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J. A. FREEL

2,437,812

FRENUM GUIDE

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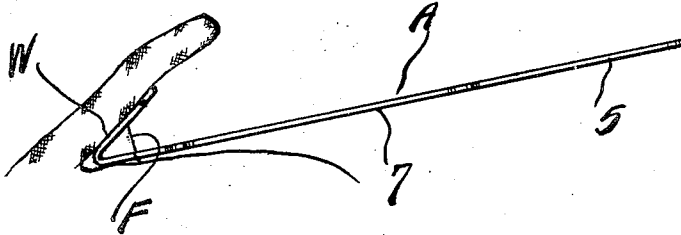


Fig. 1

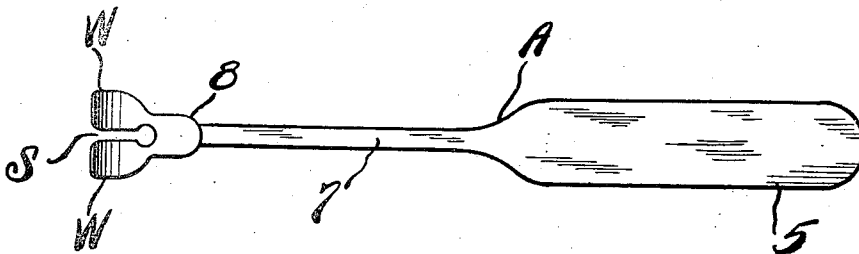


Fig. 2

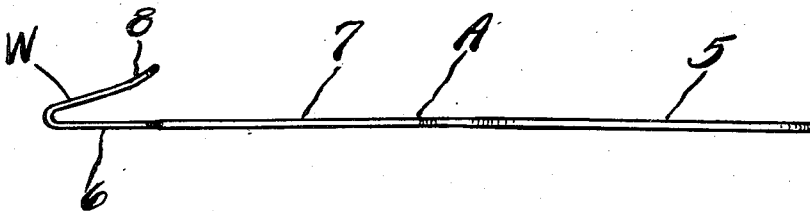


Fig. 3

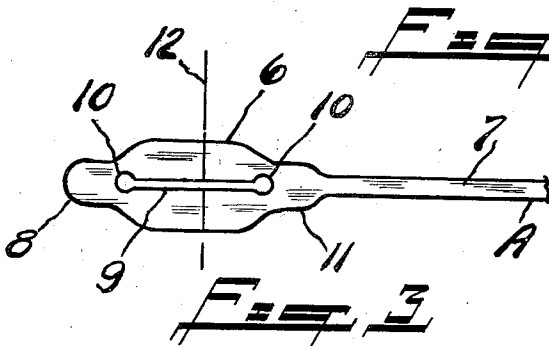


Fig. 4

INVENTOR.
John A. Freel.
BY Frank C. Larmann.
Attorney.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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FRENUM GUIDE

John A. Freel, Bay City, Mich.

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5 Claims. (Cl. 128—15)

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This invention relates to frenum guides adaptable for use by the medical profession in general, and more especially for use in the surgical treatment of tongue-tied infants, children and others, without danger of cutting or injuring the tongue, the blood vessels or structure around the frenum.

One of the prime objects of the invention is to provide an instrument which can be placed in the patient's mouth to retract the tongue from the floor of the mouth and hold it in retracted position, stretch the frenum, and confine it while stretched, between the wings of the instrument to protect the surrounding blood vessels and other structure, so that the frenum can be easily and accurately clipped as desired, the wings forming a guard, making it impossible to cut any structure other than the frenum.

Another object is to design an instrument by means of which the tongue can be held raised and out of the way, even when the patient coughs or cries, and which provides maximum exposure and accessibility to the frenum.

Another object is to design a frenum guide which can also be used as a tongue depressor when examining the anatomical structure of the patient's mouth, tongue, and/or throat.

A further object is to provide an instrument which can be readily and economically manufactured, and which can also be inserted in the conventional electrically lighted tongue depressor holder, thus providing full illumination at the point of incision.

A further object still is to provide an instrument provided with spaced-apart wings which permits the frenum entrance in its entire length, and which is sufficiently small so that it is impossible for surrounding blood vessels and structure to enter the area or field of operation.

Still a further object is to provide an instrument which serves as a retractor on the lower jaw, preventing the patient from closing its mouth during the surgical procedure, and which makes it unnecessary to have the services of a nurse or other person to hold the patient's head.

