

# World Journal of *Clinical Cases*

*World J Clin Cases* 2023 May 26; 11(15): 3369-3663



## Contents

Thrice Monthly Volume 11 Number 15 May 26, 2023

## REVIEW

- 3369 Superior mesenteric artery syndrome: Diagnosis and management  
*Oka A, Awoniyi M, Hasegawa N, Yoshida Y, Tobita H, Ishimura N, Ishihara S*

## MINIREVIEWS

- 3385 Astrocytes in the central nervous system and their functions in health and disease: A review  
*Gradisnik L, Velnar T*
- 3395 Progress in diagnosis and treatment of acute injury to the anterior talofibular ligament  
*Chen RP, Wang QH, Li MY, Su XF, Wang DY, Liu XH, Li ZL*
- 3408 Synchronous manifestation of colorectal cancer and intraductal papillary mucinous neoplasms  
*Mirchev MB, Boeva I, Peshevska-Sekulovska M, Stoitsov V, Peruhova M*
- 3418 Clinical infections in neurosurgical oncology: An overview  
*Velnar T, Kocivnik N, Bosnjak R*
- 3434 Effectiveness and safety of subthreshold vibration over suprathreshold vibration in treatment of muscle fatigue in elderly people  
*Mohamed AA, Khaled E, Hesham A, Khalf A*

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## Clinical and Translational Research

- 3444 Establishment of a prognostic model related to tregs and natural killer cells infiltration in bladder cancer  
*Yang YJ, Xu XQ, Zhang YC, Hu PC, Yang WX*

## Retrospective Study

- 3457 New native tissue repair for pelvic organ prolapse: Medium-term outcomes of laparoscopic vaginal stump-round ligament fixation  
*Kakinuma T, Kaneko A, Kakinuma K, Imai K, Takeshima N, Ohwada M*
- 3464 Demographic characteristics of patients who underwent anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction at a tertiary care hospital in India  
*Malv SK, Mahmood A, Vatsya P, Garika SS, Mittal R, Nagar M*
- 3471 Usefulness of transcatheter arterial embolization for eighty-three patients with secondary postpartum hemorrhage: Focusing on difference in angiographic findings  
*Kim BM, Jeon GS, Choi MJ, Hong NS*
- 3481 Chronic otitis media and middle ear variants: Is there relation?  
*Gökharman FD, Şenbil DC, Aydın S, Karavaş E, Özdemir Ö, Yalçın AG, Koşar PN*

**Observational Study**

- 3491** Observation of the effect of angiojet to treat acute lower extremity arterial embolization  
*Meng XH, Xie XP, Liu YC, Huang CP, Wang LJ, Liu HY, Fang X, Zhang GH*
- 3502** Outbreak of methanol-induced optic neuropathy in early COVID-19 era; effectiveness of erythropoietin and methylprednisolone therapy  
*Tabatabaei SA, Amini M, Haydar AA, Soleimani M, Cheraqpour K, Shahriari M, Hassanian-Moghaddam H, Zamani N, Akbari MR*

**META-ANALYSIS**

- 3511** Impact of heart failure on outcomes in patients with sepsis: A systematic review and meta-analysis  
*Zhu MY, Tang XK, Gao Y, Xu JJ, Gong YQ*

