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No animal subjects were included in this study.

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Follow-up Extension Up to 43 Years of Modified Osteo-Odonto-Keratoprosthesis



The osteo-odonto-keratoprosthesis is a biological corneal prosthesis (KPro), introduced by Strampelli in 1964. It uses an osteo-dental lamina as a biological haptic derived from an autologous mono-radicular tooth. An acrylic optical cylinder at the center of the lamina replaces the cornea, and the resulting osteo-dental-acrylic lamina is preferably covered by autologous buccal mucosa or, if not available, by skin (Fig S1, available at www.aojournal.org).¹ In 2005, Falcinelli et al² proposed several advances to the original surgical technique, the so-called modified osteo-odonto-keratoprosthesis (MOOKP), reporting favorable results in a large cohort of patients who underwent surgery between 1973 and 1999 and followed up to 25 years.²

This study aimed at extending the follow-up of the same cohort of patients, providing further evidence about long-term anatomic and functional outcomes of the MOOKP technique. The study adhered to the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki. Institutional Review Board approval was obtained from San Camillo Hospital, Rome, Italy. Detailed informed consent was obtained from all patients.

Inclusion criteria were untreatable corneal disease and preoperative best-corrected visual acuity (BCVA) ≥ 0.52 logarithm of the minimum angle of resolution (logMAR) in both eyes or in the eye eligible for surgery, with BCVA ≥ 1.00 logMAR in the fellow noneligible eye. Pediatric patients (< 17 years), eyes with no light perception, and eyes affected by sight-threatening conditions of the posterior pole or uncontrolled glaucoma were excluded. Details about the surgical technique and the preoperative/postoperative evaluation have been reported in previous articles by Falcinelli et al.^{2,3}

This study included 229 eyes of 205 patients (122 men, 83 women; age 54.1 ± 15.2 years). The most common indications for MOOKP included bilateral blindness or low vision caused by chemical burns or physical trauma ($n = 84$), end-stage dry eye due to ocular mucous membrane pemphigoid ($n = 54$), trachoma ($n = 11$), Sjögren's syndrome ($n = 11$), Steven-Johnson syndrome ($n = 7$), and Lyell syndrome ($n = 8$).

Autologous buccal mucosa was used in 206 eyes, skin was used in 22 eyes, and vaginal mucosa was used in 1 eye. Unlike the previous case series by Falcinelli et al² that analyzed

