

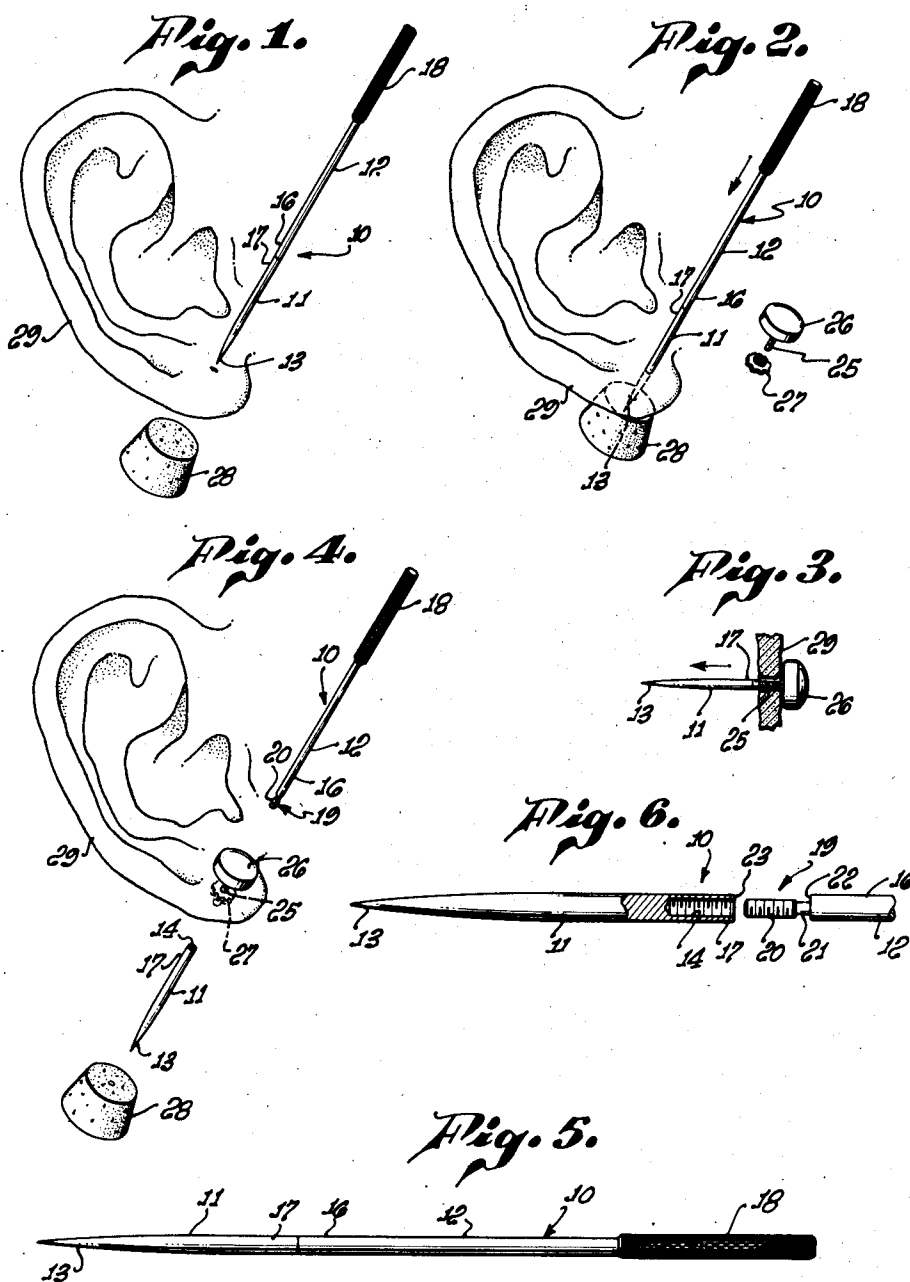
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DEVICE FOR PIERCING EARS

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## DEVICE FOR PIERCING EARS

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The invention relates to the piercing of ears in order that earrings may be attached to the ears by insertion of a portion of the earring through the flesh at the lobe of the ear.

The piercing of ears has long been a practice, chiefly among women, the pierced ear serving as a means of attaching an earring in contrast to the clip more recently provided for attaching earrings to the ear. It is appreciated that the tissues making up the lobe of the ear can be readily pierced without undue pain being suffered on the part of the subject, but nevertheless in the use of an ordinary needle for piercing ears difficulty has been experienced in properly locating the point at which the ear should be pierced so that both ears are pierced at exactly the same level in order that the earring may subsequently hang in a balanced relationship.