**CASE REPORT**

- 3522** New clinical application of digital intraoral scanning technology in occlusal reconstruction: A case report  
*Hou C, Zhu HZ, Xue B, Song HJ, Yang YB, Wang XX, Sun HQ*
- 3533** Rare adult neuronal ceroid lipofuscinosis associated with *CLN6* gene mutations: A case report  
*Wang XQ, Chen CB, Zhao WJ, Fu GB, Zhai Y*
- 3542** Enzyme replacement therapy in two patients with classic Fabry disease from the same family tree: Two case reports  
*Harigane Y, Morimoto I, Suzuki O, Temmoku J, Sakamoto T, Nakamura K, Machii K, Miyata M*
- 3552** Immune-mediated necrotizing myopathy: Report of two cases  
*Chen BH, Zhu XM, Xie L, Hu HQ*
- 3560** Retroperitoneal cavernous hemangioma misdiagnosed as lymphatic cyst: A case report and review of the literature  
*Hou XF, Zhao ZX, Liu LX, Zhang H*
- 3571** Malignant melanoma resection and reconstruction with the first manifestation of lumbar metastasis: A case report  
*Guo ZX, Zhao XL, Zhao ZY, Zhu QY, Wang ZY, Xu M*
- 3578** Promising way to address massive intragastric clotting in patients with acute upper gastrointestinal bleeding: A case report  
*Liu SX, Shi B, Liu YF, Shan JY, Sun B*
- 3583** Pyogenic spondylitis caused by *Escherichia coli*: A case report and literature review  
*Zou LC, Qian J, Bian ZY, Wang XP, Xie T*
- 3592** Primary ovarian choriocarcinoma occurring in a postmenopausal woman: A case report  
*Dai GL, Tang FR, Wang DQ*

- 3599** Treatment of severe open bite and mandibular condyle anterior displacement by mini-screws and four second molars extraction: A case report  
*Huang ZW, Yang R, Gong C, Zhang CX, Wen J, Li H*
- 3612** Application of apical negative pressure irrigation in the nonsurgical treatment of radicular cysts: A case report  
*Chen GP, Zhang YZ, Ling DH*
- 3619** Treatment of postherpetic neuralgia by bone marrow aspirate injection: A case report  
*Honda Pazili T*
- 3625** Non-target lung embolization during portal vein embolization due to an unrecognized portosystemic venous fistula: A case report  
*Alharbi SR, Bin Nasif M, Alwaily HB*
- 3631** Acute abdomen caused by spontaneous rupture of degenerative hysteromyoma during pregnancy: A case report  
*Xu Y, Shen X, Pan XY, Gao S*
- 3637** Atypical progress of frozen shoulder after COVID-19 vaccination: A case report  
*Jo HS, Kim HM, Han JY, Park HK*
- 3643** Co-existing squamous cell carcinoma and chronic myelomonocytic leukemia with *ASXL1* and *EZH2* gene mutations: A case report  
*Deng LJ, Dong Y, Li MM, Sun CG*
- 3651** Diagnosis based on electromagnetic navigational bronchoscopy-guided biopsied peripheral lung lesions in a 10-year-old girl: A case report  
*Meng FZ, Chen QH, Gao M, Zeng L, Lin JR, Zheng JY*
- 3658** Relationship between intralobar pulmonary sequestration and type A aortic dissection: A case report  
*Wang YJ, Chen YY, Lin GH*

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**RESPONSIBLE EDITORS FOR THIS ISSUE**

Production Editor: *Ying-Yi Yuan*; Production Department Director: *Xiang Li*; Editorial Office Director: *Jin-Lei Wang*.

**NAME OF JOURNAL**

*World Journal of Clinical Cases*

**ISSN**

ISSN 2307-8960 (online)

**LAUNCH DATE**

April 16, 2013

**FREQUENCY**

Thrice Monthly

**EDITORS-IN-CHIEF**

Bao-Gan Peng, Jerzy Tadeusz Chudek, George Kontogeorgos, Maurizio Serati, Ja Hyeon Ku

**EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS**

<https://www.wjgnet.com/2307-8960/editorialboard.htm>

**PUBLICATION DATE**

May 26, 2023

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**PUBLICATION MISCONDUCT**

<https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/208>

**ARTICLE PROCESSING CHARGE**

<https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/242>

**STEPS FOR SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS**

<https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/239>

**ONLINE SUBMISSION**

<https://www.f6publishing.com>



## Application of apical negative pressure irrigation in the nonsurgical treatment of radicular cysts: A case report

Gong-Pei Chen, Yan-Zhen Zhang, Dan-Hua Ling

**Specialty type:** Dentistry, oral surgery and medicine

**Provenance and peer review:** Unsolicited article; Externally peer reviewed.

**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Peer-review report's scientific quality classification**

Grade A (Excellent): 0  
Grade B (Very good): B  
Grade C (Good): 0  
Grade D (Fair): D  
Grade E (Poor): 0

