

September 10-11, 2018
Zurich, Switzerland

J Dent Craniofac Res 2018, Volume 3
DOI: 10.21767/2576-392X-C3-009

INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY

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Interventional radiology or, as it is sometimes called, minimally invasive surgery has evolved from traditional diagnostic radiology over the last 20 years. Thus today many procedures can be done with image guidance that in the past required an open approach. The morbidity, risks and complications can often be reduced significantly by image-guided minimally invasive percutaneous techniques as compared to open surgical procedures. There are many examples of successful interventional radiology performed today: TIPS, in which the portal vein is connected to the hepatic vein bypassing the liver in patients with liver failure, aspiration biopsies in deep locations that were not accessible without an open approach in the past, recanalization of the fallopian tubes for infertility, and maintenance of vascular access in patients with renal disease, to mention a few. Interventional maxillofacial radiology is in its infancy. Only a few minimally invasive

procedures have been applied to this area, but it is quite obvious that the percutaneous approach with needles is much preferred in the maxillofacial region as compared to an open procedure. In this chapter we have collected a few diagnostic and interventional procedures that have been applied to the maxillofacial and related areas. Of these procedures temporomandibular joint (TMJ) arthrography and sialography are those which most typically have been performed by maxillofacial radiologists. It is also our opinion that image-guided biopsies of soft-tissue masses or bone, being good alternatives to open surgery biopsies, should be within the working area of these specialists. Although orbital biopsies and embolizations are beyond their scope, we have also illustrated such procedures to show the maxillofacial radiologist what is indeed possible to safely perform.