Basic Guide to Sutures for Surgical Technology Students

1. Understanding Suture Basics

- **Categories of Sutures**:

    - **Absorbable**: Dissolves in the body over time.

    - **Non-Absorbable**: Permanent or must be removed.

    - **Natural**: Made from organic materials.

    - **Synthetic**: Made from man-made materials.

2. Simple Learning Tools

- **Flashcards**:

    - Write the suture name on one side and its properties (absorbable/non-absorbable, natural/synthetic) on the other.

    - Include examples of use and brand names (e.g., Vicryl® vs. Polysorb®).

- **Scrapbooks**:

    - Collect small pieces (1-2 inches) of suture material.

    - Label them and write down key facts (e.g., absorbability, common uses).

3. Key Suture Characteristics

- **Tissue Interaction**: Different tissues heal differently; absorbable sutures are better for tissues that heal quickly.

- **Doctor Preferences**: Note surgeons' preferences as these can override standard guidelines.

4. Teaching Techniques

- **Visual Learning**:

    - Use diagrams or PowerPoint slides to explain natural vs. synthetic and absorbable vs. non-absorbable.

- **Hands-On Activities**:

    - Provide suture packets for students to examine and learn how to interpret labels.

- Have students attach a suture piece and packet to index cards with its details.

- **Mock Scenarios**:

  - Simulate surgeries where students practice identifying and organizing sutures.

5. Interactive Games

- **Role Play**:

  - Students pretend to be different sutures, describing their characteristics and uses.

- **Suture Jeopardy**:

  - Create categories like absorbable, non-absorbable, package color, etc., for a quiz game.

6. Gradual Learning

- Introduce 5-10 sutures per week.

- Reinforce learning with guest lectures or demonstrations by suture representatives.

7. Final Practice

- During mock surgeries, students:

  - Organize sutures in the order of use.

  - Verbally describe suture details when passing them (e.g., "2-0 Vicryl, absorbable, T-12 taper needle").

8. Quick Reference

- Provide a handout with common abbreviations and needle types (e.g., blunt, taper, cutting).