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## Using sterile adhesive bandages to maintain a sterile field during dermatologic surgery

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**Key words:** dermatologic surgery; Mohs micrographic surgery; pandemic; sterile field; sterile prep.

### SURGICAL CHALLENGE

Maintaining an adequate sterile field while attempting to keep patients masked in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic has at times been a challenge. Importantly, improved infection control and sterility practices are associated with better patient outcomes, including a decreased risk of surgical site infections.<sup>1,2</sup>

A key component of creating a sterile field includes applying and maintaining sterile drapes on the patient for the duration of the surgical procedure. As drapes are often applied to surfaces of varying contours, patient movement or manipulation can shift drapes from their intended site. This potentially exposes an area that is not prepared sterilely, which in the context of the current pandemic may include an unsterile mask, thereby compromising the sterile field. This is of particular concern with surgical procedures near or around the mouth or nose.

### SOLUTION

Sterile adhesive bandages, which come in varying sizes, effectively secure sterile drapes in place (Fig 1). Additionally, these sterile bandages can be used to cover and/or fix nonsterile masks in place to create a sterile barrier between the nonsterile mask and the remainder of the surgical field (Fig 2). Importantly, sterile adhesive bandages are both affordable and readily available in most dermatologic practices and provide a simple, effective solution to a common challenge. Of note, it is important to confirm that the patient does not have an adhesive allergy before application.

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From the Department of Dermatology, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

Funding Sources: None.

IRB approval status: Not applicable.

Reprints not available from the authors.

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J Am Acad Dermatol 2021;■■■:e■-■.

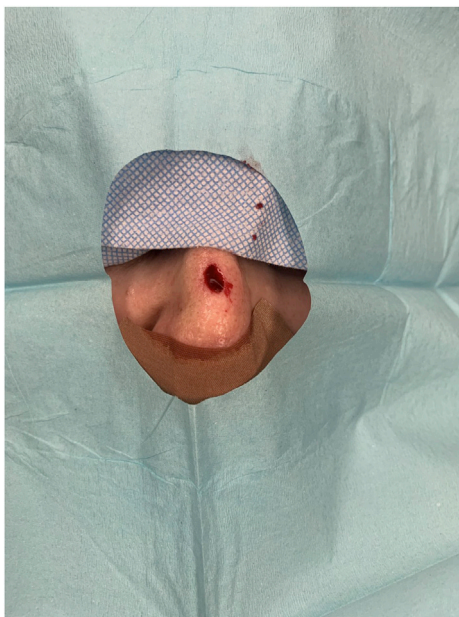
0190-9622/\$36.00

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaad.2021.04.043>



**Fig 1.** Sterile adhesive bandages are used to secure the drapes in place.



**Fig 2.** A sterile adhesive bandage covers parts of an unsterile mask to both secure a facemask in place as well as to ensure a sterile field is maintained if the fenestrated drape were to shift intraoperatively.

#### Conflicts of interest

None disclosed.

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