Skin Prepping for Upper Limb Procedures: Should I Keep my Eyes Closed Doc?

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Received: 14 July 2012 / Accepted: 18 September 2012 / Published online: 28 September 2012
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Abstract Antiseptics containing alcohol are commonly used due to their effective antiseptic properties. However, they may cause eye irritation if splashed into the eyes in awake patients receiving regional anaesthesia. We present a simple technique to avoid such cases.

Keywords Prepping · Antiseptics · Alcohol · Eye · Ulceration

Technical Note

Increasing numbers of upper limb procedures are carried out under regional anaesthesia with the patient

being awake. Antiseptics containing alcohol are commonly used due to their effective antiseptic properties but can cause significant eye irritation or even corneal ulceration if splashed into the eyes. Awake patients often converse with the surgeon during the prepping procedure and are at risk of this injury, especially by more inexperienced staff. To minimise this risk, and that of litigation, we now ask all awake patients to simply close their eyes or look away during the prepping procedure, which has prevented any further incidents.

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