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ABSTRACT

Introduction Nerve block technology is widely used in clinical practice for pain management. Conventional nerve localization methods, which only rely on palpation to identify anatomical landmarks, require experienced surgeons and can be risky. Visualization technologies like ultrasound guidance can help prevent complications by helping surgeons to locate anatomical structures in the surgical area and by guiding the operation using different kinds of images. There are several important and complex anatomical structures in the oral and maxillofacial regions. The current article reviews the application of ultrasound guidance in oral and maxillofacial nerve blocks. **Methods** We searched the literature on the use of ultrasound guidance for the main nerve block techniques in the oral and maxillofacial regions using both PubMed and MEDLINE and summarized the findings. **Results and Discussion** A review of the literature showed that ultrasound guidance improves the safety and effectiveness of several kinds of puncture procedures, including nerve blocks. There are two approaches to blocking the mandibular nerve: intraoral and extraoral. This review found that the role of ultrasound guidance is more important in the extraoral approach. There are also two approaches to the blocking of the maxillary nerve and the trigeminal ganglion under ultrasound guidance: the supra-zygomatic approach and the infra-zygomatic approach. The infra-zygomatic approach can be further divided into the anterior approach and the posterior approach. It is generally believed that the anterior approach is safer and more effective. This review found that the effectiveness and safety of most oral and maxillofacial nerve block operations can be improved through the use of ultrasound

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KEYWORDS

nerve block; ultrasound; mandibular nerve; maxillary nerve

INTRODUCTION

The precise goal of a nerve block can be described as “put the right dose of the right drug in the right place” (Denny & Harrop-Griffiths 2005). Conventional nerve localization methods are based on the identification of anatomical landmarks via palpation on the surface of the body. This technique relies heavily on the experience of the surgeons, and such localization methods are not suitable for patients with anatomical variations in nerves and blood vessels or patients with no perceived anatomical landmarks on the surface of the body. With the development of visualization technologies like ultrasound, CT, and MRI, surgeons can now observe the distribution and direction of nerves and blood vessels. Visualization technologies can greatly reduce the risk of adverse reactions and improve the efficiency of puncture procedures.

Ultrasound guidance is widely used in nerve block procedures for upper and lower limbs and spine and celiac nerves (reference). Ultrasound also has a wide range of applications in the oral and maxillofacial region, including ultrasonic scaling, ultrasound diagnosis, ultrasound-guided puncture procedures, and ultrasound thermo-chemotherapy (Figure 1), but there are relatively few studies on ultrasound-guided oral and maxillofacial nerve blocks (reference). The current article presents a review of the progress in the application of ultrasound guidance in oral and maxillofacial nerve

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106 blocks. This article aims to increase physician awareness of visualization techniques
107 when performing nerve blocks in the maxillofacial region in order to reduce injuries
108 and improve the efficiency of nerve blocks. Please include the prevalence of injuries
109 with the current techniques.

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110 This article is intended for oral and maxillofacial surgeons, dental emergency doctors,
111 and neurosurgeons, providing them with more visualization technology choices when
112 performing nerve blocks or neuralgia treatment in daily clinical practice. It is our hope
113 that these providers can develop more safe and effective treatment approaches with the
114 help of visualization technology.

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116 **METHODS**

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117 **1 Literature Search Strategy**

118 The present study was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for
119 Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) statement (Moher et al. 2009). We
120 comprehensively searched the PubMed and MEDLINE databases, using the following
121 keywords or Medical Subject Heading (MeSH) terms: We used the "OR" and "AND"
122 operations to search the literature on the different nerves and guidance methods. For
123 instance, when searching publications on ultrasound guidance used in inferior nerve
124 blocks, the search terms used were "ultrasound guidance" OR "US" or "ultrasound-
125 guided" OR "US-guided" AND "inferior alveolar nerve" OR "IANB." Since studies
126 involved both the inferior alveolar and the mandibular nerve, "mandibular nerve" was
127 searched at the same time. Since we did not find any review similar to the current one,

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141 we did not impose restrictions on the year of publication.

