Figure 1 Aspiration of blue dye rapidly confirms correct positioning of the needle into the port for expansion.

patient. We use 5 ml of methylene blue dye added to the volume of saline prior to peri-operative infiltration of the implant. In the clinic, this allows a visible aspiration into a butterfly needle and syringe (Fig. 1), confirming rapidly that the needle is correctly sited within the port, and that expansion or deflation can proceed.

Check radiograph following hip arthroplasty

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Although it has been suggested that an immediate postoperative radiograph after hip arthroplasty is not needed,¹ we favour one, principally to confirm reduction and exclude any intra-operative fracture. The patient is kept in the lateral position following arthroplasty. A pillow is placed between the patient's knees to abduct the hip. The back support is loosened and the X-ray plate is positioned behind the hip. A radiograph is then obtained as

Figure 1 Position of X-ray machine and plate to obtain check radiograph.

shown in Figure 1. We have found this technique to produce reliable radiographs for postoperative purposes. It avoids the need for moving the patient in recovery for a radiograph and reduces the burden on nursing and portering staff by avoiding the need for departmental radiographs.

Reference

1. Crawford JR, Syed I, Babatope M, Keene GS. Total hip replacement – are check radiographs required? [Abstract] *J Bone Joint Surg Br* 2006; **88** (Suppl II): 249.

The Tubiglove – a novel means of support in hand injuries

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Metacarpal and proximal phalangeal fractures are common injuries that are often treated non-operatively. It is important with these injuries to allow controlled mobilisation of the fingers to prevent stiffness whilst splintage from neighbouring structures is utilised. This can be achieved by using the Tubigrip (Medlock Medical; Oldham, UK) to create a supportive glove. A double Tubigrip is cut to about 25 cm in length. Three longitudinal rows of machine stitching are used to create four 'finger compartments'. A small opening is cut out for the thumb. Unwanted finger compartments are trimmed off. The 'Tubiglove' provides firm support to the hand and fingers (Fig. 1). In addition,