The above and other objects will appear as the specification progresses, reference being had to the accompanying drawing in which I have shown the preferred embodiment of my invention, and in which like reference numerals indicate like parts throughout the several views thereof.

In the drawing:

Fig. 1 is a plan view of my frenum guide.

Fig. 2 is an edge elevational view thereof.

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary detail plan view illustrating the blank formed to shape.

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Fig. 4 is a detail illustrating the method of using the instrument to clip the frenum.

This instrument is designed primarily for use in the treatment of tongue-tie in infants, and others, the one end being turned to form a wedge-shaped section, which section when inserted in position under the tongue in the patient's mouth, will retract the tongue from the floor of the mouth and hold it there, and which is also provided with a slit to accommodate, stretch, and hold the frenum preparatory to its being clipped by the physician, the opposite end of the instrument serving as a tongue depressor for use when examining the mouth, throat and tonsils.

The instrument proper is preferably formed of a flat piece of metal or other material with rounded edges and suitably polished so as not to cause any abrasions or trauma to the tissue of the mouth; it must be properly sterilizable, and in the present instance I have shown it formed of flat stock "A" with rounded edges and corners, the one end 5 being relatively wide and having a rounded end so that it can be used as a tongue depressor as above described.

The opposite end section 6 is also of substantially the same width as the section 5 and is connected by a narrow handle section 7, the extreme end being reduced as at 8, and a relatively narrow closed slit 9 is provided at a point spaced from the end of the instrument, the ends of the slit being enlarged and rounded as at 10 to avoid pinching or binding, and the section 11 directly adjacent the inner end of the slit, being shaped the same as the reduced section 9.

After the stock has been blanked to form as shown in Fig. 3 of the drawing, a predetermined portion of the end section 6 is bent upwardly on the line 12 so that it overlies and projects at an angle to the main body, this bending operation forming an open slit "S" between wings "W," which readily accommodate a frenum "F" when the instrument is inserted in position in the mouth.

The overlying section forms a wedge with the main body and so that the frenum, held in the slit, can be easily and safely clipped with scissors or other cutting instrument by the physician, without danger of cutting blood vessels or structure in the mouth or throat, the wings "W" serving to form upper, lower, and end guards to shield the surrounding structure.

From the foregoing description, it will be obvious that I have perfected a very simple, practical and inexpensive instrument for the purpose described.

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What I claim is:

1. A surgical instrument comprising a handle terminating in a flat, relatively wide section, the end portion being turned to overhang said end section and extend upwardly at an angle therefrom, and a slit provided in said section and turned portion and open to the end of the instrument.

2. An instrument of the class described comprising a handle, one end terminating in a thin, flat section of predetermined width and uniform cross section, the opposite end being slit at a point spaced from the end thereof with the end section turned to overhang the main body and lie at an angle with relation thereto, said slit forming an elongated passage, in both the main body and the overhanging end section of the instrument.

3. A surgical instrument of the character described comprising, a relatively wide, flat section, a handle formed integral therewith, a similar flat section forming the opposite end of the instrument, a relatively long closed slit in said section at a point spaced from the end thereof, said section being bent to overhang the main body, at a point intermediate the length of the slit and form an open passage in both the main body and overhanging section of the instrument.

4. A surgical instrument of the class described

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comprising a handle terminating in a relatively wide, flat member of uniform cross section, an elongated slit formed with enlarged end areas, formed in said member at a point spaced from the end thereof, said member being bent at a point intermediate its length to overhang the main body and form an open passage in the main body and overhanging section to accommodate a frenum therein.

5. A surgical instrument of the class described comprising a relatively wide, flat section having a handle formed integral therewith, one end being turned upwardly and over to form a wedge-shaped section on the end opposite to the handle, and a continuous open, narrow passage of predetermined length provided in the main body and upturned end of the instrument.

JOHN A. FREEL.

REFERENCES CITED

The following references are of record in the file of this patent:

- Bickham, W. S., Operative Surgery, vol. III, p. 462. (Copyright 1924.)
- Garretson, J. E., A System of Oral Surgery, pp. 526-528 (third edition), 1881, J. B. Lippincott & Co. Philadelphia Surgical Instrument Catalogue of George P. Pilling & Co. for 1921-1922, p. 122.