

Evaluation of Canal Transportation after Instrumentation with Three Different Nickel-Titanium Systems Using Computed Tomography

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Abstract: Introduction: The purpose of this study was to evaluate canal transportation (degree and direction) after instrumentation with ProTaper, WaveOne and hand NiTiFlex files using computed tomography (CT). **Methods:** Sixty extracted human mandibular first molars with severely curved mesiobuccal (MB) canals were selected and randomly divided into three groups (n=20) according to the used instrumentation technique as ProTaper, WaveOne, and hand NiTiFlex. Specimens were scanned before and after instrumentation with 640-multi slice CT at three levels: coronal, middle and apical and all tomograms were analyzed using VITREA 2 V3.8 Imaging Software. **Results:** Less transportation occurred with reciprocating WaveOne Primary instrument followed by rotary ProTaper and Hand NiTiFlex respectively ($P \leq 0.005$). Apical level showed the least canal transportation value with mesial tendency than other two levels. **Conclusions:** Single file reciprocating system prepared curved root canal with less canal transportation compared to full rotary and hand NiTi systems. Canal transportation occurred at the apical level less than middle and coronal levels.

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1. Introduction:

Root canal instrumentation is considered as one of the most important procedures during root canal treatment. This step determines the results of subsequent procedures which include canal irrigation and obturation [1].

A tooth with straight root and canal is considered as an exception rather than normal [2] and preparation of curved root canals is usually associated with unwanted alterations such as canal transportation, ledges and sometimes perforations [3]. Therefore, nickel-titanium (NiTi) instruments were introduced to overcome these mishaps as they possess two phenomena; super elasticity and shape memory which are not found in stainless steel instruments (St-St) [4].

ProTaper (Dentsply, Maillefer, Ballaigues, Switzerland) is a rotary NiTi system with multiple progressive taper and a convex triangular cross-section that enhances the cutting action with minimal transportation and improves safety [5, 6].

The use of reciprocating motion was suggested as an alternative to the conventional continuous rotation [7]. WaveOne (Dentsply, Maillefer, Ballaigues, Switzerland) is a single-use single-file NiTi system used in reciprocating mode that helps WaveOne file to successively progress along the canal path, whilst respecting the original root canal anatomy [8].

To assess the action of endodontic instruments, several methods have been proposed such as; radiographic imaging, cross sectioning, and

longitudinal cleavage of the root [1]. Recently, the use of computed tomography (CT) has been suggested for this purpose as it allows measuring the amount and direction of removed dentin after preparation in an accurate and non-destructive way [9].

Many attempts in the manufacturing of root canal preparation systems have been introduced for better maintaining of the original canal path without deviation. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to evaluate and compare transportation in curved root canals after instrumentation with rotary ProTaper, reciprocating WaveOne NiTi systems and hand NiTiFlex K-files using computed tomography.

2. Materials and Methods:

Selection of Specimens

Sixty extracted human mandibular first molars with separate mesiobuccal canals were collected. All canal should accommodate file # 15 as an initial file with curvature angle ranging from 25° - 45° according to Schnieder's method (10). The study protocol was approved by the local ethics committee of Tanta University.

Access opening cavities were prepared using round bur size # 3 (Dentsply, Maillefer) followed by Endo-Z (Dentsply, Maillefer). Teeth were numbered and randomly divided into three equal groups (n=20): Group I: ProTaper Universal up to F2, Group II: WaveOne Primary file, and Group III: hand NiTiFlex k- files up to master apical file size 25. A custom-made mold with Zetaplus heavy body impression

material (Zhermack, Italy) was made to support and fix samples while CT images were taken.

Multi-Slice Computed Tomography Analysis

The mounted specimens were placed in ONE Aquilion-640 multi-slice CT scanner (Toshiba, Japan) to be scanned for determination of MB canals' shape before instrumentation using the brain protocol supplied by the CT scanner. A complete volume of all specimens was viewed to select the desired specimen for analysis using VITREA 2 V3.8 Software (VITREA 2, Imaging Inc).

Three tomograms were selected for each assessed specimen [9]; the first corresponding to the area located 3 mm from the radiographic root apex (apical third), the second corresponding to 3 mm from the canal orifice (coronal third) and the third was at the middle third. CT scan images were then labeled and saved as JPG format.

