ACCELERATED ORTHODONTICS: TECHNIQUES AND EFFICACY

Rajdeep Kaur[1], Sukhpal Kaur[2], Geetika Puri[3]

[1]Associate professor, [2]Professor, Department of Orthodontics &Dentofacial Orthopaedics, Desh Bhagat Dental College & Hospital, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab.

[3]Associate professor, Department of Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopaedics, Dasmesh Institute of Research & Dental Sciences, Faridkot, Punjab.

Corresponding author: Dr. Rajdeep Kaur, Associate Professor, Department of Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopaedics, Desh Bhagat Dental College & Hospital, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab. Email id: dentistchahal@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Orthodontic treatment is typically a lengthy and demanding process, which can discourage many patients from pursuing needed corrective care. The prolonged duration of traditional orthodontic approaches may contribute to discomfort, increased risks of periodontal issues, and reduced patient compliance. In response to these challenges, the field of accelerated orthodontics has emerged with the goal of shortening treatment time without compromising and in some cases improving clinical outcomes.

Accelerated orthodontics represents a major advancement in contemporary practice, offering the possibility of substantially reducing treatment durations, increasing patient comfort, and boosting overall satisfaction. This is especially important in today's fast-paced world, where patients often prefer quicker and more efficient treatment options. While conventional orthodontic therapy may require 18–24 months, accelerated techniques such as corticotomies, micro-osteoperforations, and low-level laser therapy have demonstrated the ability to shorten this period by 30–50%. As such, accelerated orthodontics has become an appealing and valuable alternative in modern clinical settings.

This article reviews the various accelerated orthodontic techniques, their biological foundations, benefits, limitations, and effectiveness as documented in current literature and clinical research. A critical comparison of these methods is also provided to highlight their clinical potential and identify areas where further investigation is needed.

Keywords: Accelerated Orthodontics, Efficacy, Orthodontic Treatment, Surgical Techniques.

INTRODUCTION:

Orthodontic treatment plays a crucial role in correcting dental malocclusions and improving both function and appearance. However, conventional orthodontic therapy often lasts 18 to 24 months or longer, which can leave patients feeling frustrated due to extended discomfort, inconvenience, and overall treatment fatigue. This demand for quicker and more efficient options has driven the advancement of accelerated orthodontics, a field dedicated to shortening treatment time while maintaining effective and stable results.

Traditional orthodontic movement depends on the natural bone-remodeling process, a slow biological response to mechanical forces. Because this process progresses gradually, it limits the speed at which teeth can safely be moved. As a result, clinicians and researchers have investigated methods that stimulate or enhance bone remodeling without jeopardizing dental or periodontal health. Accelerated orthodontics includes a wide range of approaches, such as minimally invasive surgical procedures, device-assisted therapies, and pharmacological techniques, each targeting an increase in the rate of tooth movement through different mechanisms. Early studies in this area concentrated on surgical methods like corticotomies and periodontally accelerated osteogenic orthodontics (PAOO), both of which showed notable decreases in overall treatment duration.

While standard orthodontic intervention typically requires 18–24 months, sometimes longer for more complex cases so accelerated techniques have the potential to cut this time significantly, in some instances by as much as 50%. Corticotomy-assisted treatment, for example, has been reported to shorten therapy by approximately 30–50%, whereas low-level laser therapy (LLLT) may reduce treatment length by around 25%.[1,2]

These findings highlight a noticeable advantage in reducing overall treatment time, although further research is still needed to assess long-term stability and identify potential risks associated with accelerated methods. Earlier, more invasive procedures were linked to drawbacks such as postoperative discomfort and possible surgical complications. In response, newer noninvasive strategies such as low-level laser therapy (LLLT) and vibration-based

devices—have been developed, providing effective alternatives with fewer adverse effects. Pharmacological approaches that influence bone metabolism have also shown promise in improving the efficiency of orthodontic tooth movement. Numerous studies have examined these various techniques, revealing a mix of encouraging results as well as important limitations that warrant continued investigation:

SURGICAL TECHNIQUES (CORTICOTOMY AND PAOO):

