

A NEW INSTRUMENT FOR MAMMARY SURGERY

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FOR many years, in many reduction and other mammoplasties, the assistant has been using his hands, helped by sponges, towels or bandages, to hold the breast steady and firm while the surgeon de-epithelialises the dermis around the areola. Similar difficulties are also encountered in free areola transplantation and in the difficult search for small masses in large breasts.

The author has devised a new instrument which requires much less effort by the assistant and which enables a clean and accurate dissection to be accomplished in a shorter time. The instrument (Figs. 1 and 2) consists of a flexible metallic band, 2 cm wide and 36 cm long or 3 cm wide and 50 cm long for larger breasts. Along the midline of its inner aspect there are several sharp pins, 7 cm apart. At one end of the band there is a 10 cm slot so that the other end can slide over it to encircle the base of the breast. There is also a hinged plate with a removable pin to lock it in position. In the centre of this plate there is a screw which tightens on the underlying end to fix it once the base of the gland is encircled. There is also a sliding buckle to cover the free end.

Once the skin markings are drawn, the instrument is applied. The assistant takes the breast by the nipple and areola exerting as much traction as possible and the surgeon encircles the base with the unlocked instrument, pressing the pins into the skin (Figs. 3 and 4).

When the nipple is released, the breast has a mushroom shape and the assistant has free hands to provide good tension on the skin by light pressure on a firm steady base.



FIG. 1. The closed "breast holder" next to a mirror to show all aspects.

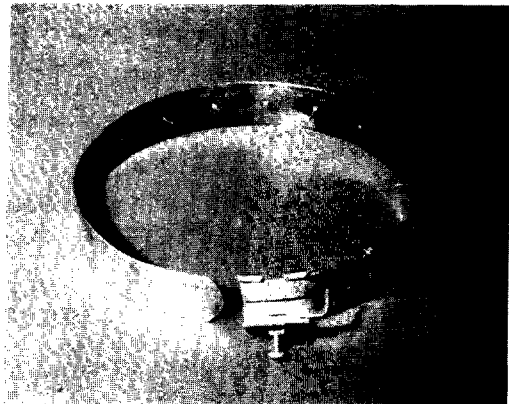


FIG. 2. The open instrument.

After de-epithelialisation the instrument is removed. No permanent lesions have been observed on the skin following its use.

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FIG. 3. Placing the instrument while the assistant exerts traction on the breast by the nipple.



FIG. 4. Placing the hinge pin to lock the plate.

FIG. 5. Mushroom shape of breast with the holder in place.