REVIEW

A scoping review of root canal revascularization: relevant aspects for clinical success and tissue formation

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Abstract

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The aim of this scoping study was to evaluate the survival rate and nature of tissue formed inside root canals of human immature permanent teeth with necrotic pulps (NIPT) under root canal revascularization (RCR). The search was performed in SciVerse Scopus®, PubMed/MEDLINE, Web of Science®, BIREME and in the grey literature up to November 2015. The keywords were selected using MeSH terms and DECs. Two independent reviewers scrutinized the records obtained considering specific inclusion criteria. The included studies were evaluated in accordance with a modified Arksey and O' Malley's framework. From 375 studies that were evaluated, 75 were included. A total of 367 NIPT were submitted to RCR, from which only 21 needed further endodontic treatment. The weighted mean follow-up

time was 17.6 months. The data were derived mainly from case reports (69%) or small case series (15%). NaOCl [0.5-6%] was applied as the disinfecting solution in almost all studies. Triple antibiotic paste was as effective as Ca(OH)2 as on intracanal medicament. De novo tissue was cementum and poorly mineralized bone positive to bone sialoprotein (BSP) but negative to dentine sialoprotein (DSP). Failures were associated mainly with reinfection of the root canal. The majority of included studies reported a significant increase in both root length and width. However, as most of these data came from case reports, they must be interpreted with care, as most were focused on treatment successes (not failures). Therefore, well-designed randomized controlled trials comparing RCR with available apexification treatments are needed to address this gap in the literature.

Keywords: dental pulp necrosis, immature permanent teeth, root canal revascularization, scoping review, scoping study.

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Introduction

Immature permanent teeth with necrotic pulps (NIPT) have thin root walls associated with incomplete root

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apices, characterized by a wide apical foramen (Wigler *et al.* 2013). Such characteristics are challenging to treat (Andreasen & Bakland 2012). Traditionally, NIPT were treated by apexification involving the insertion of Ca(OH)₂-based medicaments inside the root canal to establish favourable conditions for subsequent conventional root canal treatment (Rafter 2005). Even though in these cases traditional root canal treatment has a success rate of 74% (Kleier & Barr 1991, Cyck 1992, Andreasen *et al.* 2002), the

need for multiple treatment appointments, as well as increased brittleness of root dentine (Andreasen *et al.* 2002), raises the risk of tooth fracture (Cvek 1992). Placing an apical plug of MTA has been reported as an alternative treatment option, but it does not regenerate the physiology of the pulp–dentine complex (Jeeruphan *et al.* 2012, Simon & Goldberg 2014), nor does it allow for further root formation.

Root canal revascularization (Wigler *et al.* 2013) was proposed to overcome the obstacles related to the clinical management of NIPT (Iwaya *et al.* 2001, Banchs & Trope 2004). RCR aims to fill the root

canal with pulp-like tissue after the induction of a blood clot inside the root canal system, which will serve as an anchorage site for cells from the apical region (Fig. 1). Since then, evidence regarding stimulating ingrowth of tissues into the root canal system following RCR has been provided (Murray *et al.* 2007, Nosrat *et al.* 2011, Garcia-Godoy & Murray 2012). In addition, the application of blood venous derivatives, such as platelet-rich plasma (PRP) and platelet-rich fibrin (PRF), could be performed in specific cases aiming to accelerate tissue formation (Mittal & Narang 2012).

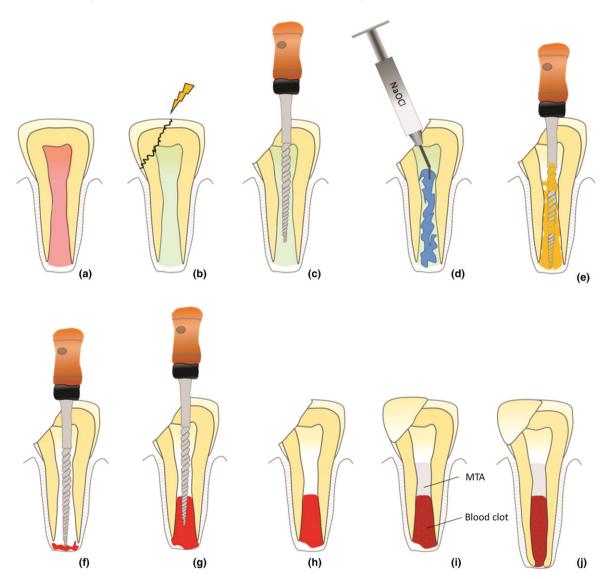


Figure 1 Schematic principle of maturogenesis in immature permanent teeth with necrotic pulps. (a) Immature permanent tooth; (b) immature permanent teeth with necrotic pulps; (c) pulp removal; (d) disinfection agent, (e) triple antibiotic paste; (f) irritating periapical tissue; (g) initial bleeding; (h) blood clot formation; (i) MTA; (j) continued root development.