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143 2 Study Selection Criteria

144 The studies were independently reviewed by two authors and any discrepancies were
145 resolved by discussion and consensus. Studies were included based on the following
146 criteria: (1) written in the English language; (2) had human subjects (including autopsy

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147 studies); and (3) were a clinical trial, cohort study, narrative study, or case report. We
148 excluded studies that were: (1) not written in English; (2) did not have human subjects;
149 and (3) did not use visualization technology but used other neural localization
150 technology to guide nerve block procedures. In total, 34 relevant publications were
151 included in this review including 3 existing review articles (Figure 2).

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153 3 Assessment of levels of evidence

154 The evidence levels of the articles were assessed by the first author using the 2014
155 version of the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Levels of Evidence. Evidence was ranked
156 into one of five levels: level 1 = very high, level 2 = high, level 3 = moderate, level 4 =
157 low and level 5 = very low.

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We searched PubMed and MEDLINE for relevant publications. We used the "OR" and "AND" operations to search the literature on the different nerves and guidance methods. For instance, when searching publications on ultrasound guidance used in inferior nerve block, the search

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159 RESULTS

160 We grouped the 34 included studies according to the nerves targeted in the study. We
161 found that the most common target nerves for nerve block procedures in the oral and
162 maxillofacial region are the inferior alveolar nerve, the mandibular nerve, the maxillary

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nerve and the trigeminal ganglion. We found that a nerve block of the mandibular nerve and the inferior alveolar nerve are frequently done at the same time, so we merged these two groups in this article. For blocks of the same nerve, we grouped different approaches. In addition to the target nerves mentioned above, there were also studies describing ultrasound-guided nerve blocks of other nerves including the infraorbital nerve and the supraorbital nerve. These were included in the "other nerves" section in this article.

The main anatomical structures and nerves involved in the current article are shown in the lateral view of the skull in Figure 3.

1 The Mandibular Nerve and The Inferior Alveolar Nerve

Intraoral injection is the most commonly used method for inferior alveolar nerve blocks (IANB) in clinical practice. The puncture location is identified using several surface landmarks like the pterygomandibular ligament and the buccal fat pad. When practicing this approach, the needle is placed 1 cm above and parallel to the mandibular occlusal plane. Surgeons administer anesthesia to the inner surface of the mandibular ramus, and then the inferior alveolar nerve can be successfully blocked through the diffusion of anesthetic drugs (Aggarwal et al. 2010). This method is widely used clinically, but studies have shown that its success rate is affected by the specific occasion, which means different types of dental treatment have different requirements for IANB (Potocnik & Bajrovic, 1999; Abdallah et al. 2016). Studies have proposed different measures to improve the success rate, such as supplementary infiltration anesthesia,

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319 changing the anesthetic drug dose (Milani et al. year?), or using ultrasound-guidance
320 methods. Ultrasound-guided IANB can be divided into intraoral and extraoral
321 approaches.

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323 1.1 Intraoral approach

324 In the intraoral approach, both the ultrasound probe and the injection needle are placed
325 in the mouth, Hannan et al. (Hannan et al. 1999) compared ultrasound guided IANB to
326 conventional techniques. When comparing the degree of anesthesia of the dental pulp
327 in one side of the mandible, they it was found that although the needle tip can be
328 accurately placed around the nerve using ultrasound guidance, no significant difference
329 was found in the success rate between the two techniques. The author also pointed out
330 that the indicator of a successful block used in the study was “pulpal anesthesia,” which
331 is different from the commonly used “lip and tongue numbness.” Also, in the same
332 study, the inferior alveolar nerve could not be located using ultrasound, so the position
333 of the inferior alveolar artery was used to locate the nerve. Chanpong et al. (Chanpong
334 et al. 2013) were able to identify the inferior alveolar nerve using a new type of hockey
335 stick-shaped ultrasound probe placed at the patient’s pterygomandibular ligament. The
336 average scanning time required to locate the left inferior alveolar nerve was only 19.6
337 seconds and the scanning time required to locate the right inferior alveolar nerve was
338 30.5 seconds. The subjects stated that the probe did not cause any significant discomfort.
339 In addition, the author successfully performed ultrasound guided IANB on cadavers
340 using this method by injecting a dye in order to simulate the diffusion of anesthesia

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355 drugs around the nerve when performing this procedure,
356 In summary, there are several criteria to evaluate the success of traditional IANB, and
357 accurately placing the needle around the nerve is not the only factor that affects
358 anesthesia. Future studies addressing the safety of this method are needed as there are
359 only a few studies (including basic research and clinical research) on the intraoral
360 approach to ultrasound-guided inferior alveolar nerve blocks. It is too early to conclude
361 that the introduction of ultrasound has any effect on the success rate of IANB in the
362 intraoral approach. More studies are needed to explore whether ultrasound can guide
363 this operation.

