LETTER TO THE EDITOR

DEAR SIR:

In an attempt to maintain sterility in the placement and subsequent re-adjustment that may be necessary while a Swan Ganz catheter is in use, I have found that it is possible initially to peel 10 to 15 cm of the protective split sheath off the catheter tip. The catheter is then inserted into the introducer and advanced into the internal jugular vein. Additional sheath is removed, as necessary, as the catheter is advanced. Once a satisfactory "wedge" position is found, the excess sheath is cut off with sterile scissors and the remainder of the sheath repositioned over the Swan Ganz catheter. The sheath is taped to the introducer. Should advancement or withdrawal of the catheter be necessary this can be performed by holding the distal end of the sheath and gently pushing or pulling the protruding catheter.

The enclosed photograph shows such a catheter and sheath in use.

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FIGURE 1. Swan Ganz catheter shown encased in segment of protective sheath.