Root Canal Biomechanical Preparation

Root canals were instrumented by the same operator and working length was visually determined by passing hand St-St K-file size 10 (MANI Inc, Japan) until it was visible at the apical foramen then subtracting 1 mm from that length [11]. A secured-glide path was ensured for NiTi rotary instrumentation using 0.02 tapered sizes 10 and 15 [9]. The preparation sequence was obtained using X-Smart Plus endodontic electro-motor (Dentsply, Maillefer) with a 16:1 gear reduction contra-angled handpiece following the manufacturer's preset mode and instructions for each system as follows:

Group I: MB root canals were prepared with ProTaper rotary system in crown down technique in the sequence of SX, S1, S2, F1 up to F2 (#25/0.08) respectively. All ProTaper instruments were discarded after preparing five canals [12].

Copious irrigation was used after each instrument with 2 ml of freshly prepared 5.25% NaOCL solution using a plastic disposable syringe with 27 gauge side-ended needle tip. The prepared canals were then flushed with 17% ethylene diamine tetracetic acid (EDTA) for 1 min and finally rinsed with normal saline solution. This irrigation protocol was applied for all groups' specimens.

Group II: Reciprocating WaveOne Primary file was used for MB root canal preparation in crown down technique. WaveOne primary files were replaced after instrumentation three canals corresponding to single use concept [13].

Group III: A classical crown down technique following Morgan and Montgomery [14] instructions using ISO 0.02 tapered hand NiTiFlex K-files. Coronal third enlargement was achieved with Gates Glidden drills size 3, 2 and 1 successively. Then root canal preparation was completed using reaming motion of NiTiFlex files in crown down manner up to

master apical file #/ 0.02. Gates Glidden instruments were discarded after preparing five canals [15] and each hand NiTiFlex K-file was used for preparation of only four root canals [16].

Each specimen was returned back to its respective place in the custom-made impression mold and repositioned in the same orientation for obtaining post-instrumentation CT images under the same scanning parameters of pre-instrumented CT.

Evaluation of Canal Transportation

Canal transportation was calculated for each specimen at three selected levels of the MB canal using both pre- and post-instrumentation CT images. Calculation of canal transportation was performed using special equation developed by Gambill et al. (17): $(a1 - a2) - (b1 - b2)$ where; **a1** is the shortest distance from the mesial edge of the root to the mesial edge of the uninstrumented canal, **b1** is the shortest distance from the distal edge of the root to the distal edge of the uninstrumented canal, **a2** is the shortest distance from the mesial edge of the root to the mesial edge of the instrumented canal, and **b2** is the shortest distance from the distal edge of the root to the distal edge of the instrumented canal (Fig.1).

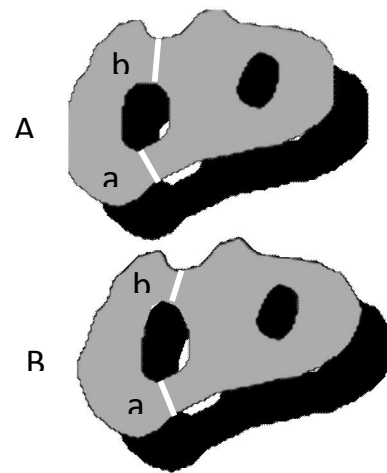


Fig.1: Diagrammatic representation of pre- (A) and post- (B) instrumentation CT scans for coronal level of P1 specimen showing a1, b1, a2 and b2 distances.

Evaluation of Canal Transportation Direction

According to this formula, a result of zero indicates no canal transportation, while results other than zero value representing direction of canal transportation. Positive values represent canal transportation toward the furcation region (distal), while negative values represent transportation away from furcal region (mesial) [17, 18].

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics was obtained in the form of mean and standard deviation (SD) and statistical

analysis was performed using One-Way Analysis of Variance with SPSS software version 17 (SPSS inc, Chicago) at significance level of P-value ≤ 0.05 . Multiple Pair wise comparisons were performed using Post-hoc Tukey test to determine which group or root canal level is significantly different from one another.

3. Results:

Mesiobuccal canal transportation results are presented in Table 1. Comparison between the three groups showed a significant difference at the three tested levels (P<0.05) with a significant difference between the tested levels only with Group II (WaveOne) (P<0.05).

Regarding root levels, apical level showed the least mean value of canal transportation followed by middle and coronal levels respectively with a significant difference in between (P<0.05). The least mean degree of canal transportation was statistically recorded with WaveOne (P<0.05), followed by NiTiFlex and the highest value with ProTaper regardless the tested level.

