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## GERIATRIC DENTISTRY: FEATURES OF TREATING COMPLETE EDENTULISM IN THE ELDERLY

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Complete edentulism, or the loss of all teeth, is one of the most common problems among elderly patients. Tooth loss in many geriatric patients significantly reduces quality of life and complicates healthy eating. Modern dental technology helps to address this problem in older adults. This article highlights the specific aspects of treating complete edentulism in the elderly, modern treatment methods, expert opinions, and statistical data.

### **Causes and Consequences of Complete Edentulism in the Elderly**

The primary causes of complete edentulism include periodontal disease, dental caries, and a lack of adequate dental care over a long period. As people age, the condition of their teeth deteriorates, often leading to complete tooth loss. In these cases, patients are deprived not only of chewing function but also of aesthetics and clear speech quality.

Statistics show that, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 30% of the population over 65 suffers from complete edentulism globally. This rate may be even higher in low- and middle-income countries.

### **Modern Methods for Treating Complete Edentulism**

Several main approaches in modern dentistry are used to treat complete edentulism in the elderly:

1. **Traditional Dentures.** One of the most common methods is conventional acrylic-based dentures. These are suitable in cases with adequate bone tissue and alveolar ridge volume. The comfort and relative affordability of these dentures make them widely used. However, dentures may not fit well for elderly patients or may shift over time.
2. **Dental Implants.** Dental implantation holds a special place among modern treatment methods. In this approach, titanium implants are placed in the jawbone as artificial roots, upon which dentures are secured. This method provides excellent results in geriatric dentistry, as it ensures the stability of teeth and significantly improves the patient's quality of life.

*Expert Opinion:* Research indicates that dental implants are more effective than traditional dentures in restoring chewing function and enhancing quality of life. For example, studies conducted by J. Misch and colleagues show that satisfaction rates among patients with implants exceed 90%, which is higher compared to those with conventional dentures.

3. **Digital Technologies and CAD/CAM Systems**  
Digital technologies have also impacted geriatric dentistry. With CAD/CAM technology, dentures are made more accurately to match the individual needs of patients. Moreover, the process is considerably shortened with 3D scanning, which is convenient for the patient.

### **Challenges in Treating Complete Edentulism in the Elderly**

Several issues arise when treating complete edentulism in elderly patients. First, bone tissue atrophy complicates dental implantation. Additional surgical interventions may be required for bone regeneration in these patients. Furthermore, cardiovascular and endocrine-related health issues can complicate surgical procedures.

Statistics show that the success rate of surgeries related to complete edentulism in elderly patients may be lower than in younger patients. According to some sources, successful outcomes after dental implantation in patients over 70 years old are around 85%, whereas, in younger patients, success rates are between 95% and 98%.

**Expert Opinions.** Numerous studies have been conducted in geriatric dentistry on treating complete edentulism. Research by B. Chrcanovic and colleagues suggests that to achieve successful outcomes in elderly patients, several factors need to be considered, including the patient's general health, bone volume, and a specific rehabilitation plan. Such an approach helps to ensure successful, long-term treatment.

**Conclusion.** Geriatric dentistry requires consideration of various factors when treating complete edentulism in the elderly. Using dental implants, traditional dentures, and digital technologies plays a crucial role in improving quality of life and restoring oral health in elderly patients. Experts believe that these methods will continue to evolve, providing more convenient and effective solutions for older adults. Moreover, individualized approaches and modern technologies play a decisive role in these processes.

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**PRESSING TOPICS IN COMPLETE EDENTULISM: GLOBAL RESEARCH TRENDS, EMERGING THEMES, AND STATISTICAL INSIGHTS**

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**Introduction**

Complete edentulism, or total tooth loss, remains a significant health concern worldwide, particularly among the aging population. This condition affects not only oral health but also overall well-being, nutritional intake, and social interactions. In recent years, researchers and clinicians across different countries have increasingly focused on this issue, developing advanced prosthodontic solutions and innovative dental implant technologies to improve patient outcomes. This article delves into the