Disinfection of the root canal system is a crucial step in RCR as mechanical instrumentation is contraindicated due to the thin walls, which could increase further the risk of root fracture (Andreasen & Bakland 2012). Rather, disinfection solutions, such as NaOCl, and a triple antibiotic paste (TAP) containing ciprofloxacin, metronidazole and minocycline (Hoshino *et al.* 1996) are applied.

Despite the promising results observed in several published case series, RCR is not a well-established therapy (Wigler *et al.* 2013) due to the lack of well-designed clinical trials evaluating its prognosis. Furthermore, little is known about the exact nature of the tissue growing into the canal after RCR is performed in humans. Taking these aspects in consideration, the aim of this study was to carry out a scoping review evaluating the performance of human NIPT submitted to RCR as well as the nature of tissue formed inside the root canal system of such teeth.

Material and methods

Conceptual definition

The American Association of Endodontists Guide to Current Dental Terminology (AAE 2013) describes a biological-based procedure named 'Pulpal regeneration', which aims to replace damaged tooth structures in NIPT. The process is based on root canal disinfection and subsequent induction of periapical tissue bleeding (AAE 2013). The first report describing the term 'revascularization' for NIPT (Iwaya et al. 2001) used a case study on the application of Hoshino's TAP (Hoshino et al. 1996) inside a root canal to treat an abscess (Iwaya et al. 2001). However, the term revascularization is not well accepted (Wigler et al. 2013): some authors claim that revascularization is more applicable to events related to dental trauma (Huang & Lin 2008). In such a context, the term 'maturogenesis' has been reported to better describe the clinical and radiographic data depicting the apical maturation in NIPT (Weisleder & Benitez 2003). As mentioned by Wigler et al. (2013), 'procedures designed to promote continued root development in NIPT should be described as maturogenesis, rather than revascularization'. The present authors believe that 'Maturogenesis' is a general term for the promotion of root development by different treatments and is not limited to vital pulp therapy. Therefore, the term 'Root Canal Revascularization -RCR' was applied by researches for protocols aiming to treat apical periodontitis, to induce radiographic evidence of apical root closure, and to promote root development, after the induction of a blood clot.

The clinical definition of the success of RCR varies between studies and methodologies. In general, the most frequently used method is the evaluation of root lengthening and root wall thickening, as well as the absence of pain or sinus tract, resulting in periapical healing. Aside from this, the follow-up periods vary largely in the published studies, making it difficult to define parameters to compare all cases. As a result, the ultimate goal of RCR is to increase tooth survival in the mouth with minimal intervention. In this scoping review, the clinical success of RCR was considered when there was no report indicating extraction or conventional root canal treatment for the treated tooth.

Exploratory search

An exploratory search was performed in PubMed/ MEDLINE up to August 2015. To construct the search strategy, the terms 'root canal revascularization', 'maturogenesis', 'dental pulp necrosis', 'dental pulp regeneration' and 'infected teeth' were applied. The initial search resulted in 1297 initial records corresponding to 517 studies. Such an exploratory search was relevant to identify that the first studies relating to the importance of the blood clot over the healing of periapical tissues (Torneck & Smith 1970). A remarkable methodological heterogeneity amongst studies was observed; most of the data obtained were derived from case reports or relatively small case series. A systematic review is a key element to produce evidencebased clinical protocols, but based on the resultant evidence, a systematic review was not considered appropriate. Therefore, a scoping study (SS) was designed under a modified five-stage framework proposed by Arksey & O'Malley (2005) (Daudt et al. 2013). According to the applied framework (Daudt et al. 2013), 'A scoping review, or scoping study, is a form of knowledge synthesis that addresses an exploratory research question aimed at mapping key concepts, types of evidence and gaps in research related to a defined area or field by systematically searching, selecting and synthesizing existing knowledge'.

Information sources, literature search and inclusion criteria

A structured search was performed in SciVerse ScopusTM, PubMed/MEDLINE, ISI Web of ScienceTM and

BIREME up to November 2015. The keywords were selected based on the two pre-specified questions:

- 1. What is the performance of immature permanent teeth with necrotic pulps under RCR?
- **2.** What is the nature of tissue formed inside the root canal of immature permanent teeth with necrotic pulps?

