



FIG. 1. View of single-unit j-wire insertion device.

Cannulation of the central venous system is accomplished with the standard techniques.<sup>2,3</sup> Once the vein is punctured and blood return established, the j-wire is passed into the vessel without disconnecting the needle from the syringe.

This system offers the possible advantages of reducing the risk of air embolism and improving sterile technique.<sup>4</sup> More importantly, it will reduce the probability of displacing the needle from the vein when disconnecting the syringe from the needle.

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### A New Use for the Pulse Oximeter

*To the Editor:*—We would like to report the use of the pulse oximeter to aid cannulation of the femoral artery. A 5-yr-old black male with Down's syndrome and obesity (40 kg) came to the operating room for complete repair of tetralogy of Fallot. After an inhalation induction, bilateral antecubital ivs were started and anesthesia was maintained without difficulty. Acceptable oxygen saturations and stable blood pressures were measured by pulse oximeter (Nellcor® N-100) and the Dinamap™ SX. Attempts to cannulate both radial arteries were unsuccessful because pulses could not be palpated due to excessive adipose tissue. Femoral pulses could not be palpated for the same reason. The right groin was then prepped and draped using sterile technique. The pulse oximeter sensor was placed on the right great toe, and good pulsations were obtained. The groin was then manually probed and a specific area identified where digital occlusion caused the cessation of the distal toe pulsation on the pulse oxim-

This device has been used on 20 patients requiring internal and external jugular cannulation. In our experience, we have not failed to pass the wire once blood return was established. It has proved especially helpful for training inexperienced personnel and for cannulating difficult external jugular vessels.

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eter. A 20-gauge intravenous catheter was inserted into the identified area and the femoral artery cannulated without difficulty. An appropriate femoral artery catheter was then inserted using a modified Seldinger technique.

In conclusion, we found this technique was helpful, and it illustrated an additional use for the pulse oximeter. It is easy to use and may aid in similar cases where palpation of the arterial pulse is not possible.

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