

TROCAR, TROCATER OU TROCARTE?

To perform laparoscopy we need a practical and functional access for the insertion of endoscopic forceps and optics. It is not such a simple task, since during a laparoscopy the abdomen is distended using CO₂ under pressure. Since the earliest days of laparoscopy, when it was used only for diagnostic purposes, instruments were developed that would allow the passage of optics and of forceps into the cavity without loss of the pneumoperitoneum.

This instrument would have to be able to perforate and cut and be long enough to cross all the layers of the abdominal wall. Additionally, it should possess an adequate gas sealing system. They consist basically of two parts: **Sheath** (outer component with a channel for the introduction of the forceps with a valve system that prevents the escape of gas) and **Mandril** (inner component consisting of a cutting element to penetrate the abdominal wall during its introduction).⁽¹⁾ This specific instrument, consisting of sheath and mandril is commonly called *trocar*, *trocater* or *trocarte*.

They are mentioned in virtually every scientific article about laparoscopic procedures, because specifying the sites in where they are placed is fundamental to describing the surgical technique. The lack of a standardized spelling for these instruments, however, hampers the work of authors and editors.

The Houaiss and the new Aurelio Buarque de Holanda dictionaries do not use the word “trocar” to represent the instrument even though this spelling is widely used in English language laparoscopy books.

In Portuguese the word “trocar” means the act of effecting change and therefore should not be used to represent the laparoscopic instrument. The term “trocater” also does not appear in these two dictionaries.

If it existed, the plural in Portuguese would be “trocateres” which sounds awkward when spoken in Portuguese. The term “trocarte” is found in the Portuguese dictionary and is derived from the French term “trocart” which was used as early as 1694 to name this surgical instrument. It refers to a “cylindrical instrument that ends in a triangular tip which is used to puncture and remove fluid from a cavity. Others claim that the name of this instrument first appeared in 1706 and is an abbreviation of “troise-quarts”, an instrument with three perforating facets combined with a cannula, for abdominal puncture and the drainage of ascites. (2)

Therefore, authors and editors of Portuguese language articles and textbooks should give preference to the use of the spelling “trocarte” when referring to the laparoscopic instrument. For the plural usage, the rule in the Portuguese language for this type of word is to add an “s” at the end; thus, it should be written “trocates”.

REFERÊNCIAS

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