The relevant MeSH terms were considered, as well as the relevant entry terms (Table 1), and then combined (Table 2) to search the studies. The retrieved records were uploaded into EndNoteTM software (Thomson Reuters, Rochester, New York, NY, USA), aiming to delete duplicates and to build up a virtual library (VL). Two independent reviewers (MCMC and LAC) read the titles and abstracts of all reports, under the following inclusion criteria:

- Studies: clinical studies, without language restriction
- Subjects: NIPT from humans
- · Diagnosis: any classification of pulp necrosis
- Regenerative procedures carried out: induced bleeding from periapical region (classical RCR); application of blood venous derivatives (PRF and/or PRP); application of scaffolds over the clot formed after the induced bleeding of periapical region
- · Clinical follow-up: any follow-up period

To confirm whether the selected studies met the inclusion criteria, the same reviewers independently

Table 1 Structured search strategy carried out in MEDLINE/PubMed database^a

Search Syntaxes

PubMed #

- ('Immature Permanent Teeth' OR 'Immature Permanent Tooth' OR 'Young Permanent Teeth' OR 'Young Permanent Tooth')
- #2 ('Root Canal Revascularization' OR Revascularization OR Maturogenesis)
- #3 ('Dental pulp necrosis' [Mesh] OR 'Dental Pulp Necroses' OR 'Necroses, Dental Pulp' OR 'Pulp Necroses, Dental' OR 'Pulp Necrosis, Dental' OR 'Pulp Necrosis' OR 'Necrosis, Pulp' OR 'Necrosis, Pulp' OR 'Necrosis, Dental Pulp' OR 'Gangrene, Dental Pulp' OR 'Dental Pulp' OR 'Dental Pulp' OR 'Autolyses, Dental Pulp' OR 'Dental Pulp Autolyses' OR 'Pulp Autolyses, Dental' OR 'Pulp Autolysis, Dental Pulp' OR 'Autolysis, Dental Pulp' OR 'Infected Teeth')
- #4 ('Platelet-Rich AND Fibrin')
- #5 ('Platelet-Rich Plasma' [Mesh] OR 'Plasma, Platelet-Rich' OR 'Platelet-Rich AND Plasma')

Table 2 Keywords combination and records recovered in each database

Key words	Records found					
applied to develop the search strategy	PubMed™	Scopus™	ISI web of science™	BVS™		
#1 and #2 and #3	25	37	31	20		
#1 and #2	64	107	107	52		
#1 and #4	7	18	2	5		
#1 and #5	8	6	41	5		
#2 and #4	11	93	10	5		
#2 and #5	38	188	84	34		

judged their full text. If any disagreement was found, the reviewers attempted to reach a consensus through discussions. Persistent disagreements were resolved by intervention from the third reviewer (FFD). After that, MCMC and LAC evaluated manually all references reported in each selected studies. Twenty per cent of the studies were randomly selected, and the data were again checked.

The grey literature in the annals of International Association for Dental Research (IADR), European Society of Endodontology and AAE were searched. To identify registered clinical trials, the following databases were consulted: International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP), Clinical trials.gov, Clinical Trials Registry-India (CTRI), EU Clinical Trials Register, Australian Clinical Trials, Pan African Clinical Trials Registration (Registros Brasileiros de Ensaios Clínicos) using the following free terms: 'root canal revascularization', 'maturogenesis' and 'dental pulp necrosis'.

Strategy for data synthesis

The selected studies were charted in accordance with the fourth and fifth stages of the applied framework (Daudt et al. 2013). Data analysis was carried out at the level of an individual tooth. The Kaplan-Meier was built simply to illustrate an overview of the evaluated follow-up time (Fig. 3). Each tooth submitted to RCR was inserted individually in the test with their respective follow-up. Initial failures due to impossibility of establishing bleeding or control infection were not submitted to the Kaplan-Meier analysis. Moreover, due to the impossibility of accessing the follow-up period for each tooth, studies reporting only the mean follow-up time were not included. Thus, 326 teeth were included in the Kaplan-Meier survival curve. The follow-up time was calculated by weighted average, considering weights proportional to the study size.

aSearches in SciVerse Scopus[™] (SS), ISI web of a science[™] and BVS were adapted according to the database.

Results

The search resulted in 998 initial records, but only 375 of them were considered unique studies. After evaluation of titles and abstracts, 84 studies were selected for full-text assessment, from which 75 were included (Fig. 2). The reasons for exclusion are outlined in Table 3. In total, 367 teeth were submitted to RCR, from which 21 failed. The evaluated teeth had a weighted (according to study's follow-up time) mean follow-up time of 17.6 months. The Kaplan–Meier curve was built to illustrate the follow-up times reported by the selected studies (Fig. 3).

Studies

The oldest included publication dates from 2004 (Banchs & Trope 2004); the majority of the included studies were published from 2012 up to November 2015 (Fig. 4). Most studies were case reports (69%) or relatively small case series (15%). Stronger evidence was provided by three pilot randomized clinical studies (4%), four prospective clinical studies (5%) and two retrospective studies (Table 4).

