
Practical needle driver cleaning technique when using fast-absorbing plain gut sutures for facial defect repair



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SURGICAL CHALLENGE

Fast-absorbing plain gut sutures are an effective and efficient method for superficial closure of relatively low-tension defects. However, dried blood on the needle driver tip from placing deep sutures poses a challenge for knot tying with fast-absorbing plain gut sutures because the viscous build-up sticks to the suture and can cause suture breakage (Fig 1). We present a practical solution to this issue.



Fig 1. Dried blood on the needle driver.

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SOLUTION

During the transition from deep dermal sutures to superficial sutures, one can simply use the solution present in the fast-absorbing plain gut packaging to clean the needle driver. We recommend opening the fast-absorbing plain gut suture packaging during this transition rather than at the beginning of the procedure to maintain the optimal amount of solution. The technique is as follows: open the packaging, remove the white plastic container that contains the suture, place the needle driver in the solution within the aluminum foil packaging, remove the needle driver, and wipe it off with dry gauze (Fig 2). The 90% isopropyl alcohol, 0.5% diethylethanolamine, 0.5% sodium benzoate, and sterile water solution within the packaging effectively loosens the dried blood and is an effective means of effortlessly cleaning the needle driver. This practical technique aids in reducing the amount of time it takes to place the superficial fast-absorbing plain gut sutures without the need for additional solutions, such as saline or lidocaine, in the graft bowl or on the procedure tray.



Fig 2. To clean the needle driver, place the needle driver into the solution within the packaging and then wipe it off with gauze.