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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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## A NEW TECHNIQUE FOR NECK LIFTING WITH BARBED TENSOR THREAD

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### ABSTRACT

The barbed tensor thread has become a popular facial rejuvenation method in recent years, and many authors use it for cheek rejuvenation. However, detailed techniques and descriptions of the use of barbed sutures for neck rejuvenation are lacking. This method uses minimally invasive techniques to rejuvenate the neck through barbed threads. In this technique, barbed threads are placed on the back of the neck to lift and tighten the skin. The threads have small barbs that anchor themselves in tissue and provide firm fixation and lift. Threads are inserted with small needles and placed in a specific pattern to achieve the desired lifting effect. The results of this technique have been analyzed and found to be effective in making the neck look younger and more youthful. The procedure is minimally invasive with little downtime or scarring, making it an attractive option for patients seeking a nonsurgical alternative to traditional neck lifts.

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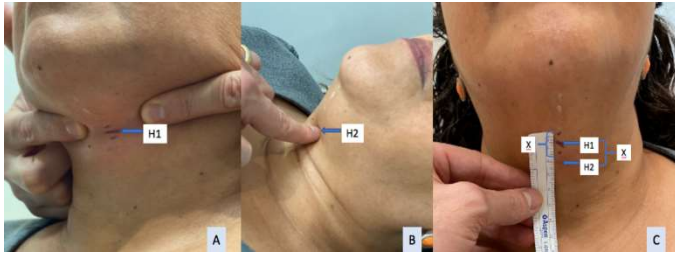
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## INTRODUCTION

The demand for non-invasive or minimally invasive facial rejuvenation procedures has increased significantly in recent years, driven by factors such as increased social media usage and desire to maintain a youthful appearance. Patients are looking for treatments that can achieve results similar to traditional facelifts without the associated downtime, discomfort, and risks. In response to this need, new techniques are continuously researched and developed to provide effective and long-lasting results with minimal invasiveness. These include thread lifts, injected fillers, laser treatments, and radiofrequency treatments.<sup>1,2</sup> Regardless of the specific technique used, the success of facial rejuvenation depends on the ability to lift soft tissues and keep them in an elevated position. This requires careful planning and execution of the procedure, as well as proper patient selection and follow-up care. Patients should be aware that the results of non-invasive or minimally invasive procedures may not be as dramatic or long-lasting as a traditional facelift and may require maintenance treatment over time. Barbed stitches are a minimally invasive face and neck rejuvenation procedure. The procedure involves inserting thin wires with small barbs into the skin and gently pulling to lift and tighten loose skin.<sup>2,3</sup> The objective of this article is to describe a little invasive technique for the treatment of neck flaccidity, with the purpose of solving common problems related to poor durability of the sustentation threads and undesirable scars caused by rhytidectomy. The author developed this technique aiming at providing longer durability and minimum visible scars to patients who wish to treat flaccidity in the neck region.

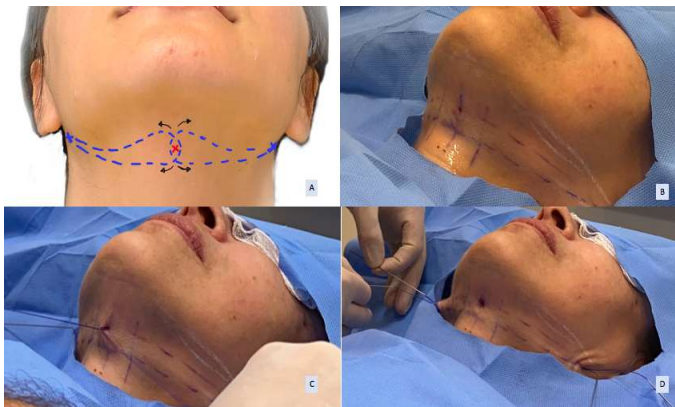
**Technique:** This technique is indicated for patients with moderate to light cervical flaccidity, who want a natural and lasting result, without visible scars. In patients with more pronounced flaccidity, the technique can be combined with a mini lifting to obtain more expressive results. Furthermore, the technique may involve liposuction in the cervical region, to remove excess localized fat and improve the neck contour in case there is excess superficial fat in this region. It is important to emphasize that the choice of the most appropriate technique for neck rejuvenation must be made in an individualized manner, taking into consideration the anatomical characteristics and expectations of the patient, as well as the skills and experience of the plastic surgeon. Surgical marking is an important step before any surgical procedure, as it helps guide the surgeon on where to make the incisions and which areas need to be treated. In the case described, the marking must be done with the patient sitting up and with the head straightened in an anatomical position, that is, in a natural and comfortable position. The goal of the marking is to identify the central point of the cervico-mentonian angle (Figure 1A), which is the region between the chin and the neck (point H1). The marking must be done accurately to ensure that the final result is the desired one. After that the patient in dorsal decubitus, the point of hyoid depression on the cervical midline (called point H2) is marked (Figure 1B). Then the patient is seated again and the degree of skin ptosis is assessed. The distance between points H1 and H2 is then measured. The measured distance is transposed to the region of point H1 where it will be the median (Figure 1C). After the marking, the next step is the anesthetic infiltration of the tumescent solution, which consists in the injection of a lidocaine and adrenaline solution in the area to be treated. This solution helps anesthetize the area, reduce bleeding, and facilitate the removal of fat through liposuction if is

necessary. The anesthetic infiltration must be performed by an experienced and qualified professional to minimize the risk of complications. The patient must also be monitored during the entire procedure to ensure their safety and comfort.