364 365 1.2 Extraoral approach

366 In the extraoral approach of ultrasound-guided inferior alveolar nerve (or mandibular
367 nerve) blocks, the ultrasound probe and the puncture point are located outside of the
368 mouth. The most common purpose behind the extraoral approach is to inject the
369 anesthetic drugs into the pterygomandibular space. The relative positions of the
370 ultrasound probe and the needle tip, and the correct recognition of the anatomical
371 structures from the ultrasound images are important for this procedure. Kumita et al.
372 (Kumita et al. 2017) reported a type of extraoral approach to performing an ultrasound-
373 guided maxillary and inferior alveolar nerve block to induce analgesia after
374 orthognathic surgery. In this method, the ultrasound probe was placed caudad to the
375 zygomatic arch to observe the maxillary artery in the pterygomandibular space. The
376 selected injection site was just around the maxillary artery to help the anesthetic drug

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396 infiltrate the inferior alveolar nerve. This study also used the position of the maxillary
 397 artery to locate the nerve in the ultrasound images. Using the same method, **Kojima *et***
 398 ***al.* (Kojima *et al.* 2020)** performed ultrasound-guided (extraoral approach) IANB in
 399 patients having drug-related osteonecrosis and undergoing mandibular resection under
 400 general anesthesia. The after-surgery analgesic effect was better in the experimental
 401 group compared to the control group **of** patients who did **not** receive IANB, and the
 402 total amount of opioids used in the experimental group was significantly less **than the**
 403 **amount used by patients in the control group**. The above studies showed that
 404 ultrasound-guided injection of local anesthetics into the pterygomandibular space can
 405 achieve satisfactory results **in** inferior alveolar nerve (and mandibular nerve) blocks. **As**
 406 **an** **a**lternative to injecting the anesthetic drugs into the pterygomandibular space,
 407 **Kampitak *et al.* (Kampitak *et al.* 2018b)** performed a new ultrasound-guided selective
 408 mandibular nerve block in cadavers, **called** the lateral pterygoid plate approach, where
 409 the drugs were injected into the **base of the skull**. During the surgery, the **cadaver's**
 410 mouth was wide open, the posterior and superior edges of the lateral pterygoid plate
 411 were identified using ultrasound, and the adjacent mandibular nerve and its branches
 412 were successfully stained by injecting a dye, indicating that a successful nerve block
 413 can be performed in the same way. **Tsuchiya *et al.* (Tsuchiya *et al.* 2019)** also used a
 414 similar approach, in which the lateral pterygoid plate was used as a landmark. In **ten**,
 415 cases of parotidectomy, low-molecular weight dextran and local anesthetics were used
 416 to block the mandibular nerve under ultrasound guidance, successfully reducing the
 417 involuntary movement of the muscles due to surgical stimulation during operation, thus

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425 reducing the need for general anesthesia.

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427 In summary, there are relatively more studies on the extraoral approach of ultrasound-

428 guided alveolar nerve (or mandibular nerve) blocks compared to number of studies on

429 the intraoral approach. In some variations, of the extraoral approach of the mandibular

430 nerve or IANB, patients do not need to open their mouths. Since there are some patients

431 who require a mandibular nerve or IANB that cannot open their mouths due to trauma

432 or pain, the extraoral approach of the alveolar nerve (or mandibular nerve) block is

433 sometimes necessary. However, in the extraoral approach, because the needle goes

434 deeper and the adjacent structures are more complex, the ultrasound can better guide

435 the needle. Jain et al. (Jain et al. 2016) performed closed-mouth high-position

436 mandibular nerve blocks, known as the Vazirani-Akinosi method, (Prabhu Nakkeeran et

437 al. 2019) and extraoral ultrasound-guided mandibular nerve blocks in, patients with pain

438 and trismus due to fracture or acute pain, before administering general anesthesia. To

439 check for differences between these two block methods, the visual analogue scale (VAS)

440 pain scores and the degree of relief from trismus, before and after the block for each

441 patient was compared. The results suggest that ultrasound can help accurately locate

442 nerves and blood vessels, anterior to the condyle, and assist with injecting anesthetics,

443 into the correct location. The ultrasound-guided group of patients required fewer

444 anesthetic drugs, had fewer adverse reactions, and showed better anesthetic effects and

445 higher success rates of block. The comparison of the different extraoral approaches of

446 ultrasound guided IANB is shown in Table 1 and Figure 4.