Table 3 Excluded studies and reasons for exclusion

Reason	Studies
Periapical bleeding was not induced; neither PRF or PRP was applied Follow-up was not reported or carried out	lwaya et al. 2001, Chueh & Huang 2006, Akgun et al. 2009, lwaya et al. 2011, Fujita & Maki 2013, Kumar et al. 2014, Saeki et al. 2014 Nagata et al. 2014

Grey literature

Four abstracts about RCR were found, and only one had been published (Bezgin *et al.* 2015). Seven clinical trials registration were found, two reporting status as completed (NCT00881491 and NCT00881907) and five as 'recruiting participants' (NCT01827098, NCT01976065, NCT01799187, NCT01817413, CTRI/2012/11/003086).

Disinfection solutions

NaOCl (0.5-6%) was applied as the disinfecting solution in almost all cases (Table 4), often associated mainly with chlorhexidine (CHX) -0.12-2% (Banchs & Trope 2004,

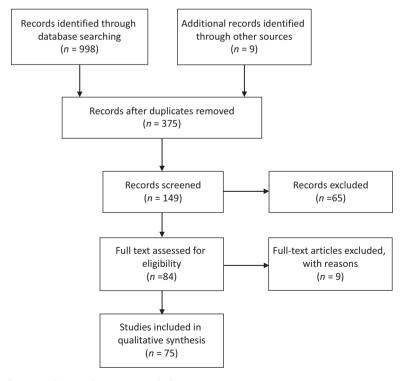


Figure 2 Flow chart depicting the search strategy applied.

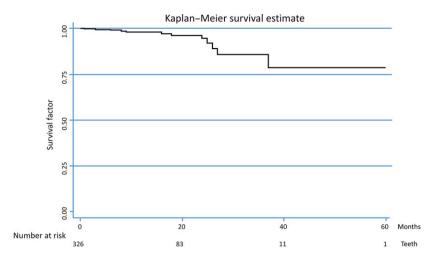


Figure 3 Kaplan-Meier survival estimate.

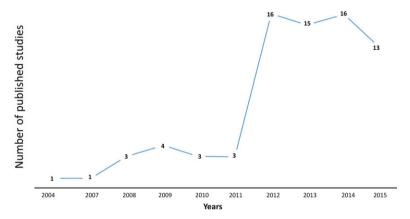


Figure 4 Studies grouped by year of publication.

Reynolds et al. 2009, Shin et al. 2009, Petrino et al. 2010, Shivashankar et al. 2012, Chen et al. 2013, McTigue et al. 2013, Becerra et al. 2014, Bezgin et al. 2014, 2015, Kaya-Buyukbayram et al. 2014, Nagata et al. 2014, Saoud et al. 2014a, Nevins & Cymerman 2015, Solomon et al. 2015) and hydrogen peroxide (Cotti et al. 2008, Shah et al. 2008, Santiago et al. 2015).

Intracanal medication

Hoshino's TAP, and its modifications (Table 4), were applied as the intracanal medicament in 86% of the studies whilst $Ca(OH)_2$ was registered in 13.5% (Cotti et al. 2008, Aggarwal et al. 2012, Cehreli et al. 2012, Chen et al. 2012, Rudagi & Rudagi 2012, Shimizu et al. 2012, 2013, Paryani & Kim 2013, Soares et al.

2013, Alobaid *et al.* 2014, Kaya-Buyukbayram *et al.* 2014, Lin *et al.* 2014, Nagata *et al.* 2014, Yadav *et al.* 2015). Two cases performed RCR in one-single appointment and so did not apply TAP or Ca(OH)₂; rather, systemic antibiotics (Shin *et al.* 2009) or NaOCl was used as the sole disinfectant (McCabe 2015). A microbiological analysis revealed that TAP, as well Ca(OH)₂, did not reduce significantly the number of microorganisms after the application of disinfecting solutions (Nagata *et al.* 2014).

Histological features of the newly formed tissue inside root canals

Studies carrying out histological analysis (Torabinejad & Faras 2012, Martin et al. 2013, Shimizu et al.