Several earlier studies have reported that PAOO can shorten treatment time by as much as 50% while still achieving stable long-term outcomes.3Corticotomy procedures have been shown to shorten treatment duration by approximately 30–50%. However, they may be associated with greater postoperative discomfort, a higher risk of root resorption, and increased costs compared with traditional orthodontic approaches.[1,3]

Micro-Osteoperforations(MOPs)

Research indicates that MOPs can speed up tooth movement by triggering a localized inflammatory response. However, their effectiveness varies among individuals, and performing too many perforations may result in unnecessary discomfort or tissue trauma.[4]

Low-LevelLaserTherapy(LLLT)

A meta-analysis reported that LLLT can stimulate both osteoblastic and osteoclastic activity, thereby accelerating tooth movement. By enhancing bone metabolism, LLLT may reduce treatment time by roughly 25%. Its effectiveness, however, depends heavily on laser settings and treatment frequency, and questions regarding long-term safety remain.[5]

Vibration-Based Devices (e.g., AcceleDent, Propel VPro+) Miles et al. (2012) observed that vibration-assisted appliances may facilitate bone remodelling and shorten treatment duration. Despite this, research findings are mixed, with some studies showing little to no significant improvement in treatment speed.[5]

Pharmacological Approaches (Prostaglandins, Vitamin D, PTH)

Prostaglandin injections have been shown to increase osteoclast activity and subsequently enhance tooth movement. Although they improve bone remodeling, their systemic effects limit clinical use. Overall, pharmacological methods remain restricted due to potential side effects and regulatory limitations.

Additional minimally invasive surgical options, such as piezocision, also demonstrate notable acceleration with reduced trauma.[7] Studies further suggest that combining techniques may be more effective than relying on a single method, and that genetic factors can impact treatment outcomes.[8,9]

Although accelerated orthodontic methods show considerable promise, challenges persist—such as variability in patient response, risks including root resorption or periodontal complications, and insufficient evidence regarding long-term stability. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of current acceleration techniques, assess their effectiveness based on available clinical research, and discuss associated risks and future directions in the field.[10-12]

TECHNIQUES IN ACCELERATED ORTHODONTICS:

Corticotomy-Assisted Orthodontics:

Corticotomy is a minimally invasive surgical technique in which small cuts are made in the cortical bone surrounding the teeth to facilitate faster movement. Its effectiveness is rooted in the regional acceleratory phenomenon (RAP), a biological response that increases bone turnover and accelerates orthodontic tooth movement. During the procedure, selective decortication of the alveolar bone is performed using a surgical bur or piezoelectric instruments, creating a temporary reduction in bone density that allows teeth to shift more easily through the softened bone.(figure: 1) This approach is frequently combined with bone grafting in a procedure known as Periodontally Accelerated Osteogenic Orthodontics (PAOO). PAOO not only speeds up tooth movement but also improves bone volume and long-term stability. Key advantages of corticotomy-based methods include significantly reduced treatment duration, enhanced bone remodeling, and compatibility with conventional orthodontic appliances.It has also some Limitations like Invasive procedure requiring surgical intervention; it hasPost-surgical discomfort and swelling are possible risks of corticotomy-based procedures, and successful outcomes

require clinicians experienced in Periodontally Accelerated Osteogenic Orthodontics (PAOO).