Moreover, even as the piercing of ears is practiced by physicians and surgeons, a considerable amount of time is often spent in the operation by use of ordinary needles even in company with a satisfactory backing of cork or some similar substance.

It is therefore among the objects of the invention to provide a new and improved needle for use in piercing the ear and attaching an earring to the ear.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a new and improved means of attaching an earring to the ear which is equally serviceable in attaching earrings provided with a threaded extension or earrings provided with a semi-circular extension without threads.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a new and improved means of accurately piercing the lobe of the ear for the attachment of an earring to the end that the attachment may be quickly and accurately made with a minimum expenditure of time and also with substantially a minimum of pain and inconvenience to the subject.

With these and other objects in view, the invention consists of the construction, arrangement and combination of the various parts of the device whereby the objects contemplated are attained, as hereinafter set forth, pointed out in the appended claims, and illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a human ear showing the needle and cork in their respective positions prior to a piercing operation.

Figure 2 is a perspective view similar to Figure

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1 but with the needle shown inserted through the lobe of the ear and an accompanying earring to be subsequently attached.

Figure 3 is a fragmentary sectional view of the lobe of an ear showing the earring in the process of attachment.

Figure 4 is a perspective view similar to Figures 1 and 2 but wherein the needle part has been removed after insertion of the earring and with needle parts in separated alignment.

Figure 5 is a view of the needle with parts assembled ready for use.

Figure 6 is a partial longitudinal sectional view of the sharp end of the needle and a portion of the shank.

As used for ornamentation of the ear two popular types of earring are frequently employed. One is an earring having an extension which is threaded so that a locking nut or clip may be attached to it to hold the earring in the ear. The other is an earring with a somewhat semi-circular or hooked extension designed to extend through the hole pierced in the lobe of the ear without special latching or safety features being employed in order to keep the earring from being pulled out of the hole in the lobe of the ear.

Although it is a relatively simple operation for those skilled in this type of practice to pierce the lobe of an ear, the difficulty arises in inserting the earring after the hole has been made. Some of this difficulty arises because the tough tissue and cartilage comprising the lobe of the ear provides a certain resistance to the earring arising partly because of the hole made by the needle closing to some extent after the needle has been removed and before a proper extension on the earring has been inserted. The insertion of the earring therefore becomes quite painful to the patient and very time-consuming to the physician.

In an embodiment chosen to illustrate the invention as shown in the drawing there has been provided a needle separable into two parts. The needle generally indicated by the reference character 10 has a piercing portion 11 and a shank portion 12. The piercing portion 11 includes a sharp point 13 which gradually tapers toward the opposite end which is, in the embodiment selected, provided with a threaded bore 14 concentric with respect to the axis of the pointed portion of the needle.

The shank portion 12 of the needle has a diameter near the end 16 exactly the same as the adjacent end 17 of the pointed portion of

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the needle so that when the portions are assembled the exterior is continuous and smooth.

At its opposite end the shank portion has a knurled section 18 here shown somewhat larger in diameter than the remainder of the shank portion in order to provide a ready finger-grip for the needle as a whole.

The end 16, as shown particularly in Figure 6, is provided with an extension 19 of reduced diameter, a portion 20 of which is externally threaded so as to be adapted to enter the threaded bore 14. Between the threaded portion and the end 16 is an annular recess 21 smaller in diameter than the base diameter of the threads. It should be noted that the length of the extension is slightly less than the depth of the threaded bore 14 so that when the extension engages the threaded bore, a shoulder 22 on the end 16 can be brought into surface to surface contact with a corresponding shoulder 23 on the end 17 of the pointed portion.

When the needle is to be used for piercing the lobe of the ear and applying an earring thereto, a mark is first made on the outer surface of the ear by dipping a sharply pointed instrument as, for example, the tip of the needle in merthiolate, thus providing an accurate location for the hole which is to be made by use of the needle. The mark can be balanced carefully on both ears so that eventually the earrings applied will be balanced.