**P-Reviewer:** Grawish ME, Egypt; Rakhshan V, Iran

**Received:** February 7, 2023

**Peer-review started:** February 7, 2023

**First decision:** March 14, 2023

**Revised:** March 27, 2023

**Accepted:** April 13, 2023

**Article in press:** April 13, 2023

**Published online:** May 26, 2023



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### Abstract

#### BACKGROUND

Radicular cysts are one of the most common odontogenic cystic lesions found in the jaw. Nonsurgical treatment of large radicular cysts is a topic of ongoing debate, and there is still no clear consensus on the most effective therapies. The apical negative pressure irrigation system aspirates the cystic fluid and releases the static pressure in the radicular cyst, representing a minimally invasive approach for decompression. In this case, the radicular cyst was in close proximity to the mandibular nerve canal. We used nonsurgical endodontic treatment with a homemade apical negative pressure irrigation system and the prognosis was good.

#### CASE SUMMARY

A 27-year-old male presented to our Department of General Dentistry with complaints of pain in the mandibular right molar when chewing. The patient had no history of drug allergies or systemic disease. A multidisciplinary management approach was designed and included root canal retreatment with a homemade apical negative pressure irrigation system, deep margin elevation and prosthodontic treatment. According to a 1-year follow-up period, the patient showed a favorable outcome.

#### CONCLUSION

This report reveals that nonsurgical treatment with an apical negative pressure irrigation system may provide new insights into the treatment of radicular cysts.

**Key Words:** Apical negative pressure irrigation; Radicular cyst; Nonsurgical root canal treatment; Case report

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**Core Tip:** We present a case of a radicular cyst treated through root canal retreatment with a homemade apical negative pressure irrigation system, which had excellent therapeutic effects. This is a minimally invasive technique because it is carried out through root canal access without impinging on anatomic structures, bone, or soft tissues. This case report offers new insight into the treatment of patients with radicular cysts.

**Citation:** Chen GP, Zhang YZ, Ling DH. Application of apical negative pressure irrigation in the nonsurgical treatment of radicular cysts: A case report. *World J Clin Cases* 2023; 11(15): 3612-3618

**URL:** <https://www.wjgnet.com/2307-8960/full/v11/i15/3612.htm>

**DOI:** <https://dx.doi.org/10.12998/wjcc.v11.i15.3612>

## INTRODUCTION

Radicular cysts are one of the most common odontogenic cystic lesions found in the jaw[1]. These cysts develop as a result of inflammation in the pulp and periodontium, originating from Malassez's epithelial remnants. They can grow to significant sizes and lead to extensive bone damage[2].

These cysts usually go unnoticed because of their painless nature and small size. Radicular cysts might expand significantly, leading to extensive damage to the surrounding bone and compromising the integrity of the relevant vital teeth. The surgical treatments for radicular cysts include total enucleation, marsupialization or decompression, or a combination of these techniques[3]. In recent years, an increasing number of publications have reported that radicular cysts can be healed by nonsurgical endodontic treatment[4,5]. However, it is controversial whether large radicular cystic lesions can be cured by nonsurgical endodontic treatment[6,7].

In this case report, the radicular cyst was in close proximity to the mandibular nerve canal, and there would be a high risk of damage to the mandibular nerve if surgical treatment was performed. Thus, we performed nonsurgical endodontic treatment with a homemade apical negative pressure irrigation system and achieved a good outcome. The cyst was reconstructed in three dimensions by 3D Slicer 5.0.3 software, and prognosis was evaluated by comparing changes in cyst volume. Nonsurgical treatment of large radicular cysts is a topic of ongoing debate, and there is still no clear consensus on the most effective therapies. This study provides new insight into the treatment and prognostic evaluation of radicular cysts.

