

A Simple tip to aid Passing Multiple Suture Threads Through the Eye of the SwiveLock® Suture Anchor Applicator in Shoulder Arthroscopic Surgery.

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Abstract

SwiveLock® suture anchor has multiple applications in orthopaedic surgery, and especially in shoulder arthroscopy. The device is used in cuff repair surgery where multiple sutures are anchored securely and knotlessly into a bony footprint. For this, multiple suture threads ought to pass through a snare applicator that comes with the swivelock anchor apparatus. This can be challenging at times giving the different suture lengths. We present a simple solution to facilitate an easy passage of the threads through the suture snare applicator.

Keywords: Shoulder; Arthroscopy; Rotator Cuff Injuries

Introduction

SwiveLock® (Arthrex, Munich, Germany) suture anchor is a commonly used shoulder arthroscopic device to secure soft tissue to bone. (Figure 1a) It has multiple application uses in human and veterinary surgery [1-3]. It is designed to allow several suture threads through its eye that are then secured knotlessly in a prepared bony footprint by an anchor [4]. For example, inserting a lateral row in rotator cuff repair surgery.

The suture threads are passed through the eye of the device using a provided and already-in-place suture snare applicator. Such sutures usually vary in length, material, and thickness which can make them tricky to pass all in one go. (Figure 1b) This can lead to unnecessary delays, potential soft tissue swelling, and frustration for the operator.

We present a simple tip to allow for a seamless passage of several sutures together as one bundle into the suture applicator and thence into the eye of the SwiveLock® anchor.

Surgical Tip

The suture bundle is held tight between the two hands of the operating surgeon and cut clean using a sharp blade by the assistant, rendering the suture ends equal in length. The suture bundle will now be easier to pass through the suture applicator snare, and often in one go. (Figure 1c-d).

Discussion

This simple, effective, and timesaving technique offers smoother surgery with little worry or frustration during arthroscopic shoulder surgery.

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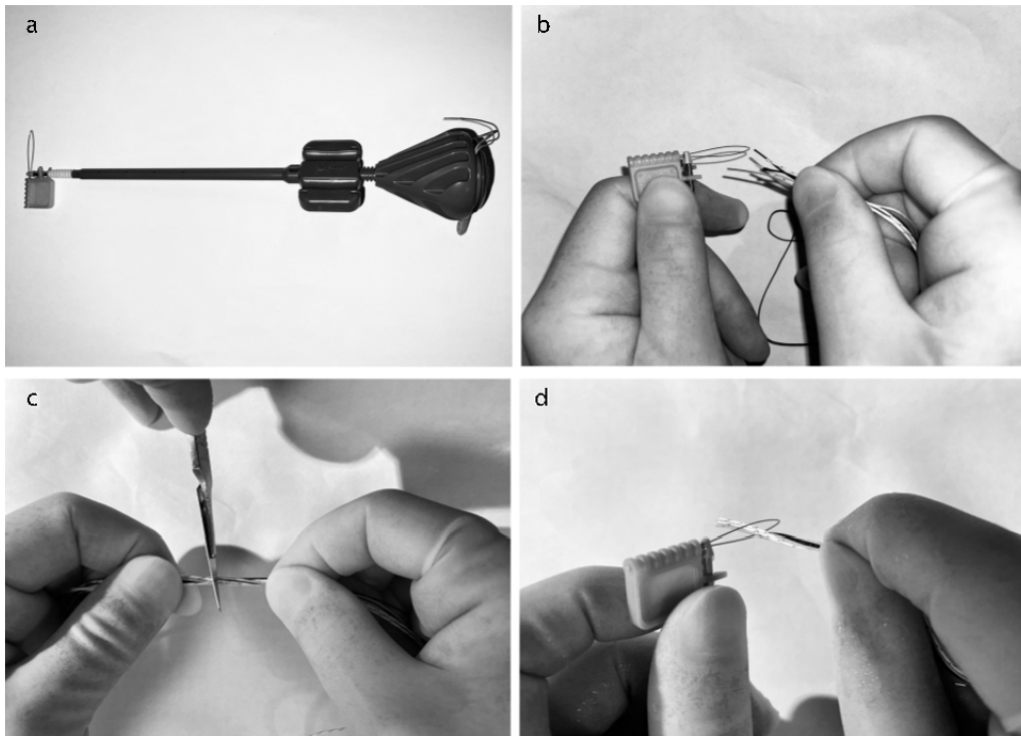


Figure 1: Clinical photographs showing the Swivelock® suture anchor device (a), along with the challenge in passing the suture bundle through its suture applicator snare (b), and finally the solution as described (c-d). See text.

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