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[54] **EAR STUD AND HOLLOW PIERCER FOR  
INSERTION THEREOF**  
5 Claims, 5 Drawing Figs.

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128/330  
[51] Int. Cl. .... A61b 17/34  
[50] Field of Search..... 128/329,  
330, 303.1; 63/12

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**ABSTRACT:** A surgical instrument for piercing ears comprising a hollow, pointed needle having an axial bore extending through the point, an enlarged head transverse to the needle at the end opposite the point, and an opening through the head in alignment with the bore of the needle, in combination with an ear stud comprising a thin, wire-like, cylindrical body of plastic preformed with curled ends, said needle being adapted to pierce the lobe of an ear by thumb pressure on its head, and said ear stud being adapted to be inserted through the opening of the head into the hollow needle after straightening the forward curled end. The needle can then be withdrawn from the ear while holding the forward end of the stud. Complete withdrawal of the needle frees the rear end of the stud to curl and hold the stud in the pierced ear lobe.

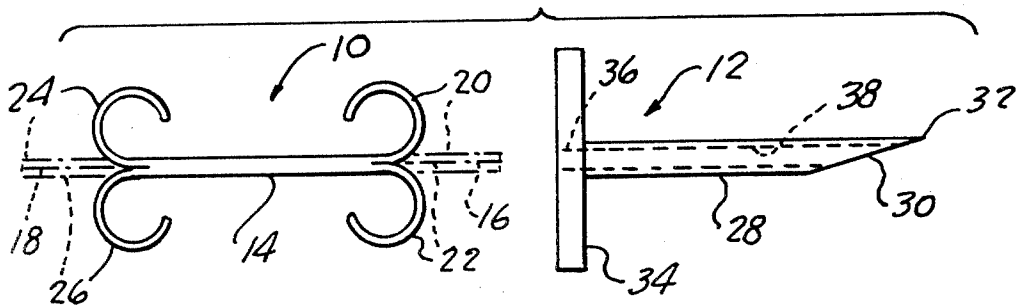


**FIG. 1.**

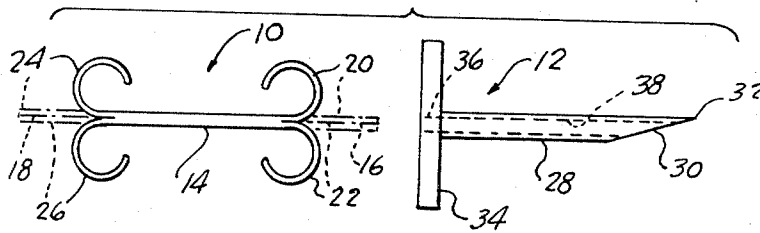


**FIG. 2.**

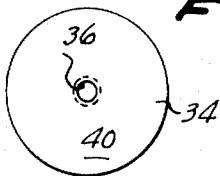


**FIG. 4.**

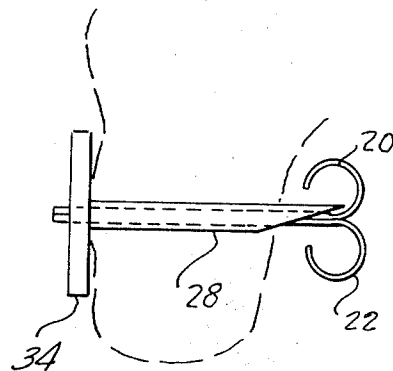


**FIG. 3.**

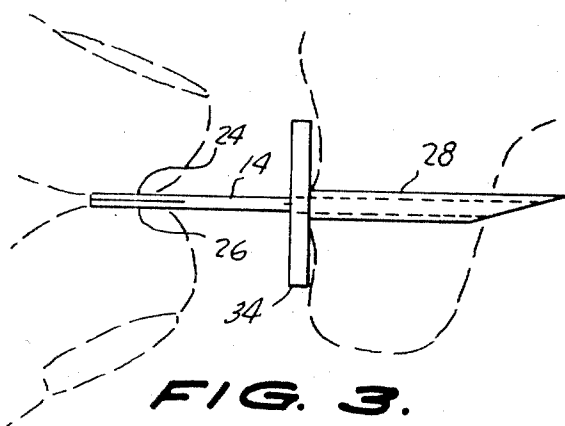
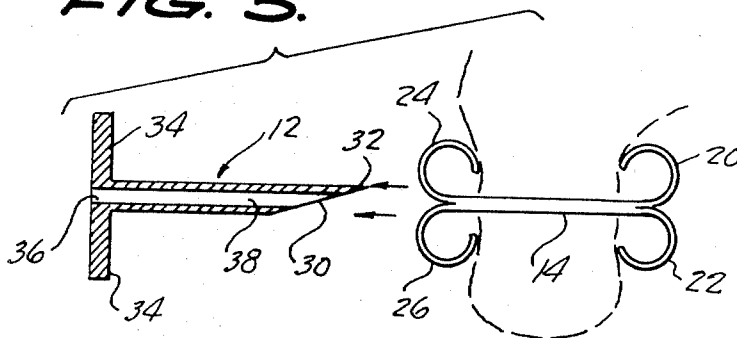


**FIG. 5.**



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# EAR STUD AND HOLLOW PIERCER FOR INSERTION THEREOF

This invention relates to surgical instruments, and more particularly to a hollow instrument adapted for piercing the lobe of an ear and reception of a straightened ear stud of special curled configuration. Upon withdrawal of the instrument, the stud curls and remains in the pierced ear lobe.

