

Conflict of Interest

Universal Splint for upper limb support during reconstruction by pedicled abdominal flap

Sir,

Although the last few decades have seen rapid expansion in the use of free flaps for the reconstruction of upper



Figure 1: The components of the splint. The wooden platform has multiple holes to change the direction of use



Figure 2: The height and angle of the foam lined arm support can be adjusted with the help of the metallic components with holes



Figure 3: The use of the splint in a patient with groin flap

limb defects, yet pedicled abdominal flaps still hold an important place in the management of defects of the hand and forearm. These include groin, thoraco-umbilical, hypogastric and random pattern abdominal flaps. These flaps have a reliable blood supply, ease of execution and are resource friendly. Common

disadvantages are longer downtime, joint stiffness and difficulty in maintaining the positioning of the limb. Moreover, no definitive methods or splints have been described to keep the limb in a comfortable position. Commonly a pillow or a thick cotton pad is kept under the upper limb for support. However, these methods are uncomfortable to the patient. Besides, there is always a risk of kinking the pedicle due to poor or altered position during sleep.

In order to avoid these problems, we have devised a splint that can be effectively used in all the above mentioned flaps. The splint consists of a wooden platform with multiple holes, a foam lined arm support and a metallic column with adjustable height. The angle of the arm support can be adjusted with the help of nuts and bolts. Various parts of the splint are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The use of the splint has been shown in a patient with groin flap [Figure 3].

The application of the splint is very easy. The height and angle of the limb support can be easily adjusted as shown in Video 1. This splint has been used successfully in pedicled groin, thoraco-umbilical, hypogastric and random pattern abdominal flaps. Since the splint is mounted on the middle of the wooden platform, it can be used for both right and left sides. Due to the above-mentioned reasons, we called it Universal splint.

It is comfortable for the patient and position of the upper limb can be managed easily.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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Access this article online	
Quick Response Code: 	Website: www.ijps.org
	DOI: 10.4103/0970-0358.163080

How to cite this article: Mishra B, Sharma RK, Singh H. Universal Splint for upper limb support during reconstruction by pedicled abdominal flap. Indian J Plast Surg 2015;48:223-5.