Table 4 Characteristics of included studies

Study	Type of Study	Teeth/ Success	Follow-up (months)	Disinfection Agent [%] Intracanal Medication	Blood Derivatives
Banchs & Trope (2004)	Case Report	1/1	24	NaOCI [5.25]+Peridex™ TAP	_
Thibodeau & Trope (2007)	Case Report	1/1	24	NaOCI [1.5] TAP(CEF)	_
Cotti et al. (2008)	Case Report	1/1	30	NaOCI [5.25] + H ₂ O ₂ [3] Ca(OH) ₂	-
Jung <i>et al.</i> (2008)	Small Case Series	4/4	33	NaOCI [2.25] TAP	=
Shah et al. (2008)	Small Case Series	11/11	19	NaOCI [2.25] and H ₂ O ₂ [3]	=
Ding et al. (2009)	Small Case Series	9/3	16	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	=
Reynolds et al. (2009)	Case Report	2/2	18	NaOCI [6] and CHX [2] TAP Hoshino	_
Shin et al. (2009)	Case Report	1/1	19	NaOCI [5.25] and CHX [2] Systemic AB	=
Thibodeau (2009)	Case Report	1/1	41	NaOCI [1.25] TAP(CEF)	_
Kim et al. (2010)	Case Report	1/1	8	NaOCI [3] TAP	-
Petrino et al. (2010)	Small Case Series	6/6	11	NaOCI [5.25] and CHX [0.2] TAP	-
Thomson & Kahler (2010)	Case Report	1/1	18	NaOCI [1] TAP(AMXI)	-
Cehreli et al. (2011)	Small Case Series	6/6	9.5	NaOCI [2.25] Ca(OH) ₂	_
Nosrat et al. (2011)	Case Report	2/2	16.5	NaOCI [5.25]	_
Torabinejad & Turman (2011) ^a	Case Report	1/1ª	5.5	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	
Aggarwal et al. (2012)	Case Report	1/1	24	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	-
Cehreli et al. (2012)	Case Report	1/1	18	NaOCI [2.5] Ca(OH) ₂	-
Chen et al. (2012)	Large Case Series	20/20	11.45	NaOCI [5.25] Ca(OH) ₂	-
Dabbagh et al. (2012)	Large Case Series	18/18	24	NaOCI [5]	_
Gelman & Park (2012)	Case Report	1/1	11	NaOCI [6] TAP	_
Jadhav et al. (2012)	Randomized	20/20	12	NaOCI [2.25]	_
Jeeruphan et al. (2012)	Clinical Study Retrospective Study	20/20	21.15	TAP(DOXI) NaOCI [2.5] TAP	_
Kottoor & Velmurugan (2012)	Case Report	1/1	60	NaOCI [5.25]	_
Kim et al. (2012)	Small Case Series	3/3	38	TAP NaOCI [3]	_
Lenzi & Trope (2012)	Case Report	2/2	21	TAP(CEF) NaOCI [2.5]	-
Narayana et al. (2012)	Case Report	1/1	12	TAP NaOCI [5.25]	-
Nosrat <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Case Report	2/2	72	TAP NaOCI [5.25]	-
Rudagi & Rudagi (2012)	Case Report	1/1	12	TAP NaOCI [1] Ca(OH) ₂	PRF

Table 4 Continued

Study	Type of Study	Teeth/ Success	Follow-up (months)	Disinfection Agent [%] Intracanal Medication	Blood Derivatives
Shimizu <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Case Report	1/0	0.75	NaOCI [5.25] Ca(OH) ₂	-
Shivashankar et al. (2012)	Case Report	1/1	12	NaOCI [5.25] and CHX [0.12]	PRF
Torabinejad & Faras (2012) ^a	Case Report	1/0	14	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	PRP
Chen <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Case Report	1/1	12	NaOCI [3] and CHX [DNR] TAP	=
Farsi <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Small Case Series	3/3	18	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	_
Forghani <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Case Report	1/1	18	NaOCI [5] TAP	_
Jadhav <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Small Case Series	6/6	12	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	PRP
Kalaskar & Kalaskar (2013)	Case Report	1/1	15	NaOCI [0.5] TAP	_
Keswani & Pandey (2013)	Case Report	1/1	15	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	PRF
McTigue et al. (2013)	Large Case Series	32/32	51	NaOCI [3] and CHX [2] TAP(CLIN)	_
Martin et al. (2013)	Case Report	1/0	25	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	_
Mishra et al. (2013)	Case Report	1/1	12	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	PRF
Paryani & Kim (2013)	Case Report	2/2	20	NaOCI [5.25] Ca(OH) ₂	_
Shimizu <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Case Report	1/0	26	NaOCI 2.6% Ca(OH) ₂	-
Soares et al. (2013)	Case Report	1/1	24	CHX [2] Ca(OH) ₂ and CHX	_
Sonmez et al. (2013)	Small Case Series	3/3	24	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	_
Wang <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Case Report	2/2	18	NaOCI [3] TAP	_
Yang <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Case Report	1/1	24	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	_
Abduljabbar <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Case Report	1/1	36	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	_
Alobaid <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Retrospective Study	19/15	17	¥NaOCI and CHX TAP versus DAP (ciprofloxacin, metronidazole) versus Ca(OH) ₂	-
Amit <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Case Report	1/1	18	NaOCI [5.25] TAP(CEF)	=
Becerra <i>et al</i> . (2014)	Case Report	1/1	24	NaOCI [5.25] and CHX [2] TAP	=
Bezgin <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Case Report	1/1	12	NaOCI [2.5] and CHX [0.12] TAP(CEF)	PRP
Chandran <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Case Report	1/1	12	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	-
Jadhav <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Case Report	1/1	12	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	PRP
Kahler <i>et al</i> . (2014)	Prospective Clinical Studies	16/16	18	NaOCI [1] TAP(AMXI)	=
Kaya-Buyukbayram et al. (2014)	Case Report	1/1	20	NaOCI [2.5] Ca(OH) ₂ and TAP	-
Lin <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Case Report	1/0	16	NaOCI [5.25]; Ca(OH) ₂ and TAP	_

