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A simple grommet introducer

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THE use of grommets through the eardrum is increasing with the realization that it acts as a separate ventilating shaft to the middle ear in cases of tubal dysfunction. It is the most accepted method of management at present available in cases of secretory otitis media. There are also other occasional indications for its use in other conditions, including Menière's disease. A simple, less expensive grommet introducer may therefore be welcome. The crocodile forceps (the conventional grommet introducer) does not give a suitable grip. The one described by Dennis Clark (1968) was suitable, and its principle was utilized in designing the present new grommet introducer.

The introducer described is only a lumbar puncture needle with stilette (size 18). The bevelled end of the needle is cut short, thereby keeping the stilette projecting beyond the needle for about 2 mm. The needle, including the stilette is angulated at approximately 150° at the junction of its proximal two-thirds and distal one-third (Fig. 1).

After the myringotomy is done the grommet, threaded on to the projecting stilette, is introduced through the myringotomy opening, holding the proximal end of the instrument by means of the three fingers and thumb. After the grommet is introduced through the myringotomy opening, a slight pull of the stilette by the right index finger and thumb releases the grommet, which remains in position.

The grommets which we prepare have a very narrow flange. Sometimes it may be very difficult to hold the short flange with crocodile forceps, as advocated by Ransome (1976). With this inexpensive instrument, which is threaded to the lumen of the grommet, we have never, in 100 cases, encountered slipping of the grommet prior to its insertion, a commonplace occurrence with crocodile forceps.

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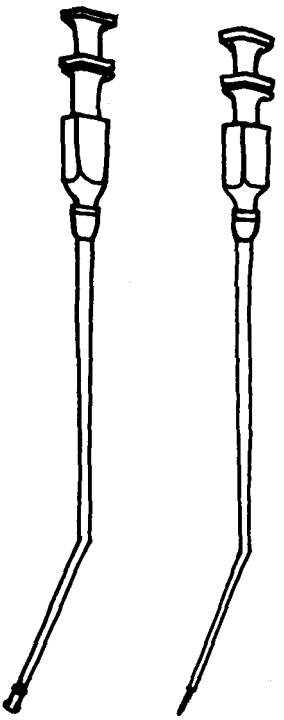


FIG. 1.

A lumbar puncture needle with stilette (size 18). The bevelled end of the needle is cut short by about 2 mm. The needle and the stilette are angulated at 150° between the proximal two-thirds and the distal one-third. The grommet is threaded on to the projecting stilette prior to its insertion into the myringotomy opening.

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