Failed Endodontic Treatment: Is Retreatment Truly Effective?

Prof. Jin Woo Kim

When encountering a failed root canal treatment, clinicians face a challenging decision between nonsurgical retreatment and extraction followed by implant placement. Despite its technical complexity and perceived unpredictability, nonsurgical retreatment remains a vital "last line of defense" for preserving natural teeth. This lecture aims to address the fundamental question: "To what extent can a failed endodontic treatment be successfully resolved through retreatment?". We will begin by objectively analyzing the success and long-term survival rates of nonsurgical retreatment based on contemporary literature and big data. This evidence-based approach will help define strategic case selection criteria—determining when to "Go" and when to "Stop" in daily practice. This session will also discuss the critical factors that transform failure into success, focusing on the elimination of intraradicular infections and the re-evaluation of root canal anatomy. We will highlight the clinical significance of identifying missed canals and protocols to correct procedural errors from previous treatments. This lecture intends to provide practical guidelines that empower practitioners to approach endodontic retreatments with greater predictability and clinical conviction.

Learning Objectives

* Course-takers will learn to establish evidence-based decision-making criteria for choosing between nonsurgical retreatment and extraction based on long-term survival data.
* Course-takers will learn to identify and correct procedural errors from previous treatments by applying advanced anatomical knowledge and clinical strategies.
* Course-takers will learn practical techniques for locating missed canals, such as the MB2, through the systematic interpretation of anatomical landmarks and the use of specialized clinical tools

Profile

* DDS, MSD, Ph.D. in Conservative Dentistry, Seoul National University
* Past President, Korean Academy of Endodontics
* Past President, Korean Academy of Conservative Dentistry
* Former President, Kangwon National University Dental Hospital
* Present, Professor, College of Dentistry, Gangneung-Wonju National University