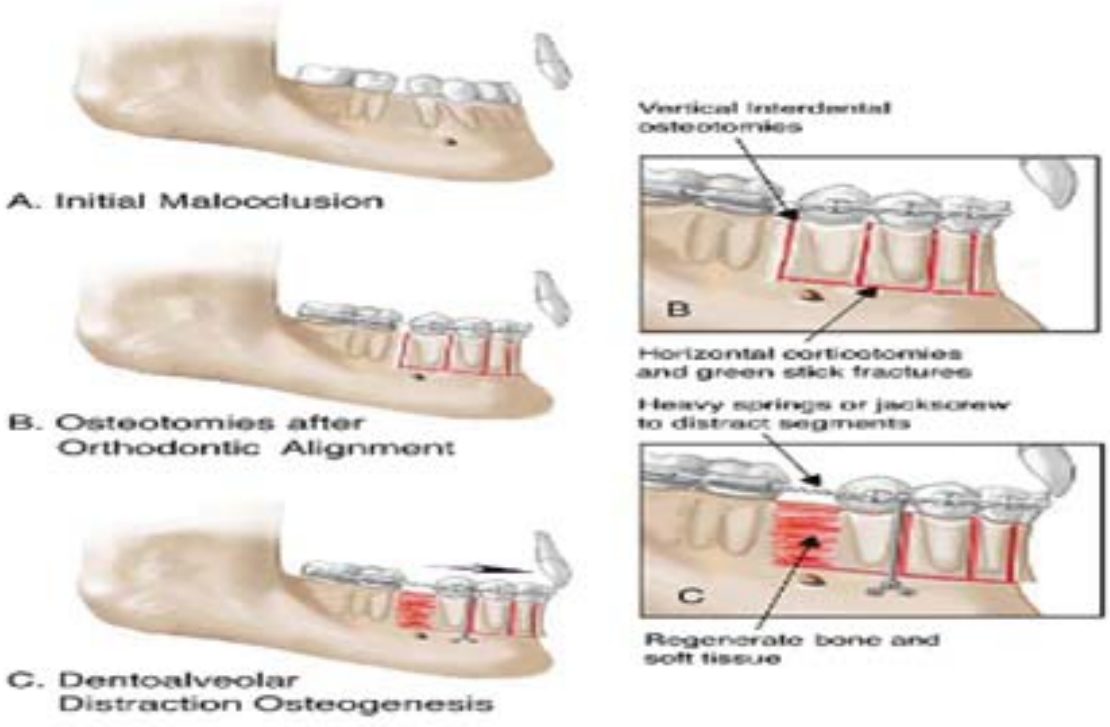

Figure 1:

Micro-Osteoperforations (MOPs)

MOPs involve creating small perforations in the alveolar bone to stimulate cytokine release and promote bone remodeling, thereby increasing the rate of tooth movement. A specialized tool is used to make these micro-perforations in the cortical bone, triggering an inflammatory response that boosts osteoclast and osteoblast activity. This heightened bone turnover reduces resistance to tooth movement and increases the effectiveness of orthodontic forces.(figure: 2)

Advantages:

- Minimally invasive and can be performed chairside
- Generally causes little discomfort
- Reduces treatment duration without major surgery

Limitations:

- Variable effectiveness among patients
- May require repeated sessions
- Limited long-term clinical evidence

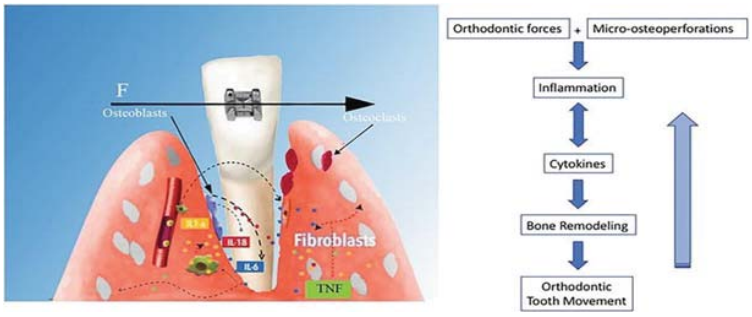

Figure: 2

Piezocision

Piezocision is a minimally invasive procedure that uses small gingival incisions and piezoelectric instruments to create precise cuts in the alveolar bone, promoting rapid bone remodeling. Because piezoelectric energy is highly selective, it minimizes damage to surrounding tissues and encourages faster healing compared with traditional corticotomy.(Figure:3)

Advantages:

- Less invasive than conventional corticotomy
- Enhances healing and tissue stability
- Shortens orthodontic treatment time

Limitations:

- Requires specialized devices
- May cause postoperative discomfort
- Effectiveness depends on individual bone biology