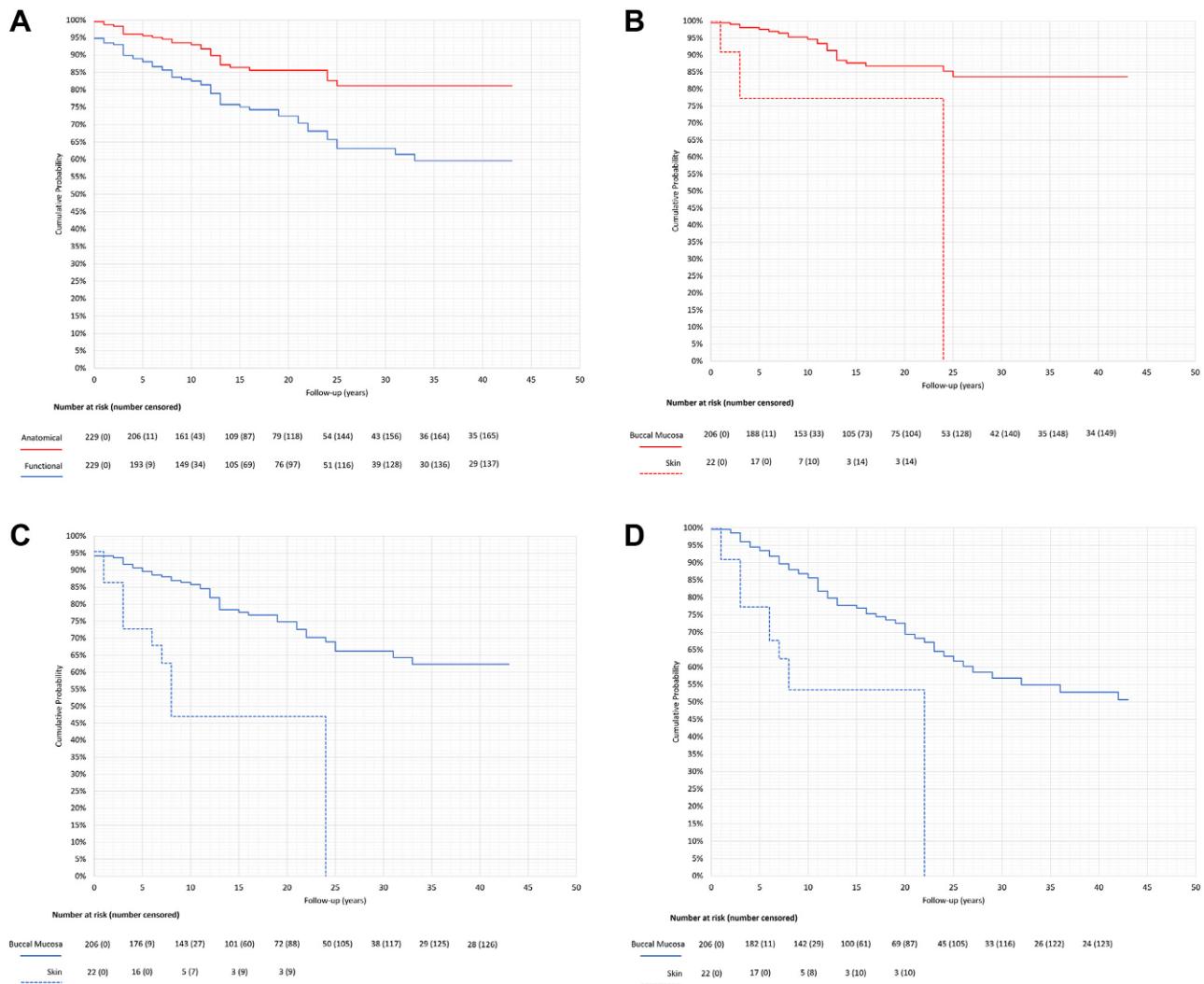


Figure 2. Kaplan-Meier analysis estimating overall anatomic (red continue line) and functional survival cumulative probability (blue continue line) (A). Kaplan-Meier analysis estimating anatomic survival cumulative probability (B), functional survival cumulative probability (C), cumulative probability of retaining the best-corrected postoperative visual acuity (BCVA) within 2 lines (D), and for eyes covered by buccal mucosa (continue lines) and by skin (dashed lines).

results of only eyes covered by buccal mucosa, eyes covered by both buccal mucosa and skin were evaluated and compared in this study.

Mean preoperative BCVA was 2.44 ± 0.42 logMAR (95% confidence interval [CI], 2.39–2.50), with no significant difference between eyes covered by buccal mucosa and eyes covered by skin ($P > 0.2$). Mean postoperative BCVA at 3 months was 0.23 ± 0.49 logMAR (95% CI, 0.17–0.30), significantly improved compared with baseline ($P < 0.001$). Overall, BCVA was 0.00 logMAR in 136 eyes (59.4%), > 0.00 and ≤ 0.40 logMAR in 55 eyes (24.0%), > 0.40 and ≤ 1.00 logMAR in 26 eyes (11.4%), and > 1.00 logMAR in 12 eyes (5.2%).

The mean follow-up period was 16.0 ± 9.5 years (95% CI, 14.7–17.2), ranging from 6 months to 43 years. Anatomic and functional survival rates of the MOOKP implant were drawn in Kaplan-Meier curves. Anatomic failure was defined as any injury or disease that requires the removal of the osteo-odontokeratoprosthesis implant, whereas functional failure was defined as BCVA > 1.0 logMAR. The number censored included losses to

follow-up and deaths. Kaplan-Meier curves were compared by log-rank test.

