Introduction

With the development of advanced surgical techniques and instruments, video-assisted thoracic surgery has been broadly applied. During video-assisted thoracic surgery, commercialized disposable incision protectors are widely used. Incision protectors protect the operating incision, improve visibility for the operation, facilitate specimen removal, and reduce the risk of incision infection (1,2). Although commercialized disposable incision protectors offer many benefits, they are often associated with a high purchase price. Therefore, in the present study, we introduce a custom-made incision protector for thoracoscopic surgery that is more convenient and inexpensive.

Technique

Our custom-made incision protector for thoracoscopic surgery comprises two stainless steel wire rings (a keyring can be purchased online for USD 0.15, or the ring can be made from vein puncture guide wire) and surgical gloves (Figure 1A). First, a surgical glove was cut to form a tube. The end of tube with the rubber band was passed through a stainless steel wire ring (30 cm in circumference) and turned inside-out (Figure 1B). The other end of the tube was advanced into another stainless steel ring (26 cm in circumference) and turned inside-out (Figure 1C). Thus, a custom incision protector for thoracoscopic surgery was made (Figure 1D). Only 3 to 5 minutes were spent on making the protector. When the custom-made incision protector was used, the 30-cm ring was placed intrapleurally and the 26-cm ring was placed extrapleurally (Figure 2).

Herein, we also introduce a technique to facilitate shortening the custom incision protector to an appropriate length using four scalp clips (Figure 3A, B). Attached to the outside of the incision protector, the four scalp clips can be rolled to shorten the protector to an appropriate length. In addition, condoms can be used instead of gloves to make the custom incision protector (Figure 3C).

From 34 cases, there were no reports of incision infections, incision disunions, and tumor implantation at 8 months of follow-up.

Comment

Although commercialized disposable incision protector offer many benefits, they are often associated with high purchase cost. We have also experienced poor elasticity.
in the two flexible rings of currently used commercialized disposable incision protectors. This made it difficult to place in the intercostal space, particularly in those patients with small intercostal spaces. Therefore, in the present study, we made an incision protector for thoracoscopic surgery that is much more convenient in its utilization and inexpensive.

The custom-made incision protector made from two stainless steel rings and a surgical glove. Assembly is simple and the stainless steel rings and surgical gloves can be acquired at a low price. Our custom-made incision protector can be made and immediately used in the operating room as long as there are surgical gloves and stainless steel wire available. In addition, the stainless steel wire can be repeatedly disinfected and reused. Thus, the consumption of materials is reduced. Custom-made incision protectors can be wildly applied because they are easy to use and inexpensive. The current price of a commercialized

---

**Figure 1** Procedure for making a custom incision protector for thoracoscopic surgery. (A) The incision protector is made from two stainless steel wire rings and surgical gloves; (B) the rubber band end of the surgical glove was passed through a 30-cm stainless steel ring and turned inside-out; (C) the other end was passed through a 26-cm stainless steel ring and turned inside-out once more; (D) the shape of custom-made incision protector.

**Figure 2** Custom-made incision protector in use. (A) The end with a 30-cm stainless steel ring was placed intrapleural; (B) the end with a 26-cm stainless steel ring was placed extrapleural.
Figure 3 Techniques to facilitate making the custom incision protector. (A) Four scalp clips are attached to the outside of the incision protector; (B) the custom-made incision protector is shortened to an appropriate length; (C) condoms can be used instead of surgical gloves.

disposable incision protector is about USD 160 whereas our custom-made incision protector is approximately USD 1. There is a potential concern that stainless steel wire rings easily detach from the rubber. On the contrary, with our custom-made incision protector we found this is does not happen easily. Compared with commercialized disposable incision protectors, our custom-made incision protector provides similar effectiveness at a lower price and with better usability.

Conclusions

Our custom-made incision protector is as effective as commercialized disposable incision protectors but inexpensive and easier to use.

Acknowledgements

Funding: This research was supported by the Department of Health of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region of China (No. S2016179).

Footnote

Conflicts of Interest: The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

References


doi: 10.21037/vats.2017.03.11

Cite this article as: Mo A, Feng Z. Custom-made incision protector for thoracoscopic surgery. Video-assist Thorac Surg 2017;2:22.