

## FINDING THE BUCCAL ARTERY -AN ANATOMICAL STUDY.

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Buccal flaps have long been used for intra oral reconstruction. To ensure a good blood supply, the pedicle of these flaps are often bulky, block the ability to chew and therefore need a second stage procedure, to restore chewing function.

The Cleft unit in Cork uses a low profile one stage buccal myo-mucosal flap in many secondary palate procedures. Theoretically, this flap is based on the buccal artery. However, in paediatric cases the flap survives, often as a random pattern flap as the flap volume and length is very small.

In adults, locating and inclusion of the buccal artery seems to be critical for the survival of the flap. The vessel is small and can be difficult to locate intraorally. The vessel seems to join the buccinator muscle at a more lateral position than textbooks would suggest.

We wish to delineate the precise 3D anatomy of the vessel in relation to intra-oral landmarks by doing a small series of cadaver dissections. The Assret centre is the ideal facility for practical research of this nature.