Figure:3

Vibration and Mechanical Stimulation

Devices such as AcceleDent and Propel VPro+ deliver low-magnitude, high-frequency vibrations intended to stimulate bone remodeling and improve the efficiency of orthodontic tooth movement. Patients typically use these devices at home for a few minutes each day alongside their braces or aligners.(figure:4)

Advantages:

- Completely non-invasive
- Easy for patients to use independently
- May improve comfort during treatment

Limitations:

- Mixed research findings on overall effectiveness
- Requires consistent patient compliance
- Often costly and not accessible to all patients

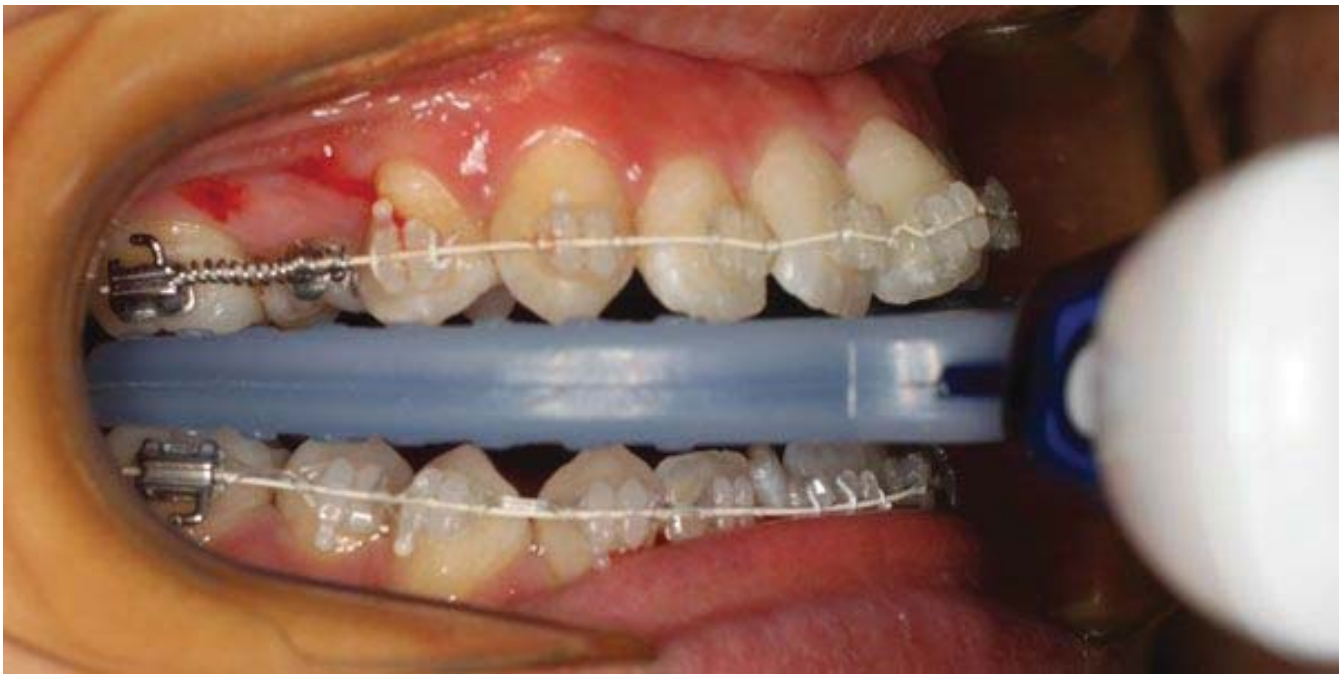

Figure: 4

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Advantages:

- Completely non-invasive
- Easy for patients to use independently
- May improve comfort during treatment

Limitations:

- Requires multiple treatment sessions
- Not uniformly effective for all patients
- Equipment and treatment costs may limit widespread use[12]

Pharmacological Approaches

Pharmacological techniques involve administering agents such as prostaglandins, vitamin D, and parathyroid hormone to stimulate bone remodeling and speed up tooth movement. These substances enhance osteoclast and osteoblast activity. Some agents, such as relaxin, can soften periodontal ligaments, making tooth movement more efficient.