In all groups, cervical and middle thirds were transported distally toward the danger zone. However, the apical thirds were transported to the outer face of the root curvature without significant difference (P>0.05). Pre- and post-instrumentation CT scans at the apical level are represented in Fig. 2 for the three groups.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviations of canal transportation of the tested groups at the three levels.

Level	Group I (ProTaper)	Group II (WaveOne)	Group III (NiTiFlex)	P values
Coronal	0.52 ± 0.31	0.32 ± 0.18	0.38 ± 0.24	0.035*
Middle	0.47 ± 0.34	0.24 ± 0.23	0.30 ± 0.31	0.043*
Apical	0.40 ± 0.12	0.14 ± 0.12	0.18 ± 0.18	<0.001*
P value	0.391	0.013*	0.052	

*Significant statistical result at $p \leq 0.05$.

4. Discussion:

Preparation of curved root canal shows some difficulties and there is a tendency for all instrumentation techniques to divert the prepared canal away from its original axis [1].

NiTi rotary instruments have been shown a high efficiency in achieving optimal root canal shaping with less straightening and better centered preparations of curved root canals [19]. Several root canal preparation techniques together with NiTi systems and different kinematics have been developed to maintain the original canal shape [9].

In the present study, canal transportation was evaluated under realistic circumstances using extracted human permanent lower molars to detect the instrumentation effect on the root canal shape.

Although the simulated canals in resin blocks have the advantage of standardized shape, size, taper and curvature; the hardness encountered in these acrylic block is completely different from that of normal dentin in addition to heat generation which may soften the resin materials [19-21].

Mesiobuccal root canals (MB) of mandibular molars with severe curves were selected because they contain canals that are often narrow and curved in two planes increasing the level of instrumentation difficulty [22]. Standardization of the initial canal width was performed by selecting only MB canals accommodating size #15 K-file as an initial apical file [8,9,23] and exhibiting (25°-45°) curvature according to Schneider's method [10]; this canal anatomy would likely lead to preparation errors such as canal transportation [11].

Furthermore, crowns were maintained to simulate as closely as possible the clinical endodontic practice in which the interference of cervical dentin projections creates tension on files during root canal instrumentation [24]. In addition, sectioning of the distal roots was performed to facilitate insertion and removal of specimens into the custom-made mold and enhance further evaluation of multi-slice CT scan images before and after instrumentation [25].

Final master apical file preparation diameter was restricted to size # 25 for all canals to achieve similar final apical preparation diameters [26] and keep standardization between the tested NiTi groups [27]. Crown down technique was used in preparation of all MB canals as this approach is recommended for curved root canal preparation; as it promotes straight-line access which reduces frictional intra-canal stresses, provides a conical configuration without excessively increasing the width of the apical third, allows easier instrumentation with better control of instruments, minimizes apical extrusion of debris and subsequently reduces canal aberrations such as root canal transportation [28].

Multi-slice CT imaging technique was used in this study to evaluate root canal transportation as it is considered as a noninvasive reproducible three dimensional method used for evaluation of external and internal morphology of the tooth and assessment of the degrees and directions of transportation before and after instrumentation, in addition to the advantages of eliminating both the limitation of the serial sectioning technique with its excessive tissue removal [29,30] and the drawback of the two-dimensional images of the traditional longitudinal radiographic method [31].

With various degrees of root canal curvatures, transportation of the canal during instrumentation occurs most frequently in three different levels [9]; the apical third where the apical portion of the instrument

enlarges the external wall of the canal, the middle third where the instrument tends to cut the internal wall of the canal and at the opening facing the external wall of the root canal [32]. Thus; canal transportation was evaluated in this study at these levels to investigate all possible canal transportations.

Using a specific formula developed by Gambill et al. (1996) [17], CT scan images was used to evaluate canal transportation by measuring the remaining dentin thickness around the original canal before instrumentation and comparing it to that around the post-instrumented canal to achieve accurate determination of the tendency, degree and course of canal deviation in two different directions [33].

The current study compared the ability of two NiTi systems; ProTaper continuous rotating system used up to F2 finishing file and WaveOne Primary reciprocating single-file system in preserving original canal path in comparison to the traditional hand NiTiFlex K-files. NiTi systems of the present study have four different concepts; file design, metallurgy, movement kinematics and the number of used files to complete root canal preparation.

In this study, Group I prepared with ProTaper rotary system showed the highest canal transportation which may be attributed to the sharp cutting edges of the convex triangle cross sectional design with its progressive taper sequence along the shaft [34]. In addition, ProTaper files have a greater number of spiraling flutes (i.e. smaller pitch) than WaveOne file which increases stiffness along the shaft of ProTaper [35].

