OMFS

Spot the difference

Sir, I wish to share my findings with your readers in order to prevent a risky surgical near-miss. The everyday life of a specialty doctor in a busy maxillofacial department involves multiple surgical extractions. The use of the handpiece burs and haemostatic pack and suture is the norm. Please note the following pieces of kit one may commonly find on their surgical tray – Figure 1: a fissure bur for use on a surgical piece; Figure 2: haemostatic sponge (left) adjacent to packaging from the above fissure bur (right).

One could be forgiven for mistaking the packaging found within this bur as a haemostatic sponge if found on a surgical tray. The incredible resemblance of the two could accidentally lead the dentist to pack the socket with the bur protection sponge instead of using the haemostatic one! I do not know many oral surgeons who would take joy in removing bur packaging from their unsuspecting patient's socket on a Friday afternoon!

M. Breen, Ashford, UK

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Fig. 1 A fissure bur for use on a surgical piece

Fig. 2 Haemostatic sponge (left) adjacent to packaging from the above fissure bur (right)