Table 4 Continued

Study	Type of Study	Teeth/ Success	Follow-up (months)	Disinfection Agent [%] Intracanal Medication	Blood Derivatives
Nagata et al. (2014)	Prospective Clinical Studies	23/22	15	NaOCI [6] and CHX [2] TAP versus Ca(OH) ₂ : Endogel™ (1:1)	-
Nagy et al. (2014)	Prospective Clinical Studies	20/17	18	NaOCI [2.6] TAP(DOXI)	_
Guven Polat et al. (2014)	Case Report	1/1	24	NaOCI [5] TAP(TETRA)	PRP
Raju <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Case Report	1/1	12	NaOCI [2.25] TAP(DOXI)	-
Saoud <i>et al.</i> (2014b)	Case Report	2/2	12	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	-
Saoud <i>et al.</i> (2014a)	Prospective Clinical Studies	20/20	12	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	-
Bezgin <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Randomized Clinical Study	20/19	18	NaOCI [2.5] and CHX [0.12%] TAP(CEF)	PRP
Jadhav et al. (2015)	Case Report	1/1	18	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	PRF
Lei <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Case Report	1/1	24	NaOCI [1] TAP(CEF)	-
McCabe (2015)	Case Report	1/1	18	NaOCI [5.25] _	_
Nagata et al. (2015)	Case Report	1/1	16	NaOCI [6] Ca(OH) ₂ :Endogel™ (1:1)	_
Nagaveni et al. (2015)	Case Report	1/1	12	NaOCI [5.25] TAP	PRF
Narang <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Randomized Clinical Study	15/15	18	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	PRP versus PRF
Nevins & Cymerman (2015)	Small Case Series	5/5	10.5	NaOCI [6] DAP	_
Ray et al. (2015)	Case Report	1/1	36	NaOCI [0.5] DAP	PRF
Santiago <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Small Case Series	6/4	21	NaOCI [2.5/5.25%]; $H_2O_2[3]$; CHX[2] TAP	-
Solomon et al. (2015)	Case Report	1/1	18	NaOCI [0.25] and CHX [2] TAP	PRF
Wang et al. (2015)	Case Report	2/2	30	NaOCI [2.5] TAP	PRP
Yadav <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Case Report	1/0	24	NaOCI [2.5] Ca(OH) ₂	PRF

^aBoth studies represent the same clinical case. The follow-up from Torabinejad & Turman (2011) was considered to calculate the clinical success.

2013, Becerra et al. 2014, Lin et al. 2014, Lei et al. 2015) did not report the presence of both polarized cells resembling odontoblasts or pulp-like tissue. Continued root development was provided, mostly, by cellular/acellular cementum and poor mineralized bone

(Shimizu *et al.* 2013, Becerra *et al.* 2014). Immuno-histochemical analysis showed that the tissue formed inside the root canal was positive to bone sialoprotein (BSP) but negative to dentine sialoprotein (DSP) (Shimizu *et al.* 2013).

^{¥,} data from retrospective study; AB, antibiotic; Ca(OH)₂, calcium Hydroxide; CHX, chlorhexidine; DAP, double antibiotic paste containing ciprofloxacin and metronidazole; H₂O₂, hydrogen peroxide; NaOCI, sodium hypochlorite; TAP, triple antibiotic paste developed by (1996); TAP(AMXI), triple antibiotic paste containing amoxycillin instead minocycline; TAP(CEF), triple antibiotic paste containing cefaclor instead minocycline; TAP(CLIN), triple antibiotic paste containing clindamycin instead minocycline; TAP(DOXI), triple antibiotic paste containing doxycycline instead minocycline; TAP(TETRA), triple antibiotic paste containing tetracycline instead minocycl

Alternative strategies to improve the RCR

From the selected studies, 17 (22%) applied alternative strategies in an attempt to improve RCR. Thereby, blood venous derivatives, such as PRP (Jadhav et al. 2012, 2013, 2014, Guven Polat et al. 2014, Bezgin et al. 2015, Nagaveni et al. 2015, Narang et al. 2015, Wang et al. 2015) and PRF (Torabinejad & Turman 2011, Rudagi & Rudagi 2012, Shivashankar et al. 2012, Keswani & Pandey 2013, Mishra et al. 2013, Bezgin et al. 2014, Jadhav et al. 2015, Nagaveni et al. 2015, Narang et al. 2015, Ray et al. 2015, Solomon et al. 2015, Yadav et al. 2015), were the most commonly applied. It was reported that PRP slightly improved the results of periapical healing, dentinal walls thickening, root lengthening (Jadhav et al. 2013, Narang et al. 2015) and apical closure (Jadhav et al. 2013).

