

IMAGES OF OUR TIMES

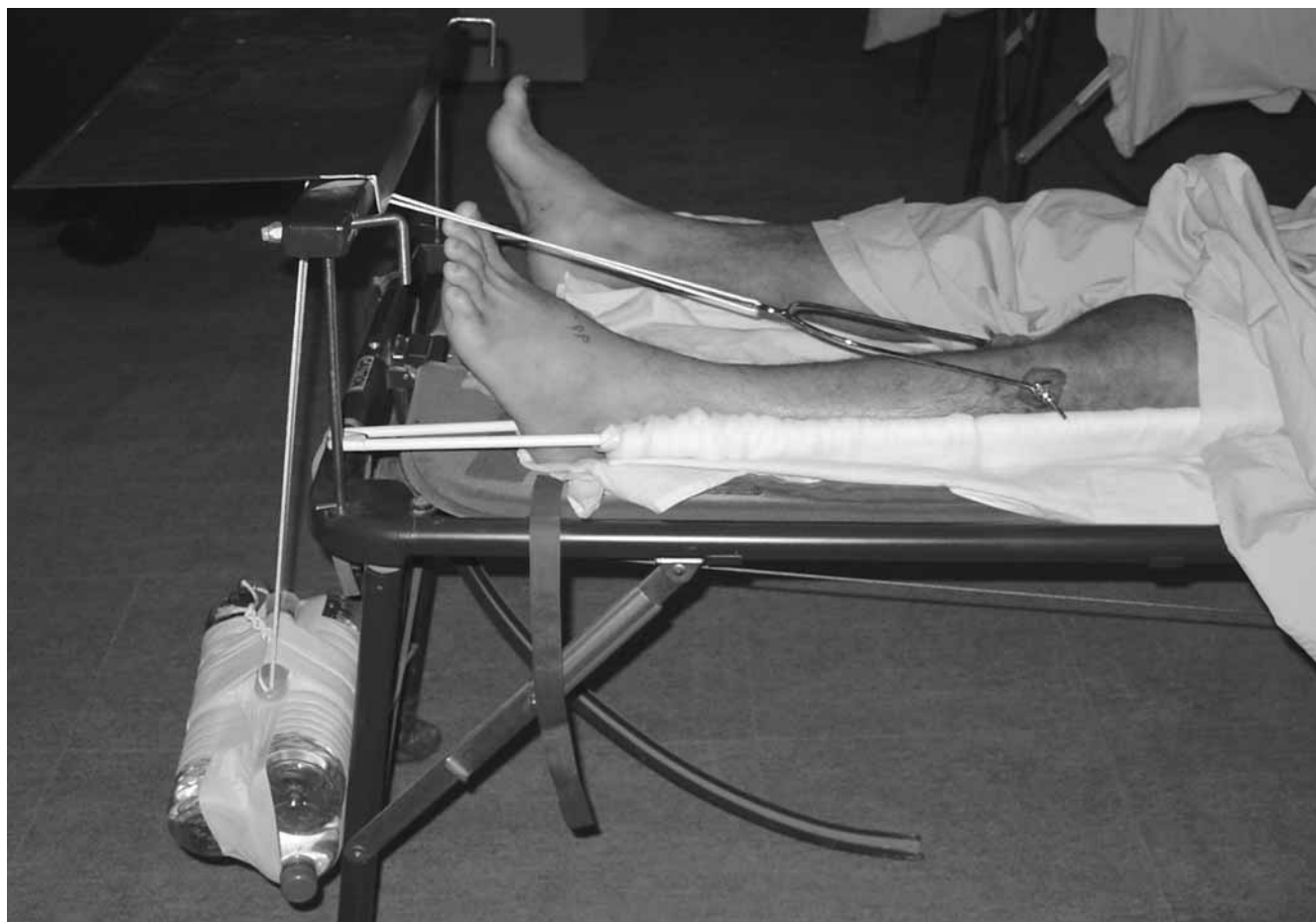
IMPROVISED EQUIPMENT FOR SKELETAL TRACTION ON OPERATIONS

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The use of skeletal traction is established in the temporary treatment for lower limb long bone fractures in the operational environment. The complicated system of pulleys and weights used in an NHS setting are often not available in the deployed Field Hospital. Patients are also frequently moved with long periods of waiting for their Casevac to the UK and a cumbersome array of pulleys and weights is not easily transported. Thomas splints are applied during motor vehicle or aeromedical transfers, but their usage is limited by the pressure issues on the perineum and skin over the ischial tuberosity.

A system of weights made by taping together three 2L bottles of water and the barrel of a 60ml syringe is demonstrated in the photograph above. Parachute cord is passed through the loop of the Böhler stirrup connected to the Denham pin and then through the syringe barrel and the ends are tied. The pulley is improvised by passing the cord over the table attachment to the standard field hospital bed. A Thomas splint is in place and being used solely to rest the leg upon. When required, the weights can be removed and the Thomas splint used in the conventional fashion with the cord tensioned using a Spanish windlass.



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