

Cervical Dilation

Goal: To practice the skill of dilating the cervical os to the appropriate size

Description: The cervical os must be expanded to an appropriate size to allow passage of the tools into the cervical cavity. This is often accomplished by using a series of tapered dilators, successively inserting dilators of increasing diameter. This is often in conjunction with a pharmacological cervical ripening agent, such as misoprostol.

The two most popular dilators used are Pratt dilators and Hegar dilators. As a rule of thumb, the cannula diameter should correspond roughly to the gestational age in weeks since LMP (i.e. at 10 weeks LMP choose a cannula that is 8-10 mm in diameter). In practice, the diameter of the cannula inserted will depend on the dilation obtained for the patient. If at 10 weeks LMP, it is only possible to easily dilate up to a No. 8 dilator, an 8-mm cannula can be used. Dilation should be smooth and gradual starting with a small size and working up.

Supplies:

- a. 1 assembled ***Pelvic Model***
- b. 1 speculum
- c. 1 tenaculum
- d. 1 set of cervical dilators
- e. 1 prepared dragon fruit uterus (or fruit of choice)

Steps:

1. Place the speculum into the model and visualize the cervix
2. Use the tenaculum to grasp the anterior lip of the cervix (12 o'clock position)
3. With one hand, manipulate the cervix to bring the cervix and uterine body into best alignment and maintain traction on the cervix throughout dilation
4. With the other hand, insert the smallest diameter dilator into the external os and through the internal os
 - o A loss of resistance may be felt indicating passage through the internal os. At this point, there is no need to advance the dilator further but may not be felt. If not felt, insert the dilator to 5 cm beyond external os.
 - o Do not force the cervix with the dilators.
5. Switch to the next largest dilator and repeat the process
6. Use sequential dilators in a step-wise fashion until obtaining dilation equivalent to the cannula which will be used
 - o Maintain tension on the cervix throughout
7. Remove all tools from the model

Performance Checklist

Cervical Dilation
Cleanse cervix with solution (betadine/hibaclens)
Traction on anterior tenaculum
Gradual increase in dilator size for # dilators
Appropriate force on dilators
Appropriate force on dilators
No false passage created

Citations:

- “Cervical dilation before first-trimester surgical abortion (<14 weeks' gestation)” by Allen, R.H. and Goldberg, A.B. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26683499/>
- Medicins Sans Frontieres Medical Guides: Manual Vacuum Aspiration (MVA): Dilation <https://medicalguidelines.msf.org/en/viewport/ONC/english/9-5-manual-vacuum-aspiration-mva-51417954.html>
- Manual Vacuum Aspiration (MVA) by David W. Wood <https://www.jbcrs.org/articles/manual-vacuum-aspiration-mva-8229.html>