

1 *Review*

2 **Maxillary Canine Impaction and Unilateral Cleft Lip and**  
3 **Palate: A Review of the Current Literature**

4

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21 **Abstract:** The present review aims to investigate the effect of alveolar bone grafting in  
22 canine impacted unilateral cleft lip and palate patients. The goal of this review is to  
23 identify and highlight the factors that may cause maxillary canine impaction, the role of  
24 primary and secondary bone graft and dental anomalies that may affect canine impaction  
25 in patients with cleft lip and palate.

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27 **Keywords:** Maxillary canine, Cleft lip, Cleft Palate

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## 32 **1.0 Introduction**

33 Worldwide, UCLP (Unilateral Cleft Lip and Palate) has a prevalence of 0.5 to 3 per 1000  
34 births.<sup>1</sup> Among 10 to 20% of these children, the cleft is part of a syndrome [1]. Strong  
35 variations exist according to gender, population, geographic region and maternal  
36 characteristics. UCLP is found to be more common in the left than the right side with ratio  
37 2: 1, more often in boys than girls with ratio 2: 1 and more common in the Caucasian  
38 population [1-3]. The aetiology of clefts involves both genetic and local factors[2].

## 39 **1.1 What is Canine Impaction**

40 Canine impaction can be defined as an infra osseous position of the canine after the expected  
41 eruption time [4]. Usually a palatal displaced maxillary canine will result in an impaction[5].  
42 Canine impaction in the general population varies from 0.8 to 5.2% [4].

## 43 **1.2 Theories and etiology related to Canine Impaction**

44 The etiology of canine impaction is summarized in two theories which try to explain the  
45 occurrence of palatal displaced canines. The first theory is the guidance theory which states  
46 that the canine tooth is insufficiently guided by eruption, by an excess of space in the apical  
47 part of the maxilla due to a hypo-plastic or absent lateral incisor or late developing tooth  
48 arches with spacing. The second theory is the genetic theory, in which a developmental  
49 disorder in the dental lamina is described as the cause for the abnormal angular eruption [4].  
50 Other reasons for retention of the canine is lack of space, persistence of the primary canine  
51 and displacement of the canine's germ by the developing maxillary sinus [6]. Commonly, in  
52 labial impacted canine crowding is the primary cause. In 83% of the labial impacted canine  
53 teeth, there is a lack of space, whereas in palatal impaction this is only in 15 to 18% of the  
54 cases [4, 7]. Furthermore, a labially impacted canine tooth will usually erupt naturally high  
55 in the labial sulcus, while a palatally impacted canine erupts without intervention. This is  
56 probably due to the thick, palatal, cortical bone and the dense, thick and resistant, overlying,  
57 palatal mucosa [7].

## 58 **1.3 Clinical Findings to Predict Canine Impaction:**

59 Clinically, it can be anticipated that a canine can be impacted when: 1. The left and right side  
60 are asymmetrical with respect to each other. 2. The primary canine remains intact until 15  
61 years of age. 3. If the canines are not palpable at their normal place (as labial bulge) despite  
62 advanced occlusal development and somatic maturity. 4. If the eruption of the lateral incisor  
63 is late, with distal or labial inclination or migration and 5. If a palatal bulge is present [7, 8].  
64 Some authors believe that the risk of canine tooth impaction can also be partly predicted on  
65 the basis of dentofacial characteristics and by evaluating the transversal maxillary width [4].

66 Lastly, impaction can also be detected via radiographic evaluation [9]. On a panoramic  
67 image, 4 radiographic factors were correlated with predicting the prognosis for an impacted  
68 canine. These are the angulation between the tooth axis and the midline, the vertical distance  
69 of the crown tip to the occlusal plane, the anteroposterior position of the root point relative  
70 to the center line and the degree of overlap between the angle tooth crown tip and the lateral  
71 incisor [4, 10]. Warford et al.,[11] investigated the mesiodistal location of the canine crown  
72 with respect to the neighboring teeth (sector) and the angulation with respect to a horizontal  
73 reference line as predictors for angle tooth impaction. They concluded that if the sector was  
74 more mesially localized, the risk of impaction is greater. The angulation, however, did not  
75 contribute significantly in predicting angular tooth impaction. Similarly, Katsnelson et  
76 al.,[12] attempted to determine the palatal or buccal position of an impacted canine tooth by  
77 measuring the angle between tooth axis and occlusal plane. Their results showed that if the  
78 angle was greater than  $65^\circ$ , the probability is 26.6 times greater that the canine is situated  
79 buccally [12]. Similarly, Sajnani and King [13] noted that from the age of 5 there is a  
80 significant difference in distance from the canine cuspid to the occlusal plane between the  
81 canine that will be impacted and its contralateral side. From the age of 9, the impacted canine  
82 tooth is more located in mesial sector and is increasingly tilted towards mesial with increased  
83 canine angle to the midline, in contrast to the non-impacted contralateral which is  
84 respectively located just above the primary canine and which is almost vertically  
85 angulated[13].

