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TECHNICAL TIPS

The use of Tegaderm™ for finger buddy-strapping: a dressing with many advantages

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Buddy-strapping is a method of finger splinting that allows protected active movement in situations such as stable phalangeal fractures, undisplaced stable metacarpal fractures and ligamentous interphalangeal joint injuries. We have found buddy-strapping with Tegaderm™ (3M Healthcare, Germany) a transparent adhesive dressing, has a number of advantages over tape. It is simple for patients to self-apply. A full range of movement is possible with full support provided throughout. The dressing is waterproof, easy to clean and does not discolour. Finally, it allows easy inspection and is cosmetically more appealing to patients. We have not found that it stretches.

Figure 1 Buddy-strapping of the little and ring fingers with Tegaderm™. This particular patient had a stable fracture of her little finger metacarpal.

Technique for reducing incision-related post-operative pain

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We describe a technique to help reduce the pain associated with transverse abdominal wall incisions (Fig. 1). During closure of the wounds, two 6-Ch PVC end-perforated 350 mm wound drains (Van Straten Medinorm, Nieuwegein, The Netherlands) are inserted deep to the internal oblique muscle (corresponding with the neurovascular bundle). The 'drain' exits laterally, 6–7 cm away from the transverse incision and away from any bone. It is stuck to the skin with two Vygon dermafilms (Dermafilm®, Vygon, UK). Once closure is complete, 0.25% levobupivacaine is infiltrated via a pink (20-G) cannula affixed to the end of the drain as this minimises spillage. Further local anaesthesia can be instilled at the appropriate dose postoperatively using either boluses or continuous infusion via a pump (Bupivacaine Easypump, Braun, France).

Figure 1 Anaesthetic infiltrated via pump.

Use of anterior cruciate ligament guide for minimally invasive subtalar arthrodesis

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For the successful outcome of minimally invasive subtalar arthrodesis, skilful and accurate screw positioning are essential.