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PEELING THE FORCEPS!

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Instrument breakage during vitreoretinal surgery is an uncommon but potentially serious complication that can jeopardize ocular structures and surgical outcomes. Macular peeling for epiretinal membrane (ERM) removal requires precision and intact instruments to minimize risks. We present a rare case of intraoperative breakage of two forceps tips during membrane peeling and introduce a novel L-shape sclerotomy technique for their safe extraction.

A 68-year-old female patient underwent 25-gauge pars plana vitrectomy for ERM peeling. During surgery, two forceps tips fractured within the vitreous cavity. To retrieve the fragments while minimizing trauma, an L-shape sclerotomy was created by modifying one of the existing vitrectomy ports. This approach enabled controlled enlargement of the sclerotomy, allowing safe removal of each tip using intraocular forceps. The procedure was completed without additional complications, followed by routine postoperative management.

Both fractured forceps tips were successfully extracted via the L-shape sclerotomy without intraoperative complications such as retinal tears or hemorrhage. The sclerotomy site remained secure, with no wound leakage or hypotony observed during follow-up. At six months postoperatively, the patient's best-corrected visual acuity improved to 20/30, with no evidence of inflammation or other adverse sequelae.

The L-shape sclerotomy technique is a safe and effective technique for removing intraocular foreign bodies, such as broken instrument fragments, during vitreoretinal surgery. This method minimizes surgical trauma and preserves ocular integrity, offering a valuable solution for managing rare but challenging intraoperative complications.