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472 2 Maxillary Nerve

473 The extraoral approach is the most common approach used in ultrasound-guided
474 maxillary nerve blocks. In this procedure, the ultrasound probe is usually placed below
475 the zygomatic arch. The extraoral approach can be further divided into the infra-
476 zygomatic and supra-zygomatic approaches depending on the location of the puncture
477 point (Anugerah et al. 2020).

478

479 2.1 Supra-zygomatic approach,

480 Sola et al. (Sola et al. 2012) and Chiono et al. (Chiono et al. 2014) performed bilateral
481 maxillary nerve blocks using ultrasound guidance and the supra-zygomatic approach
482 for pain management in infants who underwent cleft palate repair surgery. In ultrasound
483 images, anatomical structures in the pterygopalatine fossa and needle tip positions
484 could be clearly distinguished in real-time images. The anesthetic drug was injected
485 into the pterygopalatine fossa using ultrasound guidance, and the surgeons could
486 control the spread of the anesthetic over time. The arterial pulsation could also be
487 monitored to help avoid the risk of vascular puncture. Although the maxillary nerve
488 could not be directly identified using ultrasound images, the success rate and safety of
489 the maxillary nerve block in this study were both improved. After the surgery, all
490 patients with a maxillary nerve block had better pain management and used fewer
491 analgesic drugs. Another study (Bouzinac et al. 2014) performed maxillary nerve
492 blocks during maxillary osteotomy operations in adult patients using supra-zygomatic

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515 approach and determined that this method was safer as it avoids the risk of penetrating
 516 the orbital contents through the infraorbital fissure. Echaniz *et al.* (Echaniz et al. 2019)
 517 used this method to conduct a study on cadavers to identify the anesthetic drug dose
 518 required for a maxillary nerve block. The results showed that only 1 mL of liquid was
 519 needed to cover the nerve surface. In the study by Kumita *et al.* (Kumita et al. 2017), a
 520 maxillary nerve block was performed right after a mandibular nerve block, and the
 521 pterygoid fossa could be observed by adjusting the position of the probe. In this study,
 522 the insertion point was located at the angle formed by the superior edge of the
 523 zygomatic arch and the posterior orbital rim, and the injection site was at the lateral
 524 pterygoid plate. The authors pointed out that using ultrasound-guided maxillary and
 525 inferior alveolar nerve blocks at the same time significantly improved the effectiveness
 526 of perioperative analgesia during gnathoplasty.

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528 2.1 Infra-zygomatic Approach

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529 The supra-zygomatic approach mention above is considered a safer approach by many
 530 scholars, but normally it can only be performed using out-of-plane techniques, which
 531 are difficult. Moreover, due to the occlusion of the zygomatic arch, there is a period
 532 when the needle is seemingly invisible in the ultrasound and the surgeons have to rely
 533 on their experience (Anugerah et al. 2020). So, there are infra-zygomatic approach
 534 which can solve these problems.

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535 Kampitak *et al.* (Kampitak et al. 2018a) introduced a kind of ultrasound-guided
 536 maxillary nerve block using the infra-zygomatic approach in cadavers, using ultrasound

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548 [images of](#) the posterior edge of the maxilla and the lateral pterygoid plate [as](#) landmarks.

549 In this study, while the mouth of the [cadaver](#) was wide open, the injection needle could

550 approach the pterygopalatine fossa through the front edge of the lateral pterygoid plate.