## CASE PRESENTATION

### Chief complaints

A 27-year-old man visited the Department of General Dentistry, the Second Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University School of Medicine, and reported that his right mandibular molar was painful when chewing, which had been lasting for two weeks.

### History of present illness

The patient experienced pain in the mandibular right molar when chewing for about two weeks.

### History of past illness

The patient had undergone root canal treatment and inlay restoration in another hospital 5 years prior. He did not report any systemic illnesses or history of drug allergies, nor did he show any obvious contraindications to dental treatment.

### Personal and family history

There was no personal or family history reported by the patient.

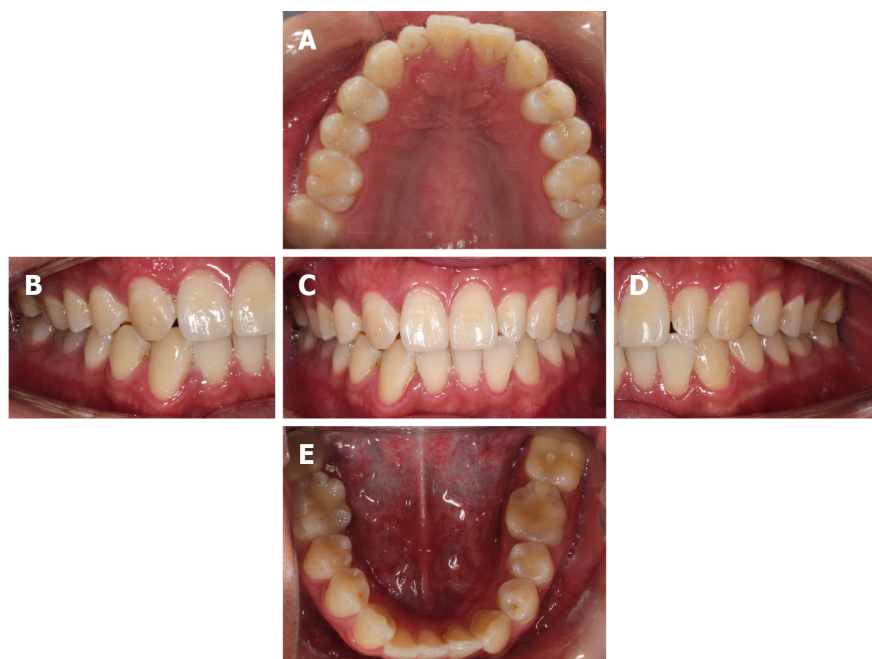
### Physical examination

In the clinical examination, tooth 47 had an inlay restoration and showed a sensitive response to percussion. No mobility or swelling was evident. The periodontal probing depth of tooth 47 was < 3.0 mm (Figure 1).

### Laboratory examinations

This case did not involve any laboratory examinations.





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**Figure 1** Intraoral photographs before treatment. A: Maxillary occlusal view; B: Right buccal view; C: Frontal view; D: Left buccal view; E: Mandibular occlusal view.

### Imaging examinations

Cone-beam CT scan (Planmeca Romexis Viewer 4.5.0R, Planmeca Oy, Helsinki, Finland) showed a high-density shadow in the root canal of tooth 47 and a 13 mm × 9 mm × 10 mm low-density shadow in the apical region, with clear borders and bone white lines. The filling overhang was visible in the distal cervical region of the tooth (Figure 2).

## FINAL DIAGNOSIS

The tooth was diagnosed with a radicular cyst based on the patient's history, as well as clinical and radiographic examination findings.

## TREATMENT

A multidisciplinary management plan was designed, which comprised root canal retreatment with a homemade apical negative pressure irrigation system (Figure 3), deep margin elevation and prosthodontic treatment. The patients were informed about the treatment plan and possible longer-term outcome for tooth 47 and signed an informed consent form.