A cork 28 is then held behind the ear lobe 29 at the location of the mark and the piercing needle with the portions assembled as illustrated in Figures 1 and 5 is forced through the lobe of the ear and into the cork which is held behind it bracing the lobe of the ear. When pierced, the needle will have the position shown in Figure 2 with respect to the ear. The cork is then removed and the shank portion of the needle is unscrewed from the pointed portion, the pointed portion being meanwhile permitted to remain in piercing position in the lobe of the ear.

After the shank portion has been removed a threaded extension 25 of an earring 26 is inserted threadedly into the threaded bore 14 as suggested in Figure 3. The pointed portion of the earring is then drawn through the lobe of the ear until the head of the earring is pressed against the flesh of the ear. That will be as far as the earring can be pulled through the ear.

By holding the earring the pointed portion can then be unscrewed from the threaded extension 25 and a safety catch or nut 27 can be attached to the threaded extension 25, thereby holding the earring permanently in place in the ear.

In performing this operation the usual care exercised by physicians and surgeons should be employed. For example, both the needle and cork should be boiled for five minutes and cooled in alcohol. Good practice indicates that the ear lobes should be washed with tincture of green soap, then rinsed with water, followed by alcohol. The ear lobes should then be dried before being marked for piercing. This practice will minimize what opportunity there may be for infection.

Although the practice has been described in detail for use with earrings having a threaded extension, the needle can be used with equal facility for earrings wherein the extension is unthreaded and is semi-circular or hooked in form. To use the needle for earrings of this description the piercing operation is the same as that above described up to the point where the shank portion is unscrewed from the pointed portion which remains in the ear lobe. At this point

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the unthreaded end of the earring or unthreaded extension may be inserted into the threaded bore 14 and the extension thrust against the pointed portion as the pointed portion is drawn through the ear. During this operation the unthreaded extension on the earring will follow through the hole made by the earring and when the extension has been thrust entirely through the lobe of the ear, the pointed portion can be removed. In the case of earrings provided with a clasp the clasp can be applied at this juncture.

Both portions of the earring piercing needle should then be cleaned and sterilized before assembling them together again for another piercing operation.

By employment of the piercing needle and the method disclosed herein the inconvenience of ear piercing and earring inserting operations can be reduced substantially to a minimum. The operation can be performed with considerable accuracy, which accuracy is assisted by providing a needle having an overall length of about three inches with the knurled portion provided as shown. Moreover, it has been found as a result of experience that an 18-gauge needle produces particularly satisfactory results. The three-inch needle is ordinarily divided so that about one inch is devoted to the pointed portion and about two inches are devoted to the shank portion. The sizes and dimensions are suggestions only in that those portions of the device are by no means critical.

Although I have herein shown and described my invention in what I have conceived to be the most practical and preferred embodiment, it is recognized that departures may be made therefrom within the scope of my invention, which is not to be limited to the details disclosed herein but is to be accorded the full scope of the claims so as to embrace any and all equivalent structures.

Having described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. An ear piercing needle comprising a sharp pointed solid end portion and a shank portion having circular cross-sections of equivalent diameter, said sharp pointed end portion having a central threaded bore at an end remote from the point, said shank portion having a threaded extension of reduced diameter shorter in length than the central bore, the outer end of said extension having an outside diameter adapted to be snugly received in the central bore.

2. An ear piercing needle comprising a sharp pointed solid portion and a solid shank portion having circular cross-sections of equivalent diameter, said sharp pointed end portion having a length about half as long as the shank portion and having a central bore at an end remote from the point, said shank portion having an extension of reduced diameter shorter in length than the central bore, the outer end of said extension having an outside diameter adapted to be snugly received in the central bore, an annular recess at the base of said extension of lesser diameter than the maximum outside diameter of the extension and a knurled section on said shank portion greater in diameter than the diameter of the remaining length of said shank portion.

3. An ear piercing needle comprising a sharp pointed end portion and a solid homogenous shank portion, said portions having circular cross-sections of equivalent diameter, said sharp pointed end portion having a length about half as long as the shank portion and having a central

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threaded bore at an end remote from the point, said shank portion terminating in an extension of reduced uniform diameter shorter in length than the central threaded bore, the outer end of said extension being threaded to correspond with the central threaded bore, an annular recess at the base of said extension of lesser diameter than the maximum outside diameter of the threads and a knurled end on said shank portion at the end thereof remote from said extension and greater in diameter than the diameter of the remaining length of said shank portion.

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