.1 Resin-Based Composites and Hybrid Materials

Composites made of resins continue to be the most popular forms of restorative material because of their preferable esthetic features and mechanical characteristics. Giomers are a special category of hybrid materials which merge the benefits of both traditional composites and glass-ionomers. These materials also use pre-reacted glass ionomer fillers, which release fluoride, retain strength and polishability of composite resins and therefore, provide a compromise between bioactivity and durability [29].

6.2 Bioactive Restorative Materials

There has been a lot of attention to bioactive materials that are capable of actively engaging in the remineralization and restoration of dental tissues. There is clinical evidence that bioactive restorative materials can prove high retention and interaction with the tooth structures in comparison with standard materials, especially in the difficult clinical scenarios [30]. Their ability to release calcium, phosphate, and fluoride ions helps in the prevention of secondary caries and helps in repairing tissues.

6.3 Ceramic and Bioceramic Materials

Ceramic materials have been used in restorative dentistry because of the material possessing a high esthetic value, wear resistance, and biocompatibility. The innovation in adhesive technology has also enabled a further advancement in their clinical use by increasing their ability to bond to tooth structures [31]. Simultaneously, bioceramic-based materials have become potential alternatives because of their high bioactivity, sealing property, and the potential support of tissue regeneration, especially in endodontic and restorative applications [32].

6.4 Remineralization and Regenerative Approaches

Contemporary restorative dentistry is more concerned with the preservation and regeneration of a natural tooth structure. The minerals that have been removed in the enamel and dentin will be replaced with reconstructive biomaterials that will be called remineralization biomaterials, and this will repair the early caries lesions and restore the weak tissues. The materials have influenced the future of the restorative practices through the promotion of minimally invasive and biologically motivated treatment methods [33]. In addition, there has been an upward trend in the application of regenerative therapies as a response to the dentin-pulp complex, and it has been based on the use of biomaterials that support the functioning of stem cells and tissue regeneration. Such plans are also designed to restore pulp activity and functionality and are a monument of an improvement over the traditional ways of restorative therapy [34].

6.5 Longevity and Clinical Performance

Performance of the restorative biomaterials in the long-run basis depends on many variables, including material properties, bonding effectiveness, oral environment, and patient-related variables. Such factors that significantly influence the lifespan of restoration include wear resistance, marginal integrity and resistance to secondary caries. Such multifactorial contributors should be learned to optimally select materials and improve clinical outcomes [35].

6.6 Emerging Trends in Restorative Biomaterials

The new technologies, 3D bioprinting and new ideas in the tissue engineering field, are now beginning to influence restorative dentistry. Such approaches will aim at integrating biomaterials and biological ideas with the aim of ensuring that there is maximum regeneration of tissues and functional replacement. The importance of scaffold, cell, growth factor, and mechanical stability combination in attaining positive regenerative outcomes has been highlighted in using the theory of the so-called diamond model of healing [36].

7. Emerging Technologies and Smart Biomaterials

The periodontal and restorative dentistry is evolving with the advent of new technologies in the field of biomaterials science. These innovations aim to enhance the accuracy, specificity, and biologic functioning; enhance clinical efficacy and allow the next-generation regenerative-based therapies.

7.1 3D Bioprinting and Tissue Engineering

Three-dimensional bioprinting has come to the horizon as a new technology in dental tissue engineering that has the capability of producing patient-specific and complex constructs. Bio printing is also applicable in creating the structures that resemble the native oral tissues closely through the accurate deposition of biomaterials, cells and growth factors. This paradigm is the foundation of an individualized treatment plan and has tremendous potential to allow periodontal structure and craniofacial tissue regeneration with a higher index of anatomical and functional fidelity [37].

7.2 Stimuli-Responsive (Smart) Biomaterials

Smart biomaterials are created to be responsive dynamically to environmental conditions, including pH, temperature or mechanical stress. Stimuli-responsive polymers are currently under development in the field of dentistry to release therapeutic agents in a controlled manner, change with changing oral conditions, and improve the performance of materials. Such materials have the characteristics of self-healing, controlled degradation and on-demand drug delivery and therefore are very promising in the area of restorative as well as regenerative use [38].