Failures and adverse events

Failures were associated mainly with reinfection of the root canal system (Alobaid *et al.* 2014, Lin *et al.* 2014), root resorption (Nagata *et al.* 2014, Santiago *et al.* 2015) and failure to induce periapical bleeding (Ding *et al.* 2009, Bezgin *et al.* 2015). Critical crown fractures occurred in cases considered successful (Shimizu *et al.* 2012, 2013, Martin *et al.* 2013). Inadequate removal of biofilm, the presence of bacteria in dentinal tubules or defective restoration were also related to failures (Torabinejad & Turman 2011, Torabinejad & Faras 2012, Yadav *et al.* 2015).

Discussion

The studies included in this scoping review reported a high success rate for the 367 teeth under RCR. The survival of teeth under RCR was based on an increase in root length and width (apical closure), resolution of apical periodontitis and the absence of clinical signs and symptoms. Comparing radiographic outcomes in NIPT submitted to Ca(OH)₂ apexification, MTA apical plugs, and RCR (Jeeruphan *et al.* 2012), those treated with RCR showed an average increase of 28.2% in root width and 14.9% in root length, whilst those receiving an MTA plug increased only 6% in root length (Chen *et al.* 2012, Jadhav *et al.* 2012). The survival rate in the revascularized group was 100%, against MTA (95%) and Ca(OH)₂ apexification (77.2%).

The main objective of RCR is to generate pulp-like tissue to reduce the risk of tooth loss (Wigler et al.

2013). Knowledge regarding the nature of tissue formed inside the root canal is fundamental in forecasting tooth survival as well as treatment prognosis (Conde et al. 2016). However, there is a lack of histological and biomolecular data on the tissues responsible for apical closure, canal narrowing and even the recovery of pulp sensibility. Selected studies (Martin et al. 2013, Shimizu et al. 2013, Becerra et al. 2014, Lin et al. 2014, Lei et al. 2015) reported that continued root development was provided, mainly by cellular/acellular cementum and poorly mineralized bone. Tissues formed after PRP application were histologically similar to those without PRP, deprived of odontoblast-like polarized cells (Martin et al. 2013). Furthermore, a fibrous nonmineralized connective tissue with different degrees of inflammation and dystrophic calcifications was observed (Becerra et al. 2014). The evaluated teeth had closed apices in radiographic evaluation; meanwhile, cone-beam analysis, together with the morphological and histological findings, depicted that root elongation was achieved only in the lingual portion. This observation highlights the difficulty in establishing parameters to confirm clinical success after RCR.

To perform RCR, decontamination is carried out by applying disinfecting solutions without conventional mechanical instrumentation (Wigler et al. 2013). In the present scoping review, almost 100% of the included studies applied NaOCl. However, an histological/bacteriological analysis related the presence of necrotic debris, comprising a thick bacterial biofilm. in the apical portion of NIPT. In addition, bacterial clusters were found on root walls and in dentinal tubules (Lin et al. 2014). Alobaid et al. (2014) suggested that passive disinfection with NaOCl may not be sufficient to reduce/eliminate contamination. However, a greater bacterial reduction was observed after the irrigation of root canal systems with NaOCl compared to TAP or Ca(OH)₂ placement (Nagata et al. 2014). Due to its extended residual antimicrobial properties, CHX has been successfully associated with NaOCl as a disinfecting agent (Reynolds et al. 2009, Shin et al. 2009, Petrino et al. 2010, Shivashankar et al. 2012, Chen et al. 2013, McTigue et al. 2013) and with Ca(OH)2 as intracanal medicaments (Soares et al. 2013, Nagata et al. 2014).

When RCR was performed in traumatized teeth, TAP was as effective as $Ca(OH)_2$ in reducing spontaneous and induced pain as well as in repairing periapical lesions (Nagata *et al.* 2014). However, a high incidence of crown discoloration (83%) was associated

with TAP (Gelman & Park 2012, Nagata et al. 2014). In fact, the main concern related to TAP is the potential for tooth discoloration, derived from the contact between minocycline and the root walls during the time needed to eradicate the infection in RCR (Kim et al. 2010). Attempts to substitute minocycline by amoxicillin (Petrino et al. 2010, Thomson & Kahler 2010, Kahler et al. 2014), doxycycline (Jadhav et al. 2012, Nagy et al. 2014, Raju et al. 2014), clindamycin (McTigue et al. 2013, Kumar et al. 2014), tetracycline (Guven Polat et al. 2014) or cefaclor (Thibodeau & Trope 2007, Thibodeau 2009, Kim et al. 2012, Amit et al. 2014, Bezgin et al. 2014, 2015) have been reported. No discoloration was observed after the application of TAP containing cefaclor in a randomized clinical trial following-up 20 teeth for 18 months (Bezgin et al. 2015). Unaesthetic results were also associated with MTA, with crown discoloration being observed in 12 of 20 cases (60%) (Bezgin et al. 2015). Nevertheless, RCR was considered successful by the authors as the teeth were suitable for root canal treatment and the patient referred to prosthodontists for tooth restoration.