The first step was root canal retreatment. A rubber dam was properly positioned, the access cavity was opened directly on the inlay, and the original filling was removed under a microscope (Figure 4A). A G drill, a K file and Ni-Ti rotary instruments (Dentsply Sirona, Switzerland) were used to remove the root canal fillings. Using electronic apex locator and #8 file to determine the working length, and the canal was then prepared until a #15 size was achieved. During this step, each K file size went beyond the apical foramen by 2 mm, and a homemade apical negative pressure irrigation system was used to drain the cystic fluid (Figure 4B). The Ni-Ti rotary instruments were selected for root canal preparation with the crown-down preparation method. During the preparation, 1% sodium hypochlorite and 0.9% normal saline were used together with the homemade apical negative pressure irrigation system for irrigation (Figure 4C). The canals were dehydrated using paper points, followed by the application of a paste made of calcium hydroxide [Ca(OH)<sub>2</sub>]. Finally, the access cavity was sealed with Cavit™.

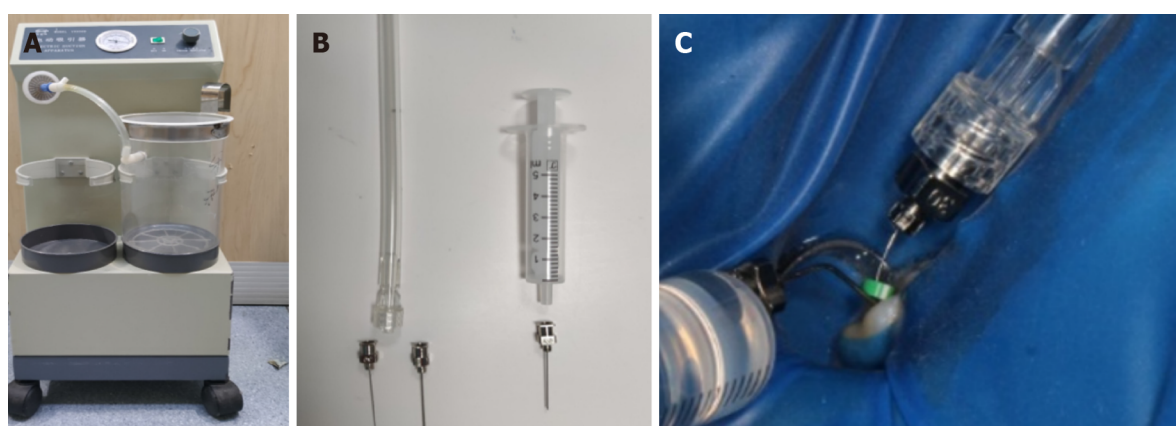
At 2 wk postoperation, the patient experienced no pain upon percussion. The single cone technique was used to fill the canal with gutta-percha (Gapadent, Tianjin, China) and iRoot SP (Innovative BioCeramix, Vancouver, BC, Canada) (Figure 4D). The access cavity was then sealed by glass ionomer (GC- Fuji IX Japan) (Figure 4E). A final digital PAX was taken at this time, in which we could see that the canals were well obturated (Figure 4F).





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**Figure 2** Cone-beam computed tomography of the mandibular second molar with a radicular cyst. A: Axial sections of the mandibular second molar with a radicular cyst; B: Sagittal sections of the mandibular second molar with a radicular cyst; C: Coronal sections of the mandibular second molar with a radicular cyst.