#### 86 **1.4 Adverse effects of Canine Impaction with interceptive treatment modalities**

87 Adverse effects of an impacted canine were the migration of adjacent teeth and loss of arch  
88 length, internal resorption, dentogenic cyst formation, external tooth/root resorption of the  
89 impacted canine, infection (mainly in case of partial impaction), pain and combinations of  
90 the above[4, 7]. Furthermore, patients with an impacted canine tooth require a longer  
91 treatment period and the orthodontic treatment should be started early to avoid ankylosis of  
92 the canine or resorption on the roots of the incisors [8, 14] The interceptive treatment for a  
93 displaced or impacted maxillary canine is extraction of the primary canine with maxillary  
94 expansion. Combining primary canine extraction with a cervical pull headgear would  
95 significantly increase the success of treatment according to Leonardi et al.,[15] and Bacetti  
96 et al.,[16]. The possible treatments options when the canine is effectively impacted are: 1.  
97 No treatment and follow-up 2. surgical release, which is also the most desirable solution 3.  
98 auto-transplantation of the canine 4. the prosthetic replacement, 5. extracting the canine and  
99 the first premolar into this position and 6. extracting the canine and posterior segmental  
100 osteotomy to move the buccal segment to mesial and thus closing the space. One must avoid  
101 extraction of the canine at all times because of its aesthetic and functional importance [17].

102 Extraction is only exceptionally indicated as in the case of ankylosis, internal or external root  
103 resorption, root dilatation, pathological changes such as infection or cyst formation[7].

104

### 105 **1.5 Canine eruption and UCLP (Unilateral Cleft Lip and Palate) Patients**

106 All maxillary canines move incisally, buccally and mesially on both cleft and non-cleft sides  
107 [17]. If the lateral incisor is present, it is usually located on the side of the bone defect. The  
108 canine tooth, on the other hand, is usually located at the distal edge of the gap or is superior  
109 to the bony defect[18]. Russell and McLeod.,[19] stated that the canine teeth get more vertical  
110 angulation during eruption. Lindauer et al.,[20] had established that in UCLP patients aged  
111 9-10 years, the risk of impaction is higher when the canine tooth overlaps more than half the  
112 root of the lateral incisor.

113 The maxillary canines at the cleft side erupt slower with delayed root development compared  
114 to those at the contralateral side [19]. This may increase the risk of impaction. In addition,  
115 the amount of root development does not affect the outcome in terms of canine eruption [19].  
116 In the split-mouth study of El Deeb et al.,[21] it was found that the canine on the contralateral  
117 side (mean age of eruption  $12.3 \pm 1.2$  SD) erupts faster than the canine on the cleft side (mean  
118 age of eruption  $13.4 \pm 1.9$  SD). Enemark et al.,[22] found that contra-lateral canines erupt  
119 spontaneously. However, the risk of angular tooth impaction on the contralateral side would  
120 still be greater than the risk in the general population.

121 In UCLP patients who did not have a bone graft, there was a significant difference in the  
122 canine angle before and after eruption. After eruption, this angle is much more vertical, most  
123 likely because of conduction through the cortical bone (unless the canine can just erupt  
124 through in the alveolar ridge, then there is no difference in eruption angle[17]. In children  
125 receiving a bone graft, there are no changes in the angle of eruption of the canine[18]. This  
126 means that these canines will erupt in the same inappropriate angle as they were before SBT  
127 (secondary bone grafting transplantation). From this it can be concluded that surgical  
128 exposure will be necessary to correct this inappropriate angle of eruption [18, 19]

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### 130 **1.6 The Nomenclature of Bone Transplantation and Canine impaction UCLP patients**

131 There is primary, secondary and tertiary bone transplantation. Primary bone transplantation  
132 is performed in the primary dentition and the bone graft done before age of 2 years. It has  
133 been found it may compromise midfacial growth [23]

134 In secondary bone grafting transplantation (SABT), there is a choice between early and late  
135 secondary bone transplantation. In an early SABT, the bone graft is placed at 5-7 years of  
136 age when the root formation of the lateral incisor reaches  $1/3^r$  to  $1/2$  of its final length[24, 25].

