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The 'Y' technique: An attempt to standardize nail dressing

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1 **Title:** The 'Y' technique: An attempt to standardize nail dressing.

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3 **Key words:** Nail Surgery, Nail avulsion, Nail Biopsy, Nail Dressing, Fingers, Toes

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6 **Surgical Challenge:** Dermatologists routinely operate upon the nail unit, be it for taking  
7 diagnostic biopsies, for partial or complete avulsion, or for ingrown nail surgery. After every  
8 procedure, post-operative dressing of the nail unit is a major challenge. An ideal dressing  
9 should allow functional mobility of the digit, protect the surgical site and absorb any  
10 discharge [1]. The dressing is often very bulky and may fall off during the post-operative  
11 period.

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14 **Solution:** To ensure that the dressing stays in place over the operated nail field, we have  
15 been using the “Y” dressing method. In this technique, a non-adherent paraffin gauze is cut  
16 in the shape of a “Y” and wound around the operated toe [Fig1]. The dimensions of the “Y” is  
17 modified depending on the toe or finger that's being dressed. The first step is winding the  
18 base layer of this paraffin gauze (i.e the stem of the Y) which provides adequate grip for the  
19 dressing and prevents dislodgement. The second layer is the adsorbent gauze which is also  
20 cut in the same “Y” shape and wound over the first layer in the same fashion. This layer  
21 further promotes the grip. The second layer takes care of the reasonably profuse and  
22 prolonged discharge expected after nail matrix phenolisation for ingrown toenail. We have  
23 found this dressing to be extra-stable and limits the use of multiple layers of bandages. In  
24 addition, this dressing does not require much expertise, is small-sized, hence increases the  
25 post-operative functionality of the operated digit.

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