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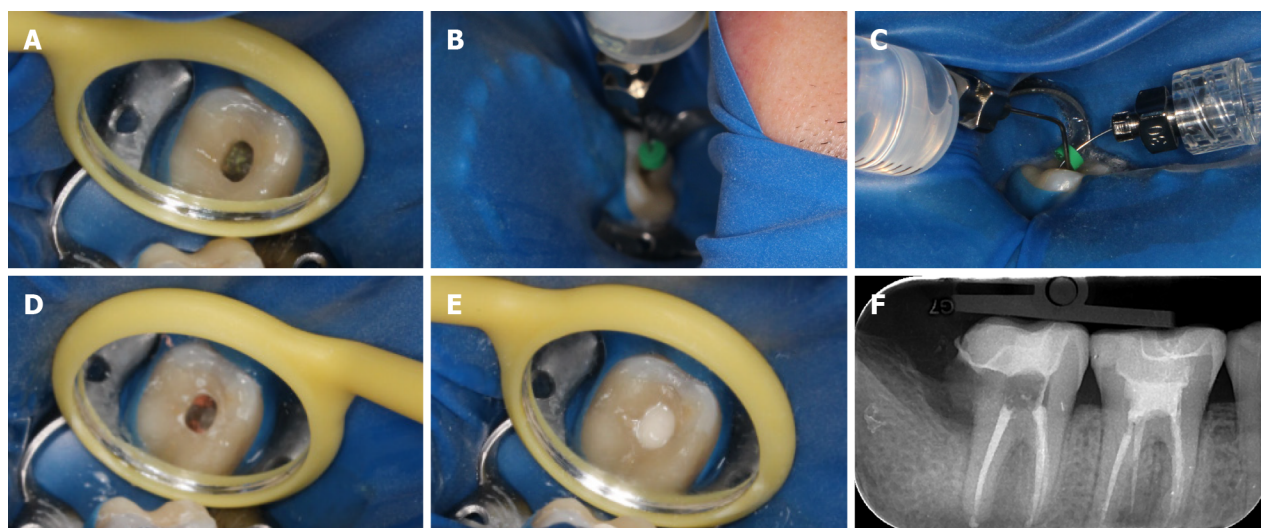
**Figure 3** Construction of apical negative pressure irrigation system with commonly used clinical instruments. A: Electric aspirator (Smanfeng, Shanghai); B: Flat bottom metal needle and 10 mL disposable syringe; C: The negative pressure irrigation system is used clinically with a 30 G metal needle as a microtube for aspirating the irrigation fluid in the apical segment and a 27 G metal needle as a large cannula for aspirating the irrigation fluid in the middle and upper segments of the root canal. 25 G needle is used as a delivery needle for delivering a constant flow rate of irrigation fluid to the root canal orifice.

## OUTCOME AND FOLLOW-UP

During the 3-mo, 6-mo, and 12-mo follow-up periods, the patient did not report any symptoms. A cone-beam CT scan (Planmeca Romexis Viewer 4.5.0R, Planmeca Oy, Helsinki, Finland) was performed again after 6 months. After exporting the 3D CBCT data, 3D Slicer 5.0.3 software was applied to reconstruct a 3D model of the radicular cyst, which showed that the volume was reduced by approximately 80% (Figure 5). Then, the inlay and filling overhang in the distal cervical region of tooth 47 were removed. Deep margin elevation was performed with Smart Dentin Replacement (Dentsply Sirona, Switzerland) and repaired with lava ultimate high toughness porcelain inlay (3M Dental Products, MN, United States) (Figure 6).