137 Late SABT occurs at 9-11 years of age where the root formation of the final canine is 1/4th  
138 to 2/3rd of its final length [26, 27]. Orthodontic expansion of the maxillary arch will often be  
139 required before to improve access to the alveolar cleft and the closure of the nasal floor [28].  
140 The choice between early and late SABT is done by evaluating advantages and disadvantages  
141 against each other. In patients with a healthy lateral incisor, the procedure can be done earlier  
142 so that the lateral incisors can be maintained. In patients with agenesis of the lateral incisor  
143 or where maxillary growth problems would be detrimental, the surgery can be scheduled later  
144 [29, 30].

145 Tertiary bone grafting is a bone graft when all permanent teeth have erupted. In UCLP  
146 alveolar bone graft can also be performed after eruption of the permanent canine[31]. The  
147 canine tooth has already erupted through the fissure. The bone graft only serves to restore the  
148 continuity of the alveolar crest, to close a persistent bucco-nasal fistula, to retract the canine  
149 orthodontically or to place an implant at later stage[32]. A bone graft at this older age is less  
150 successful and would lead to more frequent problems [33]. According to Enemark et al.,[34]  
151 the risk of root resorption of the canine is greater when bone grafting is performed when the  
152 canine tooth has already erupted. This could be avoided by covering the canine with  
153 lyophilized (freeze-dried) bone during the operation. The failure of a bone graft in the form  
154 of wound dehiscence and / or bone sequestration is also more common[35]. This is because  
155 with aging the healing potential decreases and the integration of the bone graft is no longer  
156 ideal, partly because the bone marrow is older and therefore contains less regenerative  
157 capacity.

158 The optimal time for alveolar bone transplantation (ABT) has been long discussed in the  
159 literature. There is growing consensus that secondary bone grafting at 9-11 years of age,  
160 where the root development of the canine is 1/2e to 1/3rd, gives the best result [27, 36]  
161 although other factors may also be of interest as:

162 1. Age [37] According to Ozawa et al.,[38] it was not good to perform the bone  
163 transplantation too early. Maturation and migration of the canine would then take a long time  
164 in which resorption of the graft would occur as a result of un-used. On the other hand, they  
165 emphasized that if the bone graft was delayed for too long, the canine could abnormally erupt  
166 and the subsequent orthodontic treatment becomes more difficult.

167 2. The presence or absence of the lateral incisor as discussed above[26].

168 3. The crown eruption phase has received a bone graft if only the root formation had been  
169 observed [27, 33].

170 4. The height of the intermediary formed septa [37]

171 5. The width of the cleft. However, Jabbari et al. found the width of cleft has no effect  
172 either on the success or failure of the SABG [22, 39]

173 6. The classification of malocclusion [39, 40]

174 7. The canine position relative to the gap in its pre-eruptive phase [39, 41]. Enemark et al.,  
175 stated that if the canine tooth was impacted in the palate, bone height and orthodontic  
176 treatment can be postponed until or after the eruption of the canine tooth. The advantage of  
177 this postponing is that the operation can then immediately be combined with an orthognathic  
178 surgical treatment [22].

179 8. The canine inclination. A study found that if the canine inclination increased, there will  
180 be a negative impact on SABG [39]

181 There are many other variables that influence the outcome of a bone transplant of the cleft,  
182 such as the timing of the procedure [26] the type of cleft,[37] surgeon's experience, donor  
183 site, inter-operator differences [33] and the pre-surgical status of the alveolar gap, for  
184 example, the pre-surgical amount of supporting bone for the mesial and distal teeth that abut  
185 against the gap. Moreover, the timing of the bone graft was also more critical in unilateral  
186 and bilateral cleft patients than in patients with only a cleft lip and alveolar ridge [41]

## 187 **2.0 Study Selection**

188 An electronic search was carried out via the PubMed (Medline) and ISI web of knowledge  
189 databases using various keywords including “cleft lip,” “cleft palate,” “canine impaction,”  
190 “unilateral cleft lip,” and “maxillary canine,” in combination. Papers published in English  
191 language in last 40 years were carefully examined and scrutinized. The studies significant to  
192 our review were critically analysed and summarized in Table 1. Duplicate studies found were  
193 removed

