



DERMATOLOGICAL SURGERY

# KELOID FILLET FLAP: SURGICAL PEARLS FOR A VALUABLE TECHNIQUE IN KELOIDS MANAGEMENT

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**Background:** Keloids are cosmetically worrisome lesions which are challenging to treat, especially in visually exposed areas such as the ears. The keloid fillet flap is a technique with several advantages, albeit undermined by some technical difficulty to fully remove the hard, fibrotic keloid tissue, especially in smaller keloids where there is a higher risk of accidental damage to the thin roof layer which will constitute the flap. The authors demonstrate their personal approach to this technique, including their surgical pearl which circumvents the latter challenge.

**Observation:** Under local anaesthesia (1% lidocaine with 1:100,000 epinephrine), a semi-circular incision was drawn with a 15°scalpel over half of the border of a 1.3x1cm keloid located in the antihelical fold of the left ear. The “roof” of the keloid was then bluntly filleted, as a flap, from its underlying fibrotic mass. Afterwards, a thin, 4mm curette, was used to remove all of the adherent keloid fibrotic tissue. Surprisingly, the procedure was simple and gentle to perform, allowing for fast removal of all the keloid mass with reduced risk of inadvertent damage to the thin flap. Interrupted 6-0 nylon sutures were used to suture the flap. No subcutaneous sutures were used. The stitches were removed 7 days later, followed by an intralesional triamcinolone injection which was repeated monthly for 3 months. No recurrence was seen one year into follow-up

**Key message:** The keloid fillet flap is an effective surgical treatment for keloids. Albeit an overlooked technique, our experience with this case and many others is that it provides very acceptable cosmetic and recurrence outcomes. The use of a thin curette to debride the fibrotic underlying keloid tissue adds simplicity and safety to the technique.

