



## Simple, Advanced, Complex: Achieving New Levels of Dentistry



Alessandro Devigus, Dr med dent  
Editor-in-Chief

In 1999, the Swiss Society for Oral Implantology developed the Simple, Advanced, Complex (SAC) Classification, a somewhat subjective method for determining the degree of difficulty of implant cases:

- *Simple*: This is a basic procedure for which complications are not expected, and the end result and the process needed to achieve it can be easily visualized. Surgically, this is a case for which there is no chance of the osteotomy involving vital structures and grafting is not necessary. Restoratively, this is a case that requires little concern for esthetics and involves uncomplicated biomechanics.
- *Advanced*: In advanced cases, the end result can be visualized, but there may be multiple processes demanding precision and accuracy involved in achieving a successful outcome. In the surgical sense, this might relate to cases requiring routine hard and soft tissue grafting to correct a loss of buccal contour or to a case that requires

some sinus tenting to allow a longer implant to be placed. Restoratively, advanced cases are those that require more than just proper placement of a crown; however, all esthetic cases are automatically deemed to be at least advanced. Cases that require replacement of multiple teeth and involve significant biomechanical considerations are also included in this classification.

- *Complex*: Complex cases are those for which it is initially almost impossible to visualize the processes needed to achieve success. Multiple interdependent steps are necessary, and complications and subsequent modifications to the treatment plan are to be expected.

The classification can be used independently for both the surgical and restorative phases of treatment; for example, a case in the posterior maxilla that requires hard and soft tissue grafting and needs to avoid the antrum might be considered surgically *advanced*, while the relatively



straightforward and esthetically less challenging restoration might be classified as *simple*.

This classification applies to more than just implantology. Almost everything we do, even so-called everyday tasks, can be classified as simple, advanced, or complex procedures.

The word *simple* could be replaced by *straightforward*, which better describes the working strategy related to performing daily tasks. There are many procedures we carry out on such a routine basis that we sometimes give them very little thought. However, it is important to take care even when performing simple tasks; an oversight or omission can easily cause unexpected outcomes and failures. It is therefore important to establish and follow strict protocols for routine procedures to improve the quality of your work, reduce the

risk of errors, and form a strong foundation for performing more advanced and complex procedures.

Once they have mastered their routine procedures, clinicians should dare to take the next step. As practice makes perfect, practitioners can begin to provide advanced and complex levels of treatment in their field. This progression improves the quality of the clinician's work, as well as the quality of life and the services offered to patients.

To achieve these new levels of skill, we need colleagues who are willing to share their knowledge and experience. This issue of the *European Journal of Esthetic Dentistry* features articles by just such experts. It is my hope that readers will find in these pages not only the information but also the motivation they need to reach new levels of treatment in esthetic dentistry.