Group II prepared with WaveOne reciprocating system showed the least value of canal transportation. A statistical significant difference was recorded with Group I (ProTaper) when compared with Group II (WaveOne) at the three tested levels and this may be explained by the special characteristics of reciprocating WaveOne system which are M-Wire technology, file design, reciprocating action and single use for each file [23].

Manufacturing process of WaveOne M-Wire technology promotes greater flexibility when compared with the conventional NiTi alloy of ProTaper system [36], along with its modified cross sectional design which results in lower cutting efficiency and less chip space, thus less canal transportation [8,9,37]. In addition, the reciprocating motion promotes a higher flexibility and concentricity that contributing to a balanced action motion by repeated clockwise and counterclockwise rotation. This motion allows continuous release of the file when engaged to the inner surface of the root canal during the cutting and shaping procedure [37-39] leading to reduction in torsional stress by preventing binding of the file, thereby canal transportation is reduced [40].

Moreover, this motion produces beneficial shaping results by reducing the screwing effect, yet this effect can be a reason for canal transportation because it occurs with active files that rotates in continuous motion and results in over-instrumentation beyond the apical foramen during canal preparation [37]. Furthermore, this motion is able to maintain the curvature without distorting the shape of the root canal and consequently results in lower possibility of canal transportation when compared to continuous rotary motion [37,41,42]. Finally, regarding canal transportation of single file preparation technique, this single file could produce a preserved preparation of curved root canals whenever used in reciprocating motion [8].

A significant difference was observed with ProTaper when compared with hand NiTiFlex K-files at the apical level. This may be due to the higher flexibility of the 0.02 tapered hand NiTi files in addition to their less taper allowing them to enlarge the apical portion without touching the previously flared coronal portion of the canal. Therefore, the lateral force produced in the apical preparation is diminished and consequently minimizes the incidence of apical transportation [43] in contrast to the more tapered files of ProTaper system.

Findings of this study are in agreement with Kim et al. [35] study who reported that reciprocating WaveOne single file system did not create excessive transportation compared with rotary ProTaper system. In addition, Berutti et al. [23] agreed with our results as they found that reciprocating WaveOne Primary single file maintained the original canal anatomy better with less modification of the canal curvature when compared to rotary ProTaper system up to F2 file. A study by Maitin et al. [44] also agreed with these results when compared the shaping abilities of four different rotary endodontic instruments (ProTaper, K3, Race and MTWO) using spiral CT and concluded that canal prepared with ProTaper system had more canal transportation at all the three levels of root canal.

Furthermore, the results obtained from this study confirmed the findings obtained by Tambe et al. [45] who compared canal transportation and centering ability of three rotary NiTi systems (ProTaper, OneShape and WaveOne) using cone beam CT. Dhingra et al. [46] reported similar results when the canal curvature modification was evaluated after canal instrumentation with WaveOne Primary reciprocating file was compared to other systems.

In contrary, our results are in disagreement with other studies [47-49] which did not demonstrate any drastic differences when compared reciprocating motion with continuous rotation. The contradictions may be due to the continuous change in direction of

the rotation under engine-driven reciprocating motion which might cause uncontrolled movement; resulting in greater canal transportation [37]. However, these studies recommended reciprocating motion as a good alternative method to prevent procedural errors.

Apical level showed the least value of canal transportation with a significant statistical difference when compared with the other two levels (coronal and middle). This was in accordance with study by Marzouk et al. [50] in which apical third significantly recorded the least canal transportation value. The least canal transportation at the apical level for Group I and II can be explained by the noncutting tip design of both ProTaper and WaveOne systems which enhances instrumentation with minimal apical pressure and functions as a guide for easier penetration without canal deviation [51,52], besides the standardized MAF diameter size # 25 for all tested groups [25]. Furthermore, the modified convex triangular cross sectional design with radial land [8] of the apical portion of WaveOne reciprocating files [53] could support the edge of the cutting angle and reduce canal transportation by distributing the pressure on the blades more uniformly around the circumference of a curved canal [54].

While, the least value of canal transportation at the apical level for Group III may be attributed to the using of crown down instrumentation technique which produces less constraint to the used files, better control of the file tip and subsequently less apical zipping and transportation [19, 55].

On the contrary, the highest mean value of canal transportation at the coronal level may be related to the highly-tapered coronal cross section (i.e. 0.08) in combination with the increased core diameter of both rotary ProTaper F2 and reciprocating WaveOne Primary files and the brushing motion during rotary preparation with S1 and S2 files toward the mesial aspect [22], while for NiTiFlex group; Gates Glidden drills were used for coronal third enlargement which might be responsible for the highest transportation at this level.

