




Sandro Rengo
Editor-in-Chief
Giornale Italiano
di Endodonzia
 E-mail address
editor.giornale@endodonzia.it

Editorial

Endodontics: A 40-year journey through evolution, innovation and time

There are disciplines that advance slowly, and then there is endodontics - a clinical science that over the last 40 years included a profound and rapid evolution that has completely transformed the profession's identity. Today, at the end of a long academic and clinical journey, I look back with gratitude and wonder: what was considered cutting-edge a generation ago now appears almost rudimentary.

When I first began to take my steps in this discipline, biological concepts were already solid, but the instruments were limited and technology was more a desire than a certainty. Endodontics was art, manual skill and clinical sensitivity refined through experience. Materials were few, techniques often simple and the risk of failure was a constant partner.

Then came the time of innovation — not sudden, but persistent. First, nickel-titanium rotary instrumentation systems, which transformed endodontic biomechanics, then increasingly effective irrigants and ultrasonic and sonic activation systems capable of reaching and disinfecting spaces once thought inaccessible. Moreover, the rubber dam that advanced from a virtuous optional tool to an indispensable standard and digital radiology and CBCT which redefined our ability to prevent, plan and assess. Finally, the advent of bioceramic sealers, materials that have crossed the boundaries of biocompatibility and sealing ability, ensuring prognoses once unimaginable. Of course, innovation is not only measured through devices or materials: it is also a cultural evolution. We moved from a technical approach to one biologically-related, conservative and predictable.

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