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200 **Table 1.** Review of studies that have reported the frequency of maxillary canine exposure on  
 201 Cleft lip and palate patients

Authors	Year	Type Cleft		N	Gender		Age of Bone graft	Spontaneous Eruption	Surgical Exposure
		BC	UC		Male	Female			
Kwon et al. [42]	1981	35	64	99	62	37	7-11	73%	27%
El Deeb et al. [21]	1982	18	28	46	32	14	7-14	17.9%	82% (14% exposed, 67.9% exposed + orthodontic traction)
Troxell et al. [43]	1982	4	26	30	14	16	7-26	95%	0%
Turvey et al. [36]	1984	9	15	24	13	11	7.3 – 25.4	95%	5%
Hinrichs et al. [44]	1984	-	18	18	10	8	7.3 - 13.9	44%	56% (11.1% exposed, 44.4% exposed + orthodontic traction)
Enemark et al. [34]	1985	-	62	62		/	8.6 - 15.11	50%	8.1%
El Deeb et al. [45]	1986	18	8	26	17	9	7-13	41%	59%
Bergland et al. [46]	1986	49	291	340	218	122	8-17	85%	15%
Bergland et al. [37]	1986 b		BC:4 1	41	25	16	8.9 – 17.4	95%	5%
Enemark et al. [47]	1987	44	151	224	153	71	Canine not erupted 10 Canine erupted through: graft 13.10	-	30%

Paulin et al. [48]	1988	13	54	67	-	37 patients, Canine not erupted at ABT: 8-14 30 patients, Canine erupted through at ABT: 10-20	93%	7%	
Amanat & Langdon [35]	1991	13	21	34	23	11	7-24	-	2.1%
McCanny & Roberts-Harry [49]	1998	12	17	29	7 group A 8 group B	9 group A 5 group B	Group A: 9 – 39 Group B: 7 – 25	Group A: 43.5% Group B: 44.5%	Group A: 8.7% Group B: 5.5%
Da Silva Filho et al. [32]	2000	-	UCL: 12	50	32	18	-	72%	6%
Enemark et al. [22]	2001	-	UCL P:10 1	101	72	29	Mandibular bone: 8.10-11.8	68%	32%
							Hip bone 8.8 – 12.4	65%	35%
van der Wal & van der Meulen [6]	2001	11	51	62	-	-	8.6-12.8	77%	20%
Dempf et al. [50]	2002	49	UC:4 2	91	-	-	SABT: 10.6 Tertiary graft: 21.3	100%	0%
Hogan et al. [28]	2003	11	UC:2 3	34	19	15	8.5-18.4	92%	8%



Matsui et al. [51]	2005		UC:3 40	340	98	142	Canine not erupted at SABT: 9.1	78.9%	Canine not erupted at SABT: 18.9%
Russel & McLeod [19]	2008	48	UC:5 3	101	-	-	78 early SABT: 5- 8.9 23 late SABT: 9.3- 16.9		20 time higher risk compared to general population
Tortora et al. [52]	2008	29	UC:8 7	116	-	-	UCLP: 18 -55 months BCLP: 20- 63 months	80%	4.4%
Oberoi et al. [18]	2010	4	UC:1 2	21	12	9	10.6	88%	12%

202 *BC= bilaterale clefts, UC= unilaterale clefts, CLA= cleft lip and alveolar ridge, CLAP= cleft alveolar ridge and palate*

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## 204 **2.1 Surgical Exposure of Impacted Canine in UCLP**

205 Surgical exposure is required when radiographically clear deviation from direction or  
206 location of the permanent canine can be demonstrated after SABT and when there is  
207 resorption of adjacent teeth or cystic radiolucency around the canine tooth [51]

208 Maxillary canine impaction in UCLP patients is still under investigation and to date there is  
209 few split-mouth studies. The occurrence of surgical exposure is already reported by several  
210 authors (Table 1). A strong variation in results exists and can be explained by various reasons.  
211 First, are the procedures and surgical techniques. A study by Enemark et al.,[22] attributed  
212 the effect of primary surgical procedure to high percentage in impacted canines i.e. (35%)  
213 requiring surgical release. Similarly, El Deeb., [45] presented high percentage of surgically  
214 exposed canines (73%). Both of the authors admits that this percentage is an underestimation  
215 of the number of spontaneous eruption because they easily chose for surgical exposure as it  
216 seemed appropriate, instead to wait for a spontaneous delayed eruption. A study by Tortora  
217 et al.,[52] investigated the success of Early Secondary Gingival Alveoloplasty (ESGAP) at  
218 2-3 years of age, with closure of the hard palate simultaneously. 15.5% of the canine teeth  
219 showed impaction, of which 4.4% were exposed surgically. This number was found to be  
220 higher than other studies after SABT [28, 49, 50], which implies that the early closing of the  
221 alveolar ridge may be responsible for less space for the canine to erupt spontaneously. There