551 This method successfully simulated the block of the maxillary nerve, pterygopalatine

552 ganglion, greater and lesser palatine nerves, and middle and posterior superior alveolar

553 nerves [by injecting a dye in place of an analgesic to see how the analgesic would spread](#)

554 [in the nerves](#). The authors claimed that after administering general anesthesia, the

555 degree of opening of the mouth could be increased (Kampitak & Shibata 2019). In the

556 infra-zygomatic approach, there are two ways for the [needle to enter: the anterior and](#)

557 posterior approaches. [Alfaro-de et al. \(Alfaro-de la Torre et al. 2019\)](#) compared these

558 two approaches [and](#) found that the anterior approach, in which the needle goes front-

559 to-back, can effectively avoid damage to important structures like the facial nerve,

560 parotid gland, and maxillary artery. However, [the anterior approach](#) is more difficult to

561 perform. In addition to the two approaches described above, [Takahashi et al. \(Takahashi](#)

562 [& Suzuki 2017; Takahashi & Suzuki 2018\)](#) reported a novel infra-zygomatic approach,

563 in which the needle passes from in front of the [coronoid](#) process. [In this paper, we refer](#)

564 [to this method as](#) "the [coracoid](#) approach". The main advantages of this novel method

565 are that [the path of the needle](#) is far away from the main blood vessels, and the needle

566 would not advance to the pterygopalatine fossa but instead to the infratemporal crest,

567 which is safer. [The](#) mandibular nerve can [also](#) be blocked at the same time by tilting the

568 ultrasound probe slightly posteriorly and advancing the needle vertically. [Patient](#)

569 [discomfort](#) could [also be](#) reduced since this method can be performed while the patient's

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594 mouth is closed. *Chang et al.* (Chang et al. 2017) and *Ying et al.* (Ying & Du 2017)
595 introduced another version of the infra-zygomatic approach, where the needle goes
596 between the coracoid process and the maxilla, and easily passes through the fissura
597 pterygomaxillaris to reach the pterygopalatine fossa, effectively avoiding the bone
598 structures.

599

600 There are several studies on ultrasound-guided maxillary nerve blocks, but there is still
601 no consensus on which method is better. The comparison of the different approaches to
602 ultrasound-guided maxillary nerve blocking is shown in Table 2 and Figure 5.

603

604 3 Trigeminal Ganglion

605 An ultrasound-guided trigeminal ganglion puncture is similar to a maxillary nerve
606 puncture. A nerve block of the trigeminal ganglion is used as a treatment for neuralgia
607 of the trigeminal nerve and its branches (Allam et al. 2018). *Nader et al.* (Nader et al.
608 2013a) injected anesthetic drugs and steroids under ultrasound guidance into the
609 pterygopalatine fossa of fifteen patients, who had trigeminal neuralgia and who had
610 failed both surgery and drug treatments. The results showed that 80% of patients
611 achieved complete analgesia in three branches of the nerve. The authors hypothesize
612 that the high success of this procedure is because the pterygopalatine fossa
613 communicates with the foramen rotundum and the supraorbital fissure. The injection in
614 the pterygopalatine fossa helps diffuse the anesthetic drugs to the middle cranial fossa
615 through the foramen rotundum, thereby blocking the three branches of the trigeminal

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641 nerve (Nader et al. 2013a; Nader et al. 2013b). Although the trigeminal ganglion is
642 situated relatively deeper, by adjusting the angle of the ultrasound probe and the
643 injection needle, surgeons can still advance the needle through the upper head of the
644 lateral pterygoid muscle and the pterygomaxillary fissure, and finally to the foramen
645 rotundum through the pterygopalatine fossa (Chuang & Chen 2015). A subsequent
646 study used this ultrasound-guided puncture method on a patient with trigeminal
647 neuralgia. The authors performed pulsed radiofrequency via the pterygopalatine fossa,
648 achieving satisfactory analgesic effects, and no recurrence was observed (Nader et al.
649 2015). Kumar et al. (Kumar et al. 2018) used the same procedure on patients
650 undergoing maxillofacial surgery for pain management, reducing the amount of opioids
651 these patients used after surgery.