7.3 Advanced Drug Delivery Systems

The history of biomaterials has also allowed the formulation of advanced drug delivery vehicles that have the ability to target therapeutic agents at the site of action. These systems enhance the efficacy of treatment by delivering the processes of antimicrobials, growth factors, and anti-inflammatory agents in a sustained and targeted manner. Particularly useful in treating periodontal conditions, localized therapy can be used to combat the infection and inflammation as well as induce tissue regeneration through such innovations [39]. Nanotechnology is an important aspect that can improve the ability of drug delivery, since it is possible to control the size of the particles, their surface properties, and release behaviors accurately. Nano-delivery systems are able to enhance bioavailability, tissue penetration, and targeted therapeutic effects, which enhances implant and regenerative dentistry [40].

7.4 Antimicrobial and Anti-Biofilm Biomaterials

Prevention of the colonization of bacteria and bacterial biofilm formation is essential to the long-term effectiveness of both dental restorations and dental implants. New approaches are directed toward the creation of contact killing and antibacterial biomaterials that are able to prevent microbial growth without undermining biocompatibility. They are made with antimicrobial or surface modification properties that interfere with bacteria adhesion and biofilm formation, and improve clinical survival [41]. Moreover, antibacterial restorative substances are also being developed to deliver a prolonged antimicrobial response with preservation of mechanical and esthetic qualities and would solve one of the most significant causes of restoration failure, secondary caries [42].

7.5 Digital Dentistry and Technological Integration

The revolution of restorative dentistry is seen through the application of digital technologies, such as Computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM), intraoral scanning, and digital workflows. These are dental technologies that allow manufacture of dental restorations exactly, better planning of treatment and increase the efficiency of the work of the clinic. In conjunction with novel biomaterials, digital systems help make highly customized and precise restorations, which follow the direction of personalized dentistry [43].

7.6 Biocompatibility and Functional Graded Biomaterials

Biomaterials should also have the basic requirement of ensuring biocompatibility. Recently, there has been an effort to design gradient materials in terms of mechanical and biological characteristics through the change in composition in a material structure, in functionally graded biomaterials. These materials are made in a way to be more compatible with the characteristics of adjacent tissues, minimization of concentration of stress, and enhancing integration with host tissues, which increases their applicability in clinical implantology and regenerative procedures [44].

8. Clinical Translation and Current Evidence

The clinical translation of the developed dental biomaterials into high-risk clinical applications relies on their safety, efficacy, and stability during long-term clinical utilization. Although much has been achieved in the design of biomaterials and their laboratory validation, the issue of adopting experimental models to the regular clinical setting is a major challenge.

8.1 Evidence from Clinical Applications

In implant-supported prostheses and in regenerative procedures, biomaterials are becoming more and more significant, and their biocompatibility and functionality have become important determinants of clinical performance. The available evidence indicates that the biomaterials can support the mechanism of osseointegration, enhance the stability of the prosthetic and assist in the regeneration of the tissue in case of the appropriate selection and application. They have been incorporated in dentistry of implants and have served to positively influence patient results and increase treatment opportunities [45].

8.2 Advantages and Limitations in Clinical Practice

The clinical performance of biomaterials is determined by the properties of the materials and external conditions, including the variability of the patient and the oral environment, although there is a promising development. Among the strengths of biomaterials, there are improved biocompatibility, multi-purpose nature and regenerative behavior. However, these weaknesses as variable rate of degradation, possibility of cytotoxicity, and uncertainty of the long-term effects, are still a challenge. These factors signal the need to pay particular attention to the selection of materials and further clinical testing [46].

8.3 Regulatory and Safety Considerations

Dental biomaterials possess stringent jurisdiction in regard to the clinical adoption of the material since they are obliged to induce patient safety and reliability of the product. Regulatory systems require a high level of evaluation of composition material, biological interactions and toxicological risks and possibilities prior to clinical use.. These are critical procedures for reducing the risks that are related to the application of biomaterials, though they can delay the adoption of new materials into the market. Regulatory requirements are important in the translation of research innovations to clinical practice, hence understanding of these requirements is important [47].

8.4 Current Evidence on Emerging Biomaterials

There are emerging biomaterials, especially nanomaterials, which have shown promising results in preclinical and early clinical research. Their distinctive physicochemical characteristics allow them to be more bioactive, deliver drugs directly to the target, and increase their contact with biological tissues. Nonetheless, the issues of long-term safety, possible toxicity, and standardization continue to pose a serious impediment to the widespread clinical adoption. More properly designed clinical trials are needed to determine their efficacy and safety profiles [48].