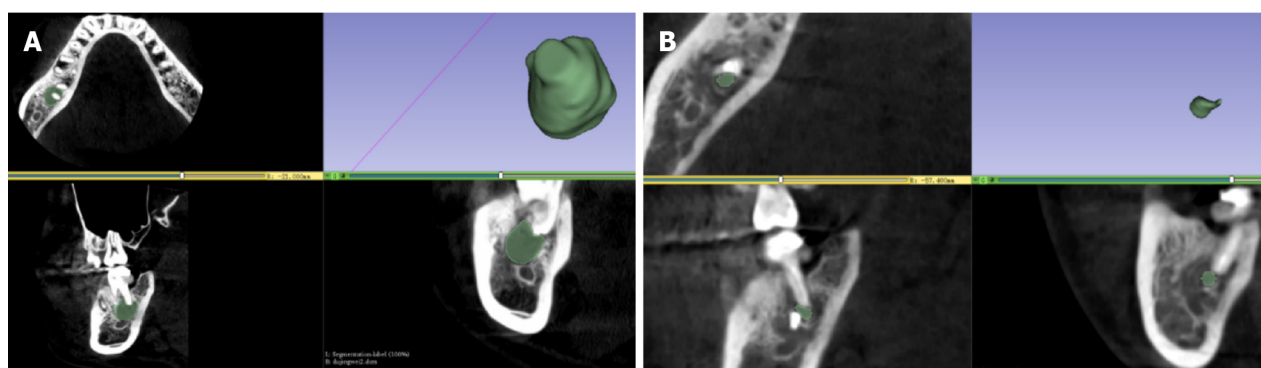
## DISCUSSION

Radicular cysts, as chronic apical periodontitis, are mostly caused by untreated pulpitis and apical periodontitis, incomplete root canal treatment or posttraumatic pulp necrosis without spontaneous symptoms that do not receive timely treatment[8,9]. Radicular cysts have a slow course, with no obvious clinical symptoms other than pain and swelling in some patients, and are closely associated with chronic periradicular granulomas and periradicular abscesses, which can transform into each other. The management of large periapical cyst-like lesions has been the subject of much debate. Treatment options may vary from nonsurgical root canal treatment, endodontic microsurgery, or tooth extraction[10]. The different treatment approaches mainly aimed at eliminating the cystic epithelium while minimizing the potential harm to vital structures. Surgical therapy often causes complications such as destruction of the adjacent teeth and important adjacent anatomical structures.



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**Figure 4 Root canal retreatment of tooth 47.** A: The access cavity was opened directly on the inlay and the original filling were removed under a microscope; B: A self-made apical negative pressure irrigation system was used to drain the cystic fluid; C: During the preparation, 1% sodium hypochlorite and 0.9% normal saline were used together with the self-made apical negative pressure irrigation system for irrigation; D: Complete canal obturation was achieved via single cone technique; E: Image of the access cavity sealed glass ionomer; F: A final digital PAX revealed that the canals were well-obtured.

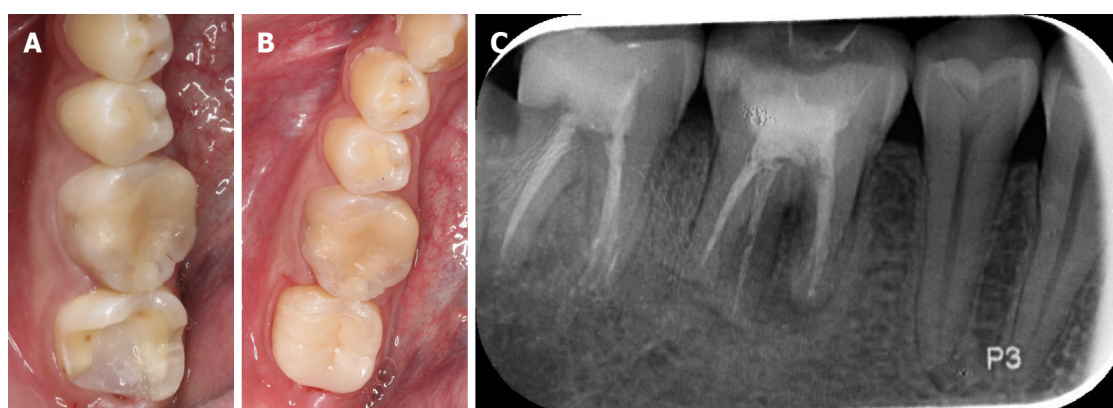


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**Figure 5 3D model of the radicular cyst reconstructed by 3Dslicer 5.0.3 software.** A: 3D model of the radicular cyst reconstructed by 3Dslicer 5.0.3 software before treatment; B: 3D model of the radicular cyst reconstructed by 3Dslicer 5.0.3 software after 6 mo.