Root canal revascularization relies on the mechanical irritation of the periapical tissues to initiate bleeding into the canal to produce a blood clot, which is expected to act as a matrix where the migrating responsive cells will possibly adhere and differentiate to reestablish the physiological activities of the pulp-dentine complex (AAE 2013, Wigler et al. 2013). The impossibility of inducing initial bleeding comprises one of the main causes of failure of RCR (Ding et al. 2009). In multirooted teeth, after observing an inadequate level of haemorrhage in some canals, transferring blood between canals comprised an effective strategy (Cehreli et al. 2011). Bleeding and fibrin clot formation are the initial stage of wound healing after tissue injury. Fibrin is a biopolymer critical for haemostasis and wound healing (Mittal & Narang 2012), and it is responsible for blood clot formation and stabilization, acting as a 'trap' to retain the unknown cells enrolled in healing (Lovelace et al. 2011).

Based on tissue engineering principles (Langer & Vacanti 1993), a range of strategies has been proposed by incorporating artificial scaffolds, after the initial bleeding. The application of a gelatin hydrogel charged with basic fibroblast growth factor (bFGF) over the blood clot (Nagy et al. 2014) or injection of PRP into the apical third of the canal (Martin et al. 2013) did not appear to improve healing as both pulp-like tissue and odontoblastic cells were not observed in the

revascularized teeth. However, when a collagen sponge soaked with PRP was applied over the blood, a slight improvement in periapical healing, apical closure, root wall thickening and root lengthening was observed (Jadhav et al. 2013, Conde et al. 2016). The utilization of PRP and PRF has been reported more frequently in recent years (2012-2015), and they were feasible adjuncts to obtain clinical success over more than 30 months follow-up (Ray et al. 2015, Wang et al. 2015). PRP and PRF possess important differences regarding their properties to deliver growth factors (Mittal & Narang 2012). The releasing peak of growth factors from PRP takes place in the first day, decreasing significantly in the third day, whilst the releasing-GF peak of PRF, mainly for TGF-β1 and alkaline phosphatase, ensues on the 14th day (He et al. 2009). These properties can justify the better response of periapical healing, root lengthening and root wall thickening of PRF over PRP and conventional blood clots observed in studies comparing these techniques (Narang et al. 2015). The main disadvantages of PRP and PRF are related to the need for centrifugation, mainly to obtain the PRP (Mittal & Narang 2012), and the need to collect venous blood from young patients. One reported failure occurred after application of blood venous derivatives (Yadav et al. 2015).

The periapical region of NIPT possesses a population of MSC, named stem cells of the apical papilla – SCAPs - (Sonoyama et al. 2008), which are odontoblastic-progenitor cell thought to be enrolled in healing during RCR (Wigler et al. 2013). However, histological and immunohistochemical analysis performed after RCR identified structures staining positively for bone sialoprotein (BSP) but negatively for dentine sialoprotein (DSP), which are a protein enrolled in dentinogenesis (Martin et al. 2013, Shimizu et al. 2013, Becerra et al. 2014, Lin et al. 2014, Lei et al. 2015). It has been speculated that both the inherent bacterial contents of necrosed pulps and the application of Ca(OH)₂ as a temporary filling could be harmful for these cells (Nagata et al. 2014). In such a context, EDTA has been suggested to be applied in RCR as it can solubilize the growth factors fossilized in the dentine matrix (Graham et al. 2006), which seems to be essential for pulp regeneration (Conde et al. 2016). However, only 14 from the selected studies applied EDTA during RCR (Paryani & Kim 2013, Soares et al. 2013, Alobaid et al. 2014, Amit et al. 2014, Jadhav et al. 2014, 2015, Nagata et al. 2014, 2015, Bezgin et al. 2015, Lei et al. 2015, McCabe 2015, Nevins & Cymerman 2015, Ray et al. 2015).

Conclusion

Most of the cases reported a significant gain in root length and width in NIPT. Histological analysis revealed cementum-like tissue inside the root canal suggesting that RCR in NIPT provides repair instead regeneration. NaOCl and TAP were the most frequently used intracanal medicaments. However, such results must be carefully interpreted as most of them are derived from case reports and uncontrolled clinical trials. Besides, it is unclear whether the motivation to submit and publish cases of RCR failure is as high as the motivation to publish RCR successes. Therefore, the results of this analysis are likely to overestimate the actual success rate of RCR. Thus, well-designed randomized controlled trials comparing RCR with available apexification treatments are needed to address this important gap knowledge.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have stated explicitly that there are no conflicts of interest in connection with this article.

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