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652 Ultrasound-guided trigeminal nerve block technology generally uses the
653 infrazygomatic approach. Zou et al. (Zou et al. 2020) proposed a suprazygomatic
654 approach, where both the ultrasound probe and the puncture point are both located
655 above the zygomatic arch. After identifying the landmark structures like the maxilla,
656 the great wing of the sphenoid bone, and the pterygopalatine fossa using ultrasound
657 imagery, the anesthetic drugs were injected onto the surface of the maxilla. The
658 comparison of the skin sensation of the patients as well as MRI images both before and
659 after the operation showed that this method helped spread the anesthetic drugs to the
660 target nerves, and both the mandibular and maxillary nerves were blocked successfully.
661 However, the blocking effect of the ophthalmic nerve was poor. This method is also
662 more comfortable for patients as it does not require the mouth to be open. In-plane

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681 technology can [also help](#) reduce the difficulty of puncturing. [The best way to perform](#)
682 [an](#) ultrasound-guided trigeminal nerve block, [however](#), is [still unclear](#). [A comparison of](#)
683 the different approaches [to](#) ultrasound-guided maxillary nerve blocks is shown in [Table](#)
684 3 and [Figure 6](#).

685 4 Other Nerves

687 [Apart](#) from the larger branches of the trigeminal nerve, like the maxillary and the
688 mandibular nerves, some small branches [in the oral and maxillofacial region](#) can also
689 be blocked using ultrasound guidance [\(Allam et al. 2018\)](#). However, due to their
690 superficial position, [these nerves can be blocked easily using](#) [conventional](#) landmark
691 palpation, [so](#) the application of ultrasound has not been widely promoted [in this area](#).

693 [Michalek et al. \(Michalek et al. 2013\)](#) used ultrasound to observe the position of the
694 infraorbital foramen on a skull model. The authors [concluded](#) that it is feasible to block
695 the infraorbital nerve under ultrasound guidance, and when the puncture point is located
696 intraorally, the block can be performed using the in-plane technique because the path
697 of the needle is longer. [Two other studies \(Takechi et al. 2015; Cok et al. 2017\)](#) used [an](#)
698 ultrasound-guided infraorbital nerve block for patients with trigeminal neuralgia and
699 isolated infraorbital neuralgia, and showed that rapid and satisfactory analgesia was
700 achieved after surgery; although, neuralgia recurred in both studies. The results from
701 another randomized double-blind clinical trial of ultrasound-guided infraorbital nerve
702 blocks [suggest](#) that dexmedetomidine combined with bupivacaine [have](#) a superior

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722 analgesic effect than dexamethasone combined with bupivacaine after cleft palate
723 repair surgery (El-Emam & El Motlb 2019).

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724

725 Cadaver studies (Spinner & Kirschner 2012) have demonstrated that ultrasound can
726 also be used to guide injection into the supraorbital, infraorbital, and mental nerves.

Deleted: Supraorbital neuralgia, too, is commonly observed.

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727 Luo *et al.* (Luo *et al.* 2018) and Ren *et al.* (Ren *et al.* 2020) studied the treatment of

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728 refractory supraorbital neuralgia with radiofrequency pulses and radiofrequency
729 thermocoagulation, respectively, using ultrasound guidance. The results showed that

730 both methods achieved satisfactory analgesic effects and no obvious adverse reactions

731 were observed.

732

733 Hafeez *et al.* (Hafeez *et al.* 2014) performed greater palatine nerve blocks with

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734 ultrasound guidance with a hockey stick-shaped ultrasound probe in patients and

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735 cadavers. They found that although ultrasound could locate the greater palatine artery

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736 and identify the greater palatine foramen and its direction effectively in the normal and

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737 edentulous maxilla, the block procedure could be challenging. The authors reported that

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738 with a more suitable size of ultrasound probe and a more suitable dose of local

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739 anesthetics, ultrasound may be used in pre-procedural localization to achieve a

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740 successful greater palatine nerve block.

741

742 In the maxillofacial region, although some nerves are superficial, they are accompanied

743 by blood vessels, and the adjacent structures are complex. Ultrasound may play an

755 important role in visualization and guidance of puncture operations. Ultrasound
756 technology has the potential to significantly improve nerve blocks and the treatment of
757 neuralgia.

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759 CONCLUSION

760 The biggest advantage of ultrasound is its convenience and real-time imaging
761 capabilities. These real-time images may help surgeons observe the blood vessels and
762 nerves around an injection area and the diffusion of anesthetics in real-time, thereby
763 improving the success rate and safety of puncture procedures. While there are relatively
764 few studies on the application of ultrasound guidance in oral and maxillofacial nerve
765 blocks and no widely recognized standards, this comprehensive literature review
766 suggests the superiority of using ultrasound to guide nerve blocks in the oral and
767 maxillofacial region.