In ProTaper group, there was no statistical significant difference in canal transportation between the three tested levels, yet the coronal level showed the highest transportation value. As long as cross-sectional design has an effect on canal transportation [56], this result may be due to the thick core of the convex triangle cross section of ProTaper file which makes it less flexible and more resistant to bending leading to deviation in the coronal region.

This finding was in accordance with Miglani et al. [57] who found no statistical significant difference between 7.5 and 5 mm slices while, there was statistical significant less transportation in 3.5 mm than both 5 and 7.5 mm slices. In addition to Schäfer

et al. study [58] in which 0.08 tapered files were recommended to safely prepare apical region of root canals without creating severe aberrations unless using less tapered files before 0.08 tapered ones.

However, this disagrees with You et al. [37] who found no statistical significant difference between 3 and 5 mm slices but the apical sections showed the highest mean of canal transportation. The results of the current study can't be compared directly with those of the previous one [37] as the difference in using simulated canals and the microscopic superimposed images as an evaluation method for their study.

Coronal level of WaveOne group also showed the highest canal transportation followed by middle level, while the apical level showed the least value with a statistical significant difference between the coronal and apical levels. This may be due to the difference of WaveOne cross sectional design as a modified convex triangular cross section with radial lands at the tip end and a convex triangular cross section at the coronal end [59]. The radial lands at the tip, the cutting angle projected and the reciprocating working motion are claimed to keep WaveOne instrument centered, whilst advancing apically into the root canal [60].

This result was augmented by a recent study conducted by Amaral et al. [61]. While, the present study findings regarding transportation of the coronal third after instrumentation with WaveOne system differ from those found in another study by Bürklein et al. [62] as their study was transformed on simulated resin blocks which may explain these conflicting results.

In addition, NiTiFlex group showed the highest canal transportation at the coronal level followed by middle level, while the apical level showed the least value of canal transportation; this reflects the difference in flexibility between Gates Glidden drills used in coronal section flaring and flexible 0.02 tapered NiTi files used for apical part instrumentation. However, this finding is in disagreement with studies by Lam et al. [63] and Oliveira et al. [64]; they stated that the greatest transportation occurs at the apex and 2 mm from the apex. It should be noted that simulated root canals were used which explaining the changes in obtained results.

Comparison of different levels regardless the used instrumentation technique revealed that the least canal transportation value was associated with the apical level, while the highest value was associated with the coronal one. This may be attributed to the difference in cross sectional geometry of MB canal of lower first molar among its three tested levels; starting with an oval cross section at the cervical and middle two thirds while ending with a rounded cross sectional configuration at its apical third [65]. Consequently, the

mechanical action of files is unlikely to affect the entire circumference of the oval cross section while, preparing the round cross sectional part of the canal with more uniform dentin removal [3].

The direction of canal transportation after instrumentation was also evaluated; results showed greater tendency toward the mesial aspect (outer) curvature of the root canal for all groups at apical third. While, the coronal and middle levels in all instrumentation groups; a greater tendency toward the distal aspect (inner) curvature of the root canal was observed. This may be attributed to the straightening of root canal instrument inside the curved canal with uneven removal of dentin from the inner aspect of coronal portion and outer aspect of apical portion, in addition to the used crown down approach which has a tendency to straighten curved canals and causes transportation toward the furcation at the middle and coronal levels predisposing the strip perforation as a susceptible consequence to canal transportation mainly found in this 'danger zone' of mesial roots of mandibular molars [66].

Several studies have reported similar results [64, 67], while these results were opposed by Lam et al. [63] study in which deviation toward the inner curvature aspect was observed and this conflict may be attributed to using S-shaped Endo-training blocks instead of natural teeth, however Peters et al. [68] demonstrated that there is no constant pattern regarding the direction of apical transportation. In addition, You et al. [37] conceived that ProTaper files have a tendency to straighten curved canals and causes transportation toward the furcation at middle and coronal levels, while transportation at the apical 1-3 mm level occurs toward the outer aspect of curvature.

5. Recommendations:

ProTaper is not encouraged as a rotary NiTi technique for apical preparation in severely curved canals. WaveOne reciprocating system is recommended in preparing canals with moderate and severe curvatures.

Further modifications in NiTi metallurgy, file design and system kinematics of current NiTi systems are recommended for better preservation of original canal curvature.

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