When managing inflammatory lesions associated with an intracanal infection, it is recommended to adopt a conservative approach. It has been suggested that the main reasons for the failure of root canal therapy to treat some of the larger diameter apical cysts are improper endodontic flushing methods during root preparation, failure to use pharmaceutical solvents, improper selection of endodontic sealants, or unclear root canals[11]. Currently, the most commonly used clinical method for root canal irrigation is syringe irrigation. However, syringe irrigation alone does not provide effective cleaning of the three-dimensional root canal system. From the perspective of hydrodynamics, the syringe can only effectively flush the area 1-2 mm beyond the tip of the needle, so it is not effective in cleaning anatomically restricted areas, especially the lateral root canals, accessory root canal, isthmus, and apical areas affected by the air-blocking phenomena[12]. Since Schoeffel[13] first proposed apical negative pressure irrigation in 2007, increasing attention has been given to the application of apical negative pressure irrigation in root canal therapy. Studies have shown that negative pressure irrigation can reduce the amount of irrigation liquid that spills over the root tip during irrigation, eliminate the apical airlock effect, improve the cleaning efficiency in the area of root canal stenosis and reduce the incidence of postoperative pain[13-15]. In addition, negative pressure in the root canal relieves the static pressure in the radicular cyst, allowing for adequate drainage of the cystic fluid and promoting healing of the cyst [15].

In this case, the radicular cyst was in close proximity to the mandibular nerve canal, and there was a greater risk of damage to the mandibular nerve if surgical treatment was performed. Therefore, this patient was treated with nonsurgical root canal retreatment in combination with a homemade apical negative pressure irrigation system. This conservative method has several advantages, such as less



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**Figure 6 Deep margin elevation and lava ultimate high toughness porcelain inlay.** A: Image of the tooth after deep margin elevation; B: Intraoral photographs of lava ultimate high toughness porcelain inlay; C: A digital PAX at 1-year recall.

discomfort because no surgical flaps are necessary; In contrast to marsupialization or surgical decompression, it is a minimally invasive technique. The procedure is performed through the root canal access means that patient cooperation is not required, and there is no damage to surrounding anatomic structures, bone, or soft tissues. In addition, this technique also generates proper healing[16].

3D Slicer, a multiplatform software that runs on personal computers, can be extended to enable new algorithms and applications and permits multiple configuring, which range from simple 3D visibility of medical images to different reconstructed and generated images[17]. The patient's 3D CBCT data were exported before treatment and at the postoperative follow-up, and 3D Slicer software was applied to reconstruct the 3D appearance of the cyst. The prognosis of the radicular cysts after nonsurgical treatment was observed by calculating the volume at different time periods.

## CONCLUSION

We report a case of a radicular cyst that achieved a good prognosis through nonsurgical treatment with an apical negative pressure irrigation system. We utilized CBCT data to generate a 3D model of the radicular cyst with 3D Slicer, and this model enabled us to better evaluate prognosis. This case report offers new insight into the treatment of patients with radicular cysts. Future studies with large samples are needed to evaluate the efficacy of nonsurgical endodontic treatment with apical negative pressure irrigation in patient with radicular cysts.

## FOOTNOTES

**Author contributions:** Chen GP and Ling DH performed the dental treatment; Chen GP, Zhang YZ and Ling DH reviewed the literature, and contributed to the drafting of the manuscript; Zhang YZ and Ling DH contributed to the design of the treatment plan; Chen GP and Ling DH were responsible for the revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content; and All authors issued final approval for the version to be submitted.

**Supported by** the Medical Health Science and Technology Project of Zhejiang Provincial Health Commission, No. 2022RC158.

**Informed consent statement:** The patient provided informed written consent prior to study enrollment.

**Conflict-of-interest statement:** All the authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

**CARE Checklist (2016) statement:** The authors have read the CARE Checklist (2016), and the manuscript was prepared and revised according to the CARE Checklist (2016).

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**S-Editor:** Liu JH

**L-Editor:** A

**P-Editor:** Yuan YY

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