



FIG. 1. (Left) 26 gauge $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch spinal needle. (Center) 21 gauge $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch standard introducer. (Right) 21 gauge $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch modified introducer.

MODIFIED INTRODUCER FOR 26 GAUGE SPINAL NEEDLE

Lumbar puncture with fine bore spinal needles is becoming a widely practiced technique (1). To obviate the danger of breaking the fine needle *in situ*, a 21 gauge $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch introducer is used. The 21 gauge needle which customarily serves as an introducer for the 26 gauge needle effectively reduces the length of the 26 gauge needle from 6.4 cm. to 5.2 cm. This length is sufficient to reach the subdural space in most adults. However, in the obese or the very muscular patient, the needle penetrates only as far as the epidural space. To circumvent this, we have modified the introducer by shortening the hub. This was accomplished by grinding down the hub on an emery wheel and polishing the surface. The resulting introducer shortens the length of the 26

gauge needle by only 0.3 cm., and the additional length enables us successfully to reach the subdural space with the 26 gauge needle in the overwhelming majority of patients. The accompanying photograph (fig. 1) illustrates the modified introducer.

REFERENCE

1. Greene, B. A.: A 26 Gauge Lumbar Puncture Needle: Its Value in Prophylaxis of Headache Following Spinal Anesthesia for Vaginal Delivery, *Anesthesiology* 11: 464 (July) 1950.

PAUL KUSHNER, CAPTAIN, M.C.,*
U. S. A. R.,
121st Evacuation Hospital,
Korea

* Present address: 527 Kingston Ave.,
Brooklyn, New York.