

## COMMENTARY

ESTHETIC AND FUNCTIONAL REHABILITATION OF A PATIENT WITH NONSYNDROMIC OLIGODONTIA: A CASE REPORT FROM CHINA

J. Timothy Wright, DDS, MS\*

Missing teeth, or hypodontia, is one of the most common developmental defects in humans and presents a variety of diagnostic and treatment challenges for oral health care providers. As pointed out in the case report by Xiangyi He and coauthors, missing teeth can occur as an isolated trait caused by a variety of genetic or environmental etiologies or can be part of a syndrome. Ectodermal dysplasias are a diverse group of hereditary conditions that frequently exhibit missing and/or conical-shaped teeth as part of the ectodermal defect. Determining the etiology of hypodontia can be of tremendous importance. Many of the hereditary conditions associated with hypodontia can have significant additional medical implications ranging from a variety of skin and hair abnormalities to an increased risk of colon cancer.<sup>1</sup>

As presented by the authors of this report, there is no question that missing and malformed teeth can have a tremendous psychosocial influence on an individual's quality of life and sense of well-being. Society's increasing emphasis and recognition of esthetics make management of hypodontia more important than ever. A variety of therapeutic approaches are available to the clinician, ranging from conventional removable prosthetic management to implants and complex restorative treatment. While these different approaches all can address the esthetic and functional issues of hypodontia, the authors of this article point out that there are marked differences in the technical delivery and cost of these services. Conventional removable prosthodontic therapy, as presented in this article, can be less complex and more affordable than some other therapies and can provide an excellent treatment approach for individuals with severe hypodontia.

### REFERENCE

1. Thesleff I. The genetic basis of tooth development and dental defects. *Am J Med Genet A* 2006;140:2530–5.

\*Distinguished professor and chair, Department of Pediatric Dentistry, 228 Brauer Hall, UNC School of Dentistry, CB#7450, Chapel Hill, NC 27599–7450

Copyright of Journal of Esthetic & Restorative Dentistry is the property of Blackwell Publishing Limited and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.

Copyright of Journal of Esthetic & Restorative Dentistry is the property of Blackwell Publishing Limited and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.