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769 Also, ultrasound technology is constantly developing and there have been several
770 suggestions to enhance positioning abilities (such as needle visualization technology,
771 endoscopic ultrasound, etc.) (O'Donnell & Loughnane 2019). More research on
772 ultrasound guidance is needed in the future. With the advancement of imaging
773 technologies, more problems may be solved with support from clinical trials and
774 medical practitioners.

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Figure captions

Figure 1: Application of ultrasound in the oral and maxillofacial region. (A) Ultrasound Diagnostic System. (B) Ultrasonic scaler tip. (C) Ultrasound used to scan and diagnose the examination site. (D) Ultrasound guided puncture operation. (E) Ultrasound thermo-chemotherapy. (F) Ultrasonic scaling. (G) Ultrasonic root canal irrigation.

Figure 2: Study selection process.

Figure 3: Anatomy structure of part of the skull in lateral view. (A) Lateral view of part of the skull with mouth closed; (B) Lateral view of part of the skull after the zygomatic arch is removed with mouth closed; the pterygopalatine fossa is covered with coracoid process; (C) Lateral view of part of the skull where the zygomatic arch and mandible are transparent; (D) Lateral view of part of the skull after the zygomatic arch is removed with mouth opened; the pterygopalatine fossa can be seen. (E) Enlarged image of the pterygopalatine fossa.

SB: sphenoid bone; TB: temporal bone; CB: Cheekbone; ZA: zygomatic arch; TG: Trigeminal ganglion; FR: foramen rotundum; FO: foramen ovale; CP: coracoid process, LPP: lateral pterygoid plate; PF: pterygopalatine fossa; MdN: mandibular nerve; MxN: maxillary nerve; LN: lingual nerve; IAN: inferior alveolar nerve; PSAN: posterior superior alveolar nerve; PG: pterygopalatine ganglion.

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964 Figure 4: The needle position of different methods of performing an ultrasound-guided
965 mandibular nerve block in extraoral approach with mouth opened

966 1: The trajectory of the needle is perpendicular to the sagittal plane to reach the PMS,
967 described by Kumita et al.

968 2: The needle reaches the posterior edge of the LPP in the infrazygomatic approach
969 described by Kampitak et al.

970

971 Figure 5: (A) The needle position of different methods of performing an ultrasound-
972 guided maxillary nerve block while the mouth is closed or slightly opened. The dotted
973 line indicates that the needle is blocked by the zygomatic arch or coracoid process. 1:

974 the suprazygomatic approach described by Sola et al; 2: the coracoid approach of the
975 infrazygomatic approach described by Takahashi et al. (B) The needle position of
976 different methods of performing an ultrasound-guided maxillary nerve block while the
977 mouth is opened. 3: Posterior approach of the infrazygomatic approach described by
978 Nader et al. where the mouth is slightly opened; 4: Anterior approach of the
979 infrazygomatic approach described by Kampitak et al. in which the anterior edge of
980 LPP is used as the landmark for puncturing.

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982 Figure 6: The needle position of different methods of performing an ultrasound-guided
983 Trigeminal Ganglion block.

984 Studies describe that an injection into the pterygopalatine fossa can make the anesthetic

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drugs diffuse through the foramen rotundum, to the middle cranial fossa, thereby

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blocking three branches of the trigeminal nerve.

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1: The infrazygomatic approach described by Nader et al.

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2: The suprazygomatic approach described by Zou et al.

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Table 1: Comparison of Different Approaches of Ultrasound Guided Mandibular Nerve and

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Inferior Alveolar Nerve Blocks

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ZA: zygomatic arch; LPP: lateral pterygoid plate; PS: pterygomandibular space

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Table 2: Comparison of Different Approaches of Ultrasound Guided Maxillary Nerve Blocks

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ZA: zygomatic arch; LPP: lateral pterygoid plate; PF: pterygopalatine fossa

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Table 3: Comparison of Different Approaches of Ultrasound Guided Trigeminal Ganglion Blocks

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ZA: zygomatic arch; LPP: lateral pterygoid plate; PF: pterygopalatine fossa

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