**Figure 1. Marking**

The double-needled spiculated wire is passed through pertussis in the median region of the neck corresponding to point H1, and a single or double pulley is made with the other double-needled spiculated wire that goes to the opposite side. When the lateral traction of the wires is made, the central pulley penetrates through the hole made at the level of point H1, being allocated to the subcutaneous tissue. The two extremities are tied at the level of the exit hole near the earlobe (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. Technique: A) Schematic drawing of the technique; B) Intraoperative marking; C) Realization of the central pulley that will tie the two wires; D) Lateral traction of the wires with exit close to the earlobe**

The absorbable support wires used in the technique are made of a material that is gradually reabsorbed by the body so that there is no need to remove them later. These wires are anchored to specific points in the muscles and tissues of the cervical region, and their traction is adjusted to provide a natural and lasting lifting effect (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Clinical cases: A) 8 months after the procedure in a 57-year-old man; B) Post-procedure 10 months in a 65-year-old woman; C) 12-month post-procedure in a 48-year-old woman associated with neck liposuction**

## DISCUSSION

Barbed stitches are a minimally invasive face and neck rejuvenation procedure. The procedure involves inserting thin wires with small barbs into the skin and gently pulling to lift and tighten loose skin. When the pointed thread passes through the midline of the neck, it can achieve an intense lifting effect, improving the appearance of the neck and jawline. This technique is especially effective for patients with early signs of aging, as it can help prevent further sagging and wrinkling of the skin.<sup>1,2,3</sup> While suture suspension techniques for facial rejuvenation have been used for many years, the use of barbed sutures for minimally invasive facelifts is a relatively new development. This technique involves passing the barbed sutures through the skin and then pulling them tight to lift and tighten the soft tissues of the face and neck. While this technique is advertised as a quick and easy alternative to traditional surgical facelifts, it is important to note that it is still a medical procedure and should be performed by a trained and experienced medical professional. There is some evidence to suggest that barbed suture suspension techniques can be effective in achieving a modest improvement in facial appearance, but it is important to manage patient expectations and understand that the results may not be as dramatic or long-lasting as those achieved with traditional surgical techniques. It is also important to note that there are risks and potential complications associated with any medical procedure, and patients considering barbed suture suspension techniques should discuss these risks with their medical provider and carefully weigh the potential benefits against the potential risks.<sup>3,4</sup>

The advantage of this technique is that the force applied to the tissue is evenly distributed along the suture, which can lead to better results than the traditional smooth suture suspension technique. The Sulamanidze technique of self-sustaining sutures is a special method of tissue suspension using barbed sutures<sup>4,5</sup>. This technique has been refined and refined over time, and more aggressive anchoring techniques are being developed to increase the effectiveness of the procedure. These techniques may involve additional fixation points or other modifications to the sutures or the procedure itself.<sup>4,5</sup> The purpose of this technique is to provide a minimally invasive option for patients who wish to improve the appearance of their necks without more invasive surgical procedures. However, it is important to note that, as with any medical procedure, there are risks involved, and patients should discuss the potential benefits and risks with their healthcare provider before beginning treatment.

The technique described for the treatment of a sagging neck is called "cervical lifting without submental scar" or "cervical lifting without visible scar". This technique involves the introduction of absorbable support wires to lift and support the flaccid tissues of the cervical region in the cervical midline with an exit near the earlobe. These wires are crossed in the cervical midline and then a pulley is made that lifts the tissues of the submentonian region. And the two extremities are tied in the region of the lobes or posterior to them according to the level of skin flaccidity. Barbed sutures have been promoted as a minimally invasive cosmetic procedure, but the available evidence of their efficacy and safety is limited and inconclusive. Although avoiding severe fractures and dislocations may reduce some adverse events, some mild and self-limiting side effects have been reported. The extent and duration of the corrective effect and the long-term effects of the filament remain uncertain. A major problem with current barbed wire suspension studies is the lack of objective outcome measures and long-term follow-up data. Without these data, it is difficult to assess the long-term efficacy and safety of this technique. Therefore, more rigorous and systematic studies are needed to determine the potential benefits and risks of barbed suture suspension for facial rejuvenation.<sup>6,7,8</sup> Regarding the effect of hanging sutures on facial movement, it is crucial to choose the appropriate type and location of sutures to avoid damage to facial nerves and muscles. The duration of the effect of the suspension may vary depending on the type of suture used and the individual

characteristics of the patient. Over time, sutures can break, especially if the suture material breaks or the sutures are subjected to excessive tension. Complications such as infection, suture crushing, and asymmetry can also occur and must be carefully monitored and managed by your attending physician. The placement of barbed sutures may affect or limit future cosmetic or reconstructive procedures, especially if the sutures are placed in critical areas or if they cause tissue scarring or disfigurement. Therefore, the choice of suture material and placement technique must be carefully considered to minimize these risks.<sup>9,10</sup> In conclusion, facial rejuvenation with suspension threads requires careful consideration and careful planning to achieve the best results and minimize complications. Objective clinical and laboratory studies are needed to fully understand the benefits and risks of this technology and to develop evidence-based guidelines for its use. Overall, this technique presents a promising option for neck rejuvenation using traction suture spines. It should be noted that the success of the surgery depends on the skill and experience of the surgeon, so it is essential to choose a qualified and experienced professional to perform the surgery.

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