

M0007560: Letter from Lister to T.B. Beach, 1892

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14 Jan. 1892

My dear Mr. Beach,

If catgut prepared with chromic acid &c. is used thick, it is liable to be too rigid & may irritate mechanically. This difficulty is got over by using the finest catgut in two or three strands. For a vessel like the femoral I should use

three strands; & this is easily arranged for in the following manner. Take 2 pieces of the catgut each twice as long as the ligature desired, & round the middle of one piece tie the other in half a knot, with ends of equal length. One of these ends is put with the two ends of the first piece to make

the triple cord, while the other end serves as the guiding thread. The three ends of the triple cord are tied together in a knot, to avoid any chance of disarrangement. I enclose a piece of string arranged in this manner. You will find it as easy to tie the triple cord as a single one, the first half of the reef-knot being tied sufficiently

tightly to divide the internal & middle coats of the artery.

In tying the femoral artery you will of course take care to clear the vessel well of its sheath before passing the needle; & in order to make the resistance ^{I avoid risk of injuring the vein} to the needle as little as possible, it is best to pass the needle unarmed, i.e. unthreaded, & then put the guiding thread through the eye, withdraw the needle, draw the triple cord into place & tie.

I enclose a hank of fine gut of good quality; as Messrs. of Gate Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, who has hitherto supplied us, is I believe just moving to Scotland. It is as well to

put the catgut for an hour or two in 1 to 20 Carbolic lotion before using it; & it is not spoiled by being kept for any length of time in that lotion.

The double Cyanide gauze is prepared by Mr. Milne, Antiseptic Dressings Factory, Ladywell, London, S.E., sold in 6 yard packages. I use it moistened, i.e. damped, with 1 to 20 solution of Carbolic acid. This is conveniently done by sprinkling alternate pieces & rolling

dry & moist together, by which all are made damp, not just. A batch so damped is kept damp by being wrapped in mackintosh cloth, to save the trouble of dampening afresh at each dressing.

Wishing you good success in your case,

I remain
yours very truly

Joseph Lister

L. 149

L. 151



J. B. Beach Esq -

Medical Staff

Aldershot