9. Challenges, Limitations, and Future Directions

Even with major improvements in the dental biomaterials, there are still various issues which restrict their use on a broad clinical basis and success in the long run. Among the primary ones, the optimal biocompatibility is aimed at preserving the desired functional and mechanical characteristics. Biomaterials should be compatible with the complex oral environment without causing any undesirable immune and inflammatory reactions. Nevertheless, the differences in patient-specific variables, such as systemic diseases and discrepancies in the oral microbiome, may have a profound impact on the biomaterial performance and clinical outcome, and standard approaches to treatment are hard to maintain [49]. Besides the biological issues, there is the economic factor that is very relevant in adopting high-end biomaterials. The cost of developing, producing and consuming the same materials is quite high and accordingly, their availability might be limited, particularly in scarcity-stricken settings. This brings the issue of the fair accessibility of advanced care in dentistry and the necessity to find cheaper alternative options without jeopardizing clinical performance. The assessment of the economic feasibility and therapeutic advantage of the innovative biomaterials also remains crucial to the wider use of innovative biomaterials [50]. Implementation of artificial intelligence into biomaterials research is also a promising initiative that can eliminate current shortcomings. Artificial intelligence-based methods can streamline the construction of materials, forecast biological reactions, and enable the creation of individualized care plans that would suit the needs of specific patients. Nevertheless, data reliability, standardization and large-scale clinical validation issues should be resolved before such technologies can be implemented in full-scale use in the dental practice [51]. Nanotechnology has also increased the dental biomaterials with the ability to control the properties of materials in a more accurate way and promote their regenerative capabilities. Yet, the issues of the safety of nanomaterials in the long-term perspective and possible toxicity are also important. They are very reactive and small; therefore, they might have unintended biological interactions such as cytotoxic effects and tissue accumulation. Due to the lack of standardized evaluation that can be evaluated, it is hard to be approved by regulatory bodies and restrict its extensive application in clinical practice [52].

Dental biomaterials will also evolve in the future, where multifunctional and personalized systems have been introduced, which will be capable of addressing several clinical problems simultaneously. Smart materials, nanotechnology and tissue engineering are likely to be used to develop next-generation biomaterials with enhanced adaptability, bioactivity and therapeutic effectiveness. Moreover, the interdisciplinary team of materials science, biology, and digital technologies would be critical to the development of regenerative dentistry and better patient-specific treatment outcomes [53]. A summary of the significant impediments to clinical translation and subsequent future prospects of dental biomaterials is listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Major challenges and future directions in clinical translation of dental biomaterials

Challenge	Clinical implication	Future direction	Expected impact
Biocompatibility variability	Unpredictable tissue response	Patient-specific biomaterial design	Improved safety and consistency
High cost and limited accessibility	Restricted routine use	Economical and scalable production	Wider clinical adoption
Regulatory and validation barriers	Delayed translation to practice	Standardized testing and stronger clinical evidence	Faster and safer implementation
Long-term nanomaterial safety concerns	Uncertain risk profile	Comprehensive toxicity assessment	Better acceptance of advanced materials
Need for intelligent design tools	Slow optimization of new materials	Integration of artificial intelligence and digital workflows	More precise and personalized therapies

10. Conclusion

New dental biomaterials are transforming the arena of periodontal regeneration and restorative dentistry by changing the paradigm of treatment of passive repair to biologically active and functionally incorporated regeneration. As it has been emphasized in the course of this review, the development of natural and synthetic biomaterials, hydrogels, nanostructured systems, bioactive ceramics, smart polymers, and digital technologies has really enhanced the ability to support the process of tissue healing, remineralization, and long-term restoration. Meanwhile, clinical translation of these materials is still limited by the biocompatibility, standardization, cost, long-term safety and regulatory approval issues. The future of the field will be in producing multifunctional patient-specific biomaterials with regenerative, antimicrobial, and diagnostic capabilities in minimally invasive and digitally-guided procedures. Further incorporation of the fields of materials science, molecular biology and artificial intelligence can further speed this up. In general, state-of-the-art dental biomaterials promise a lot in enhancing therapeutic predictability and patient outcomes, although the effective implementation of the new technology will require strict clinical validation as well as consideration of the implementation in actual practice.

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