



Q&A with **Dr. Michael Costa**

Get to know the Yomi Diamond
Doctor of Excellence



Weren't able to catch Dr. Michael Costa's lecture at the Pankey Symposium last month? In this Q&A, the Knoxville-based dentist shares his perspective on robot-assisted implantology and what the Yomi platform has meant for his practice. Dr. Costa, an associate instructor at the Pankey Institute, has been placing implants robotically since the fall of 2021.

How would you describe your implant practice? Which types of procedures do you perform? What's your typical case volume?

At Knoxville Smiles at Malone & Costa Dentistry, we do everything from singles to full-arches. Fixed and hybrid restorations. Bone reduction. You name it. My team and I place about 300-400 implants a year.

What initially drew you to Yomi and robot-guided implant surgery?

How innovative the technology is and all the benefits it brings. Yomi allows me to perform same-day guided surgery. I'm no longer dependent on labs, and my team has much more control over treatment planning. I believe robotics is the gold standard of dental surgery — there's nothing out there like it.

How does robotic guidance compare to other treatment modalities?

I've placed implants freehand and used many different types of guides over

the years. Robotics provides a feeling of confidence you just can't get working freehand. And with guides, there are so many pieces to the puzzle that can present issues: Fit problems, print errors, having to cut acrylic in the middle of a surgery. With Yomi, I don't have to worry about any of that.

Flexibility is a huge benefit of robotics. If you start your drill path and don't like the way something looks, you can adjust on the spot. If you remove a tooth and are left with less bone than you anticipated, you can modify your plan on the fly. I also like that Yomi allows me to use different types of implants, easily access posterior surgical sites, and clearly see what I'm drilling.

For your practice, what has been the single most important benefit of the Yomi platform?

Speed and efficiency of treatment. Being able to do same-day, fully-guided surgery and eliminate the need for multiple patient

visits is a game-changer. When a patient comes in with a cracked molar or a broken front tooth, we can typically plan and execute treatment that day. Alleviating someone's pain more quickly and saving them trips to our office is very rewarding for me as a provider.

How has Yomi made your workflows more efficient?

My intraoperative time is a fraction of what it used to be. Take bone reduction for example. What once took me five or ten minutes now takes 30 seconds. In terms of production, Yomi has been wonderful. By allowing us to accelerate our treatment timelines and do more in fewer visits, Yomi has helped free up our schedule, so we can see more patients.

What has robotics meant for your clinical team?

Before Yomi, surgery was more of an isolated event within our practice. Much of it was on me. Now, my assistants



Dr. Michael Costa performing robot-guided implant placement at Knoxville Smiles at Malone & Costa Dentistry, a Yomi Platinum Center of Excellence in Knoxville, Tennessee.

are much more involved in implant planning. Once they've scanned a patient, they start to put together a digital treatment plan in the YomiPlan software that I can work from. This technology has made us a more cohesive team and helped my staff develop a deeper understanding of implant surgery.

How does robot-assisted surgery contribute to a better patient experience?

Where do I begin? It's so much more seamless for the patient. We're not shoving bulky guides into their mouth. They're often in and out in one visit and spend less time in the chair. Because robotic guidance is so accurate, there's less pressure and head shaking.

I recently did an implant on my mom with Yomi after placing one for her with a printed guide about five years ago. She said the experience was completely different. Much easier, faster, and less painful this time around.

How would you describe the training and educational support you receive from Neocis?

It's been fantastic from the very start. No other partner relationship we have even comes close, which makes sense because it's sophisticated technology and a sizable investment.

With Yomi, you're not just buying a piece of equipment. You're investing in a unified software and hardware platform that's constantly evolving. I think of it in the same way I think about a Tesla or an iPhone. The more Teslas there are on the road and the more miles that are driven, the more data the Tesla team has to work with to make their vehicles better. It's the same with Yomi. Neocis is all about innovation, and the Yomi platform continues to evolve rapidly.

What would you say to another clinician considering Yomi?

The future is bright for Yomi. I believe this is just the beginning for robotic dentistry. If you value cutting-edge clinical technology and are willing to take a leap, I don't think you'll ever look back.

Want to hear more from Dr. Costa?



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