According to the Kaplan-Meier analysis (Fig 2A), anatomic survival cumulative probabilities were 96.0% at 5 years (number at risk [nr] = 206), 93.5% at 10 years (nr = 161), 85.6% at 20 years (nr = 79), 81.1% both at 30 years (nr = 43) and at 40 years (nr = 35), and functional success rates were 89.0% at 5 years (nr = 193), 83.1% at 10 years (nr = 149), 72.4% at 20 years (nr = 76), 63.2% at 30 years (nr = 39), and 59.6% at 40 years (nr = 29).

Anatomic and functional Kaplan-Meier curves for eyes covered by buccal mucosa and skin are shown in Figure 2B and C. Concerning eyes covered by buccal mucosa, most anatomic failures occurred within the first 25 years ($n = 22$), whereas 1 was reported afterward. Likewise, most functional failures occurred within the first 25 years ($n = 48$), with only 4 cases reported after the 25-year threshold. Eyes covered by skin showed significantly lower anatomic ($\chi^2 = 11.324$; $P < 0.001$) and functional ($\chi^2 = 26.428$; $P < 0.001$) survival probability, with a maximum follow-up of 24 years.

Mean postoperative BCVA during follow-up is reported in **Table S1** (available at www.aojournal.org). Postoperative BCVA ≤ 1.0 logMAR remained unchanged in 146 of 217 eyes (67.3%) for the entire duration of the follow-up. The cumulative probability for an individual patient of maintaining the postoperative BCVA within 2 lines, according to Kaplan-Meier analysis, is shown in **Figure 2D**. Eyes covered by skin had a significantly lower probability to maintain postoperative BCVA (chi-square = 12.340; $P < 0.001$). Overall, mean postoperative BCVA at the last follow-up visit was 0.78 ± 1.06 logMAR (95% CI, 0.64–0.91).

Intraoperative and postoperative complications are reported in **Table S2** (available at www.aojournal.org). In line with data previously reported,⁴ the most threatening complications were endophthalmitis ($n = 18$), retinal detachment ($n = 10$), instability/expulsion of the optical cylinder ($n = 12$), and expulsion of the prosthesis ($n = 2$). After MOOKP, glaucoma developed in 23 of 145 nonglaucomatous eyes (15.9%) and worsened in 35 of 84 eyes with preexisting glaucoma (41.7%). Of these, 56 eyes developed glaucoma within 25 years from surgery.

To the best of our knowledge, this study evaluates the longest follow-up for a cohort of patients who underwent MOOKP surgery (PubMed, keywords osteo-odonto-keratoprosthesis, years 1965–2023). Long-term anatomic and functional survival probabilities at 40 years were approximately 80% and 60%, respectively, with a decreasing rate of failures and complications over time, especially after the 25-year threshold. These positive results may be due to the characteristics of the osteo-dental support, which constitutes a heterotopic autotransplant with fundamental biological properties of immunological defense, repair, and proliferation typical of living tissues **Fig S1**, www.aojournal.org.^{2,5,6} The lower survivability of eyes covered by skin confirms the essential role of the buccal mucosa overlay, which is in contact with and nourishes both the alveolar bone and dentine, resembling the anatomic structure of the tooth neck inside the oral cavity.^{6,7}

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On the centenary of his birth, in loving memory of late Giancarlo Falcinelli, father of the MOOKP, whose long professional life was dedicated to cure corneal blindness and to perfect a keratoprosthesis technique used for the sake of all patients worldwide.

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Data collection: Colliardo, Taloni, Taloni, Falcinelli, Petitti, Giannaccare

Analysis and interpretation: Colliardo, Taloni, Taloni, Falcinelli, Petitti, Lucisano, Busin, Scoria, Giannaccare

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