

CORRESPONDENCE

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A Right-angled Alligator Clip for Use with Insulated Nerve Block Needles

To the Editor:—Insulated needles with a nerve stimulator are used frequently to perform peripheral nerve blocks.¹ Typically, the anode is grounded to the patient, and stimulation of the needle tip is accomplished by attaching the cathode alligator clip to the metal hub of an insulated needle.

This needle assembly has a number of drawbacks. It is cumbersome and can be difficult to manipulate, particularly if the alligator clip is attached to a small needle. The wire from the alligator clip trails at a right angle from the needle, enabling it to enter the sterile field. Furthermore, the alligator clip has a tendency to move when the needle is manipulated during nerve blockade.

A solution to these problems is suggested by employing a right-angled alligator clip. This can be made by carefully breaking off that part of the alligator clip (Archer mini alligator clips 1-1/4", cat no. 270-380A) that bears the "teeth" using pliers. The teeth are then soldered at a right angle to the ends of another alligator clip that have been shortened and flattened using pliers. When the teeth of the right-angled alligator clip grasp the hub of the block needle, the wire lies parallel to the extension tube and can be wound around it for added support (fig. 1). The right-angled alligator clip appears more compact and convenient to use than the standard alligator clip, particularly with short needles.

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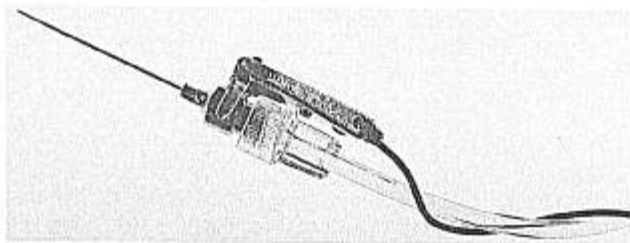


Fig. 1. Right-angled alligator clip attached to the hub of a 25-G sheathed pencil-point needle with extension set.

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Parents in the Operating Room?

To the Editor:—Many centers in which an appreciable number of pediatric surgical operations are performed allow parents or other responsible adults into the operating room during the anesthetic induction of children. Hopefully, this effects a less frightening and

traumatic experience for the child by providing a familiar face in unfamiliar surroundings. The presence of parents in the operating room is not without its pitfalls, as illustrated by the following unusual experience.