

STITCHING WITH A HYPODERMIC NEEDLE

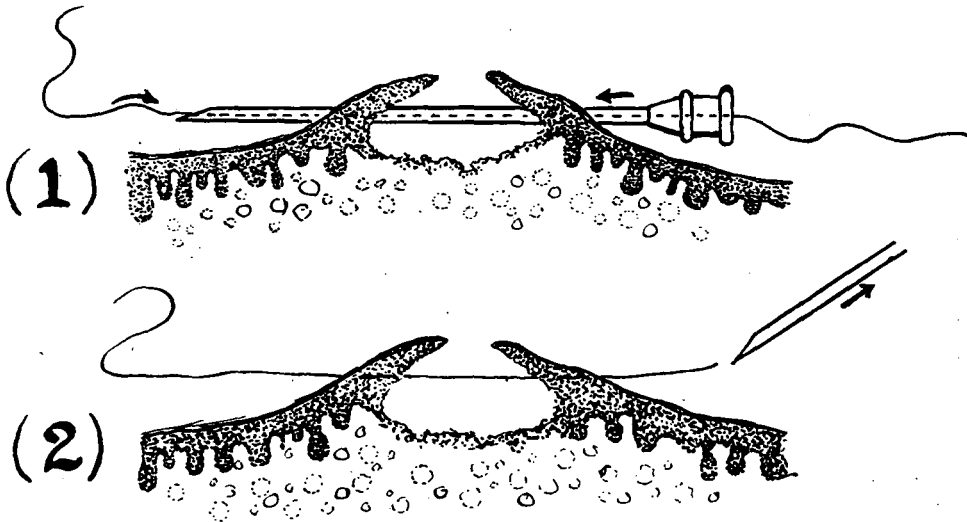
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SOME months ago I discovered, as I thought, an entirely new method of stitching, using a hypodermic needle. Subsequent conversations with elders of the profession have revealed that the method, if not as old as the hills, is at least as old as the sulphonamides. However, most doctors of my generation seem to be ignorant of it, and since the use of nylon as a suture material renders it easier to employ now than formerly, perhaps it should be publicised.

As the diagram shows, a hypodermic needle of appropriate bore is thrust through both lips of the wound, suture material is threaded through the pointed



end, and then the needle is withdrawn, leaving the suture ready for tying. The method is especially suited to rounded surfaces such as eyebrows and knees, or where the skin is loose. An assistant and several needles might save time in continuous suturing of operation incisions.

The advantages of stitching in this way seem to be :

1. It is very easy.
2. It minimizes trauma to the healthy skin edges by eliminating the necessity for pulling a bulky needle eye and two thicknesses of nylon through them.

3. Only a short length of needle has to be dragged through the wound, instead of a considerable length of suture material. In theory this should lessen the risk of infection and stitch abscess, and in practice I have had no such troubles using this method.