

Kruse A, Jung RE, Nicholls F, Zwahlen RA, Hämmerle CHF, Weber FE

**Bone regeneration in the presence of a synthetic hydroxyapatite/silica oxide -based and a xenogenic hydroxyapatite -based bone substitute material.**

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A comparison of synthetic hydroxyapatite/silica oxide, xenogenic hydroxyapatite-based bone substitute materials with empty control sites in terms of bone regeneration enhancement in a rabbit calvarial four non-critical-sized defect model.

Methods: In each of six rabbits, four bicortical calvarial bone defects were generated. The following four treatment modalities were randomly allocated: (1) empty control site, (2) synthetic hydroxyapatite/silica oxide-based (HA/SiO) test granules, (3) xenogenic hydroxyapatite -based granules, (4) synthetic hydroxyapatite/silica oxide -based (HA/SiO) test two granules. The results of the latter granules have not been reported due to their size being three times bigger than the other two granule types. After 4 weeks, the animals were sacrificed and un-decalcified sections were obtained for histological analyses. For statistical analysis, the Kruskal–Wallis test was applied ( $P < 0.05$ ).

Results: Histomorphometric analysis showed an average area fraction of newly formed bone of  $12.32 \pm 10.36\%$  for the empty control,  $17.47 \pm 6.42\%$  for the xenogenic hydroxyapatite -based granules group, and  $21.2 \pm 5.32\%$  for the group treated with synthetic hydroxyapatite/silica oxide -based granules. Based on the middle section, newly formed bone bridged the defect to  $38.33 \pm 37.55\%$  in the empty control group,  $54.33 \pm 22.12\%$  in the xenogenic hydroxyapatite -based granules group, and to  $79 \pm 13.31\%$  in the synthetic hydroxyapatite/silica oxide -based granules group. The bone-to-bone substitute contact was  $46.38 \pm 18.98\%$  for the xenogenic and  $59.86 \pm 14.92\%$  for the synthetic hydroxyapatite/silica oxide-based granules group.

No significant difference in terms of bone formation and defect bridging could be detected between the two bone substitute materials or the empty defect.

Conclusion: There is evidence that the synthetic hydroxyapatite/silica oxide granules provide comparable results with a standard xenogenic bovine mineral in terms of bone formation and defect bridging in non-critical size defects.