ultrasonography (Fig 3). Once the tip is in the peritoneal cavity, insufflation is begun and can be visualised as a hypoechoic shadow around the tip of the Veress needle.

DISCUSSION

We have standardised this technique in 53 patients who underwent weight loss surgery without any complications. Use of this method eliminates the blind steps of Veress needle insertion (two blind entries and one blind gas insufflation).⁴ This technique holds promise for decreasing the risks and improving the safety of trocar insertion without requiring costly optical devices.

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Blood on screwdriver tip to aid screw insertion at depth

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BACKGROUND

In performing a total hip arthroplasty, many surgeons undertake screw fixation of the acetabular component. While inserting the screw at depth, it sometimes proves difficult to ensure that the head of the screw remains engaged on the tip of the screwdriver. This may result in dropping the screw into the acetabulum or elsewhere within the surgical field. To address this problem, many medical manufacturers have designed instruments to stabilise and hold the screw on the screwdriver; for example, the Stryker 'screw holding forceps' (Stryker, Newbury, UK). The use of these instruments may prove cumbersome and occupies both of the surgeon's hands. We describe a simple alternative method to prevent the screw falling off the end of the screwdriver.

TECHNIQUE

The tip of the screwdriver is briefly placed into a drop of blood, such that the surface of the tip is completely covered (Fig 1). The screw

Figure 1 With the tip of the screwdriver covered in blood, the screw is engaged more securely and able to better resist the effects of gravity

can then be attached to the screwdriver and subsequently inserted into the acetabulum without the requirement for an additional stabilising instrument.

DISCUSSION

This simple technique aids attachment of the screw to the screwdriver tip for screw insertion at depth, thus allowing the surgeon the free use of one hand. We have observed that it is more difficult to intentionally drop a screw, with the use of force, when the technique is used. This phenomenon may be explained by the interrelated concepts of capillary action and liquid adhesion.¹

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