Technical Section

TECHNICAL NOTES & TIPS

TECHNICAL NOTES

Retraction of oedematous eyelids with paper-clips

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BACKGROUND

Examination of ocular content and visual acuity, as part of full facial examination, is often hindered by post-traumatic or post-operative peri-orbital and eyelid oedema or haematoma. In order to exclude rare complications of occult ocular injury or retrobulbar haemorrhage, visualisation of the cornea and eyeball is crucial for making the correct clinical diagnosis. Patients frequently refuse ocular examination by clinicians' gloved fingers due to blood clots sealing the eyelashes together or painful swollen eyelids.

TECHNIQUE

A pair of ordinary paper clips (length 3.2 cm or 7.4 cm) are bent to approximately 90° near the midpoint of the paper clip with gentle finger pressure to create a hand-held retractor (Fig. 1). The paper-clip retractor should be held at the proximal end of the clip in order to allow the exposed wire end to lie vertically away from

Figure 1 An eyelid retractor made from bending a 3.2-cm paper-clip.

Figure 2 Retraction of post-traumatic swollen eyelids with a pair of paper-clips.

patient's eyelid. The paper-clip retractors are then cleaned with antiseptic solution before gently retracting the swollen eyelids. The eyelid will slowly open with a stepwise technique to advance the paper-clip retractors only on the skin surface (Fig. 2).

DISCUSSION

Paper-clip eyelid retractors are simple, cheap, readily available self-made eyelid retractors, and are helpful in opening closed oedematous eyelids in both trauma and postoperative situations. No patients suffered from any undue pressure or complications from the paper-clip eyelid retractors.

A novel use for synthetic ligaments in hip surgery

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BACKGROUND

Synthetic ligament replacement or augmentation is an accepted part of orthopaedic practice. Their use as a dynamic augmenta-