

# Better ways to align impacted canines

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**H**ow often have you struggled to bring a severely impacted maxillary canine into alignment only to wonder if there wasn't a better way? This happens when I have to return the patient for a second surgical exposure, or when the resulting periodontal support for the canine is inadequate and the esthetic and functional relationships are less than ideal. The first article in this issue of *The Angle Orthodontist* consists of two case reports that address some of the difficulties encountered when treating individuals with severely displaced maxillary canines. A number of questions are raised as the results of treatment are critically evaluated and relatively new findings are referenced that question some of the more traditional ways of treating these patients.

The feature article in this issue of the journal will change forever the way periodontists and oral surgeons look at the surgical exposure of impacted anterior teeth. Drs. Michael Vermette and Vince Kokich (page 23) compare the results for patients who had two different methods of surgically uncovering impacted maxillary anterior teeth: the apically posi-

tioned flap (APF) procedure and the closed-eruption (CE) technique. The 30 treated patients in their study are assessed for both esthetic and periodontal differences. The results include a periodontal examination as well as a look at stability. This is one of the first clinical studies that looks at esthetic differences between techniques in such areas as gingival attachment, clinical crown lengths, and gingival scarring.

If you're interested in the thoughts of a periodontist, read the commentary by Dr. David Mathews that follows. His reflection on when to use the closed eruption technique will be of interest.

Finally, you may be encouraged to know that the problems caused by unerupted teeth have been around for a very long time. The discovery of a palatally displaced canine in an Etruscan adolescent skull is described in this issue (page 75) with commentary by Dr. Sheldon Peck. Isn't it amazing that approximately 2600 years later we are still developing new and improved ways of bringing these teeth into occlusal function?