Ornamental earrings have been worn since the birth of history and a great many devices have been provided for piercing ear lobes to accommodate them. The most usual practice has been to force a needle through the ear, a local anesthetic being often used to reduce the pain accompanying the piercing. In most instances, as soon as the lobe has been pierced and the needle withdrawn, a temporary ring or ring-like device is inserted to maintain the opening in the ear lobe until healed, after which an ornamental earring may be inserted. Various disadvantages have accompanied this procedure including the need for two separate insertions, first the needle and then the ring, the resultant doubling of pain, and frequent occurrence of infection.

Accordingly, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide an improved apparatus and method for safely piercing the lobe of an ear which will overcome the above-stated and other disadvantages of conventional practice.

Another object of the invention is to provide a simple and inexpensive apparatus which may be used to quickly, efficiently, and safely pierce an ear lobe and dispose an ear stud in the aperture without subjecting the ear lobe to double piercing.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved ear stud which is preformed with curls at both ends, said curls being readily straightened, or uncurled, for placement in the ear aperture by insertion into the hollow bore of the piercing needle, and said straightened ends being adapted to re-curl upon removal of the needle to hold the stud on the ear.

The novel features that are considered characteristic of the invention are set forth with particularity in the appended claims. The invention, itself, however, both as to its organization and method of operation, together with additional objects and advantages thereof, will best be understood from the following description of a specific embodiment when read in connection with the accompanying drawing, wherein like reference characters indicate like parts throughout the several FIGS. and in which:

FIG. 1 is an enlarged, exploded, elevational view of a preferred embodiment of the invention illustrating an ear stud aligned with a hollow device used for both piercing the ear and inserting the ear stud;

FIG. 2 is an end view of the piercing device alone, and looking toward the head of the needle of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is an elevational view illustrating the needle in its pierced position, through an ear lobe, shown in broken lines, with the ear stud partially inserted in the hollow needle;

FIG. 4 is an elevational view similar to FIG. 3, but showing the ear stud fully inserted in the hollow needle; and

FIG. 5 is an exploded view, partially in section, showing the needle withdrawn from the ear lobe to leave the ear stud in the pierced aperture and clamped to the ear.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing, wherein is illustrated a preferred embodiment of the invention as comprising a stud, generally indicated at 10, and a piercing instrument, generally indicated at 12, the stud having a special curled configuration, and the piercer being shaped like an enlarged thumbtack with a hollow point. The ear stud 10 is formed of any suitable plastic, such as polyethylene, or metal, such as spring steel, or stainless steel, and includes a short wire-like body 14, of cylindrical shape, having its ends sliced axially inwardly at 16, 18 to form four inwardly directed curls 20, 22, 24 and 26, two at each end. The studs 10 may be stamped in their shape as shown in solid lines in FIG. 1 from a sheet of plastic or metal material, or may be molded or otherwise formed with the curls 20, 22, 24 and 26. Alternatively,

the curls may be formed by bending and retained in circular shape, by inherent resiliency of the material employed, or by prestressing under heat or other suitable conditions.

Because of their flexibility, resilience and thinness, the curls 20, 22, 24 and 26 can easily be straightened to align with the body portion 14 and to occupy their broken line positions shown in FIG. 1 by merely pushing outwardly with the fingers along the stud body 14, against the inner ends of the curl loops. The cylindrical body portion 14 of the stud should have a diameter of approximately  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch, the curls at each end having a thickness of about  $\frac{1}{32}$  inch. The stud length can vary from about one inch to  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch, one-fourth of this length at each end being intumed into the curled loops 20, 22, 24 and 26 so that the spacing between the intumed ends of the loops is slightly greater than the thickness of the average ear lobe.

The ear piercing instrument 12 comprises a hollow tubular needle 28 whose outer end is bevel cut with respect to the axis at 30 to provide a pointed end 32. Integrally formed, or united, with the other end of the needle, is an enlarged, disc-like head 34 having an opening 36 therethrough aligned with the bore of the needle. The disc 34 preferably has a diameter of about the size of a human thumb so that the latter can be placed against the outer face and pressure applied to force the pointed end 32 of the needle through the ear lobe.