Advantages:

- Non-surgical option
- Can be personalized to specific patient needs

Limitations:

- Potential systemic side effects
- Limited long-term clinical data
- Variable patient responses

Efficacy of Accelerated Orthodontic Techniques

The success of accelerated orthodontic approaches is influenced by several factors, including patient cooperation, individual biological responses, and the specific technique employed. Research indicates that corticotomy can shorten treatment duration by roughly 30–50%, while methods such as micro-osteoperforations and vibration therapy show more variable outcomes. Low-level laser therapy can be effective but requires consistent and properly timed application. Pharmacological strategies remain largely experimental due to the absence of standardized protocols.

Recent clinical evidence suggests that combining two or more acceleration methods for instance, pairing micro-osteoperforations with vibration devices or integrating corticotomy with LLLT may yield enhanced results. However,

patient-to-patient variability continues to pose challenges, highlighting the importance of individualized treatment plans. Long-term stability is another key concern, as accelerated movement may increase the potential for root resorption and periodontal issues. Patient comfort also plays an essential role in method selection; many individuals prefer less invasive techniques such as vibration therapy and laser treatments over surgical procedures.[13]

Despite technological progress, achieving consistent, predictable, and reproducible clinical outcomes remains a significant hurdle, emphasizing the need for further research and innovation.

Psychological and Economic Factors

Beyond clinical effectiveness, psychological and financial considerations strongly influence the adoption of accelerated orthodontic methods. Patient compliance may be affected by perceived discomfort, procedural invasiveness, and cost. Non-invasive techniques such as vibration-based appliances or LLLT are often more appealing due to their reduced discomfort and absence of surgery. However, these options are usually expensive and may not be covered by insurance, limiting accessibility for some individuals.

Additionally, fear of surgical procedures or unfamiliarity with newer technologies can influence patient decision-making. Understanding these psychological and economic factors is essential for clinicians when presenting treatment options and guiding patients toward appropriate choices.

Risks and Considerations

Although accelerated orthodontic techniques offer clear advantages, they are also associated with important risks:

- **Increased discomfort:** Surgical procedures may cause greater pain and swelling than traditional orthodontics.
- **Root resorption:** Faster tooth movement can heighten the risk of shortening tooth roots, potentially affecting long-term dental health.
- **Periodontal damage:** Techniques like corticotomy and PAOO may increase the likelihood of gum recession or reduced bone support.
- **Surgical complications:** Invasive procedures carry risks such as infection, bleeding, and delayed healing.
- **Unpredictable outcomes:** Biological differences—including age, genetics, and bone quality—lead to variations in treatment response.
- **High cost:** Many accelerated techniques are expensive and not universally accessible.
- **Relapse potential:** Rapid movement does not guarantee long-term stability; inadequate retention can result in relapse.
- **Patient compliance:** Some methods require diligent at-home participation, such as daily use of vibration devices.

Research has documented the potential for root resorption in accelerated treatments. For example, Hassan et al. (2010) reported root resorption in approximately 15–20% of patients undergoing corticotomy-assisted orthodontics. Studies focused on micro-osteoperforations have found root resorption rates ranging from 5% to 10%, depending on patient characteristics. These findings highlight the importance of cautious case selection and thorough monitoring throughout treatment.[12]

CONCLUSION:

Accelerated orthodontics presents promising strategies to shorten treatment duration and enhance the overall patient experience.[14] Each method, however, comes with distinct benefits and limitations. Surgical techniques, such as corticotomy and piezocision, have demonstrated substantial effectiveness, whereas non-invasive approaches like vibration therapy and low-level laser therapy still require further validation. Future studies should aim to optimize these methods and establish standardized clinical protocols for broader implementation.

Combining multiple acceleration strategies may offer superior outcomes compared to using a single technique alone. A patient-centered approach taking into account biological factors, treatment objectives, and individual compliance is critical for selecting the most appropriate acceleration method. Emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, have the potential to further improve treatment planning, predictability, and efficiency in accelerated orthodontics.

Continued research and well-designed clinical trials are essential to refine these techniques, enhance their accessibility, and make them more cost-effective for patients.

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