Rounded instrument grips

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For those who prefer rounded instrument grips on scalpels and forceps, and especially microsurgical forceps, I submit a simple, low-tech solution that I have found very effective over the past 30 years in practice.

Silicone bathtub caulking applied to the handles of these instruments in the contour preferred by the surgeon adheres remarkably well, and survives through hundreds of autoclaving procedures without deterioration. The scalpel and forceps in the photograph have had the silicone handles for approximately 30 years now, and show no signs of deterioration (Figure 1). The grips show no deterioration but the remainder of the scalpel is somewhat tarnished.

The application is quite simple. A bead of silicone is run down the middle of the handle. A fingertip wetted with saliva is used to contour the silicone as desired.

For the occasional overrun, a Dremel tool with a sanding drum is used to dermabrade the excess material away, producing a nice smooth contour. The silicone must be completely dry before this is done.

I have applied silicone to virtually all of the forceps I use in my surgical packs, and find that the grip enhancement from the

Figure 1) Scalpel and forceps with 30-year-old silicone handles

contour and the friction is an advantage, especially when fatty oils are present.

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