The aperture 36 and the bore 38 of the needle portion 28 of the piercer have a diameter slightly greater than the diameter of the stud body 14, so that upon straightening the curls 20, 22, at one end of the stud, the stud may be inserted and easily slid into the bore of the needle, as illustrated in FIG. 3.

In use of the stud and piercer, the needle and stud are first dipped in a cold sterile solution of conventional type, such as isopropyl alcohol, for removing germs and bacteria, and the back and front faces of the ear lobes are also cleansed by swabbing with rubbing alcohol. The needle may then be dipped in an anesthetic, but this is not essential as the pain engendered during piercing is very small. The user then positions the first and second fingers back of the inner face of the ear lobe and positions the point 32 of the needle against the outer face of the lobe at the point where piercing is desired. With a quick application of pressure by the thumb of the same hand applied to the outer face 40 of the needle head, the needle is forced through the ear lobe to its position shown in FIG. 3. The stud curls 20, 22 are then straightened to align with the stud body 14 and inserted in the aperture 36 of the needle head, to the position shown in the same figure. The curls 24, 26 at the outer end of the stud are then straightened and held by the thumb and forefinger, and the stud may be pushed further into the needle to occupy the position shown in FIG. 4 wherein the ends 20, 22 protrude beyond the needle point and elastically resume their curved shape, as illustrated. The user then grasps the curls 20, 22 with the fingers of one hand and with the fingers of the other hand pulls on the head 34 of the needle in the opposite direction, as illustrated by the arrow in FIG. 5, to remove the needle 12 from the ear lobe. As soon as the needle point 32 frees the curls 24, 26, they will spring to their curled condition, as shown in FIG. 5. The stud 10 is retained in the ear aperture with axial movements limited by the out-turned curl ends for a period of from seven to ten days, rubbing alcohol being applied periodically for the first two days. To remove the stud from the ear, one end of the stud can be cut, clipped, or broken off, allowing the other end to be grasped by its curls and pulled out of the lobe aperture. The ear aperture is healed by this time and a conventional ornamental earring may be inserted therein in place of the ear stud 10.

It is apparent from the above that the ear stud and piercing instrument, according to the invention, provide a very simple device for easily and quickly piercing an ear lobe and inserting a temporary stud of ornamental appearance. Obviously, the stud may be formed with fewer or more curls at each end, and such curls may take different shapes, if desired, so long as they can be easily uncurled for insertion into the needle. Obviously,

also, the head of the needle may be made larger or smaller and, if desired, be formed with a concave thumb-receiving surface and a funnel-like aperture to ease the insertion of the straightened curls of the ear stud. While the stud has been described as formed of plastic or spring metal, it may also be formed of precious metals or alloys thereof so long as the curls retain their resilience. The ear piercing device may be inserted from the front or the back of the ear lobe depending on whether the operator is left or right-handed, or at his discretion.

Although a certain specific embodiment of the invention has been shown and described, it is obvious that many modifications thereof are possible. The invention, therefore, is not to be restricted except insofar as is necessitated by the prior art and by the spirit of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. The method of piercing an ear lobe and inserting a stud therein comprising the steps of, piercing the lobe with a hollow needle, inserting a wire-like stud having a curl at each end into the hollow bore of said needle by first straightening said stud curls, pushing said stud through the hollow needle until the forward end protrudes beyond the point thereof and the straightened curl at said forward end resumes its curl form, and holding said protruding forward end while withdrawing said needle in the opposite direction to allow the straightened curl at the rear end of the stud to resume its curl form.

2. The combination of an ear lobe piercing instrument and a stud for temporary insertion in a newly pierced ear lobe, said ear lobe piercing instrument comprising a hollow needle hav-

ing a point at one end with an opening therethrough, a transverse, disc-like head secured to the opposite end of the needle, and an aperture through said head in alignment with and communicating with the hollow bore of said needle, said stud comprising a wire-like body removably housed in a straight condition in the hollow needle and being so constructed and arranged as to form at least one loop element at each end of the stud when the hollow needle is removed from about the stud, said loop elements being curved away from the axis of the body for limiting endwise movement of the body in an ear lobe aperture, and being adapted to be straightened and aligned with the body of the stud for insertion of the stud into the hollow needle through said aperture in the needle head prior to use of the needle for piercing an ear lobe.

3. The combination as set forth in claim 2, wherein the length of said stud exceeds the length of said needle by at least the length of the loop element at one end of said stud.

4. A stud, for temporary insertion in a newly pierced ear lobe, comprising a wire-like body having an axial slit at each end, portions of said body defining a wall of each of said slits being curled away from said body to define at least one loop element at each end of the body for limiting endwise movement of the body in an ear lobe aperture.

5. A stud for temporary insertion in a newly pierced ear lobe, comprising a wire-like body having an axial slit at one end, a wall of said slit being curled away from the axis of said body for limiting endwise movement of the body in an ear lobe aperture.

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