



Special interview | Dr. Soohong Kim D.D.S./Ph.D., founder of Cowellmedi

PIONEER OF KOREAN DENTAL IMPLANTS

Dr. Soohong Kim, the founder of Cowellmedi, is an essential figure when it comes to Korean implants. His proteges are currently active as CEOs and executives of major domestic implant companies, so Cowellmedi is even called the 'Implant Academy'. We met Dr. Soohong Kim, who said he would develop into a research-oriented company rather than quantitative growth, and heard about his history, management philosophy, and plans.

KOREA'S FIRST DENTAL IMPLANT, DREAMS COME TRUE, THE IMPLANT AND MEDICAL DEVICE INDUSTRY HAVE GREAT GROWTH POTENTIAL

Q What brought you to develop and localize the first dental implant in Korea?

A In the 1990s, when foreign implant brands were dominant, patients who could afford dental implant treatment were limited to the wealthy. At the time, I closed my own dental clinic and went to graduate school with the dream of providing better implants at better prices to patients who need implant treatment. I poured all my money earned from my clinic into developing implants and worked day and night with engineering professors and researchers to complete CAD drawings, succeeding in developing Korea's first dental implant (Bioplant).

Q After developing dental implants for the first time in Korea, you have won many awards. Which one is the most memorable?

A The most memorable one is the Medal of Industrial Service Merit in 2004. The medal was officially certified for the first implant development in Korea and was awarded

directly by the president at the time. With this opportunity, I spurred my research and developed the rhBMP-2. Besides, I won the Venture Business Grand Prize, etc.

Q How did you establish a dental implant company?

A After the development of Korea's first implant in 1994, Asrahi Medical in 1998, and Bioplant obtained medical device manufacturing item license in 1999. In 2000, it was converted into a corporation, Cowellmedi, named after 'CO-WELL', meaning a medical device company where everyone is happy. Cowellmedi has acquired numerous domestic and international patents and certifications so far and is manufacturing various products such as dental implants, surgical kits, dental bone graft materials, and non-resorbable shielding membranes. Among the products in the spotlight, INNO, an implant system launched in 2012, COWELL® BMP, a bone graft material based on E.rhBMP-2 for the first in the world in 2010. Cowellmedi holds the CIC (COWELL International Conference) every year and has meetings with many dentists around the world through

lectures and clinical case posters. Of course, we are constantly participating in domestic exhibitions such as SIDEX and BDEX.

Q Can you explain about INNO Implant and COWELL® BMP, the world's first E.rhBMP-2 based bone graft material?

A INNO Implant, the icon of Cowellmedi, was born with the meaning of implant innovation and, as its name suggests, it was designed to be suitable for various clinical cases. The INNO is sprayed with HA, a material safe for the human body, to evenly distribute the roughness obtaining strong geometric inter-locking. The development of COWELL® BMP was initiated for bone grafting required for implants. After launching research reagents in 2009, COWELL® BMP received manufacturing approval from the MFDS in 2010 for the first in Korea and became the world's first E.rhBMP-2 based bone graft material. COWELL® BMP induces rapid and reliable reformation of insufficient soft and hard tissues.

Q What are Cowellmedi's future visions and how do you prospect the future implant market?

A When I first entered dental school at the age of 18, when I first opened a dental

clinic with a signboard for the first time to become a person who helps people, the beginnings were always full of excitement of fear. A person who finds excitement in the face of difficulties and helps people, I am still silently trying to realize the vocation. In the future, we hope to become a company that helps many patients by creating a wind of great innovations in the dental industry as the innovative technologies of Cowellmedi in 1994. In addition, I believe that the growth potential of the dental implant and medical device industries is limitless.

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