
Letters to the Editor

Designing the rhombic flap in relation to the lines of maximal extension

Ricardo Baroudi
Editor-in-chief of the **Revista Brasileira de Cirurgia Plástica**

Sir,

The article by Alvarez et al.¹ aptly highlights the versatility and usefulness of the rhombic flap in various sites and defects. Accurate designing of a rhombic flap pre-operatively is of paramount importance for consistent results. The authors though have described the basic design of a rhombic flap; one important aspect has been under-emphasized. The least tension in the flap is possible only if the short diagonal of the rhombic flap falls in the lines of maximal extensibility (LME). This has been previously famously by Borges². Such a design minimizes the tension of closure and hence it is important to accurately orient two limbs of the rhombic flap. We can start by marking two lines of the rhombus along the LME. The other two lines are then marked at 60 and 120 degrees (Figure 1).

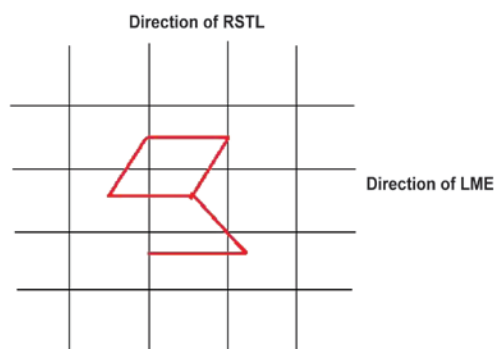


Figure 1 – Design of a rhombic flap in relation to LME and RSTL.
LME = lines of maximal extensibility.
RSTL = relaxed skin tension line.

Then the short diagonal of the flap is extended such that it follows the LME. This design however may not be possible for large defects or if the defect is in close proximity to an important aesthetic landmark. As shown by the authors the rhombic flap is a useful tool in the armamentarium of a plastic surgeon.

Sincerely,

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