222 are authors who reported a higher impaction percentage, as a result of which Tortora et  
223 al.,[52] in the study stated that ESGAP does not have an adverse effect on angle eruption.

224 In another study by Hinrichs et al.,[53] and Bergland et al.,[37] stated that the reason for  
225 tooth impaction is the anatomy of the alveolar ridge that muco-buccal and muco-labial  
226 patches do not satisfy, in contrast to a mucogingival patch. They persist as soft and red tissue  
227 that forms a resilient obstacle to the erupting tooth [37, 44]. Damage to the periodontal  
228 ligament during the surgical procedure leads to necrosis, resulting in resorption and ankylosis  
229 of the tooth [54]. Secondly, each sample is unique with individual characteristics, just as each  
230 CLP (Cleft lip palate) is unique. For example, it has been shown that surgical exposure was  
231 more frequent in patients with both a cleft alveolar ridge and palate (CLAP) compared to  
232 patients with only cleft alveolar ridge (CLA) [19], more often with bilateral cleft than with  
233 unilateral and that also the width of the defect plays a role[51]. In addition, alveolar cleft  
234 width has been found increased significantly in patients who undergo surgical exposure than  
235 in those who had spontaneous eruption[55].

236

## 237 **2.2 Radiographic Interpretation of Canine Impaction and UCLP patients**

238 One of the main disadvantage of a panoramic image is that the reliability in the anterior region  
239 is limited because structures are blurred. Furthermore, the horizontal deformation is not  
240 linear, so the angle of the crown and distance from the crown to the centre line is  
241 overestimated on a panoramic radiography. Due to this magnification, distortion, overlap of  
242 important structures, limited number of identifiable landmarks and positioning problems with  
243 two-dimensional panoramic image is a hassle, which may influence the quality of  
244 interpretation [56]. The only way to be certain of resorption on the lateral incisor and of the  
245 buccal or palatal position of the impacted canine is by means of two-dimensional images  
246 such as CBCT. A study by Ericson and Kuroi.,[8] interprets the resorption of neighbouring  
247 teeth by the impacted canine tooth on a two-dimensional image taking in consideration three  
248 factors 1. The degree of overlap, 2. The occurrence of the lamina dura (interrupted or not)  
249 and 3. The occurrence of the root contour. However, they concluded the interrupted lamina  
250 dura is a sign of resorption. According to Ericson and Kuroi.,[8] peri-apical image showed a  
251 better relation to the lateral incisor compared to a panoramic image. Panoramic images are  
252 found unreliable for 1 finding the position of the canine relative to the tooth arch or the lateral  
253 incisor and 2 for detecting resorption of neighbouring teeth.

254 However, there are authors who argue that panoramic images are reliable for geometric  
255 measurements. Linear vertical measurements, ratios and angles can be determined with  
256 consistent accuracy through a panoramic image [13]. Further, the bucco palatal position of

257 the canine can be easily determined [57] Angles measured on a panoramic show a  
258 combination of the angle tooth slope both in the frontal and sagittal plane [57]

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260

### 261 **2.3 Skeletal relation in UCLP Patients**

262 In UCLP patients mid-facial retrusion frequently occurs with a Class III skeletal relationship  
263 due to inherited growth limitations or post-surgical scar tissue[58]. The occlusion  
264 classifications have no effect in development of canine impaction [59]. In UCLP with  
265 impacted canines at the cleft side the occlusion is found more Class II malocclusion, while  
266 in non-cleft side had significantly more Class III malocclusion [59].

267

### 268 **3.0 Conclusion**

269 In today's rapidly advancing medical field, one optimal treatment plan to adhere to when  
270 treating canine impaction in patients with cleft lip and Palate is not possible. In accordance  
271 to the available evidence in the present study every patient is different and treatment options  
272 vary according to the characteristics, subjective response and variability of the malformation.

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