Figure 1 Drill held against outer diameter of acetabular shell

Figure 2 Removal of ceramic liner in one intact piece

TECHNIQUE

Circumferential exposure is achieved so the shell and liner are clearly visible. A high frequency drill is held against the outer diameter of the acetabular shell (Fig 1), allowing transmission of the vibrations to the ceramic Morse taper, loosening the taper and allowing the articulation to fail without fragmentation. The loose liner can then be delivered undamaged (Fig 2). Subsequent revision can be performed as required.

DISCUSSION

Revision of a total hip arthroplasty needs comprehensive knowledge of the characteristics of the articulating materials. This simple yet effective technique, which uses readily available equipment, can be employed when faced with these potentially challenging revisions.

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Use of the locking guide in facilitating the removal of locking plates

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When removing a locking plate, there can be difficulty in prising the plate from the bone despite removing all the screws. Once overgrowth of tissue is removed, the use of an instrument to create a plane between the plate and the bone or to carefully lever the plate from the bone is often required, with the inherent risk of bone loss or fracture. We have found that the insertion of the locking guide into the plate (Fig 1) enables the surgeon to gain better purchase on the plate, facilitating plate removal with less frequent need for risky manoeuvres.

Figure 1 The locking guide was used to aid removal of this distal radius volar locking plate.