



Cost Saving Tips

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Hand Rolled Plaster Bandages

Plaster bandages are expensive, especially if they're purchased from outside of the country with limited foreign exchange dollars. An old trick is to "roll your own". We used to do that when I worked in Afghanistan 40 years ago. Standard muslin bandages are cut on the bias into the widths that you want for your plaster rolls. Powdered plaster is then shaken onto the bandage (using a sugar shaker) as it is rolled up.

To do this efficiently, use a table with built up edges (about 4 inches) to hold the plaster. Mount a winch on wooden slat across the middle of the table. The "winch" is two metal uprights of about 6 inches height with a hole in each through which was passed a spindle (about 1/4 inch diameter). The spindle was placed into the uprights and the bandage gradually wound up on it. When the end of the bandage had been reached, the spindle was pulled free and the roll shelved.



Use a sugar shaker full of plaster to apply to add a liberal coating as the cast is applied.

When I was in Lithuania, rather than the nice white plaster we're familiar with, they used regular wall plaster which was wheeled in on a wheel barrow.

Use A Dremal Tool In OR

Dr. Felix Vinuña in Cebu told me that he had great success using a Dremel Tool for many power needs in the Operating Room.

It costs about (U.S.) \$50 for the flexible shafts (which can be autoclaved and last about one year) The power source costs about (U.S.) \$200 and has lasted him for years. He has found that good cheap bits (including side cutters) are readily available.



Fishing Line Sutures

When I was in Thailand last year at the Thai Orthopedic meeting, I noted a Poster titled "The Cost-Effective Non-Absorbable Suture" presented by C. Kantayaporn; P. Chonyoen & D. Sinthuvanich.

To quote from them: "The suture material is from fishing line, the needle is made from a cannulated needle that is used for injection or blood collection. The sutures are sterilized by ethylene dioxide gas.

"One hundred clean and clean-contaminated wounds were closed by these sutures and observed. In the same patients 30 wounds sutured with fishing line were compared to those sutured with commercial nylon.

"Healing of the wounds with both types of sutures were not different. The cost of each suture is 5 Baht or approximately (U.S.) 10 cents.

The fishing line used was nylon. Four pound test line was used with a #23 needle; 8 lb. test with #22; 10 lb. test with #21 and 12 lb. test with #20 needles. The needles can be curved to the shape desired.



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