PLEURAL DECOMPRESSION

PARAMEDIC

INDICATIONS:

- Tension pneumothorax causing hypoactive breath sounds with signs of shock.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

- Absence of a tension pneumothorax

Equipment Needed:

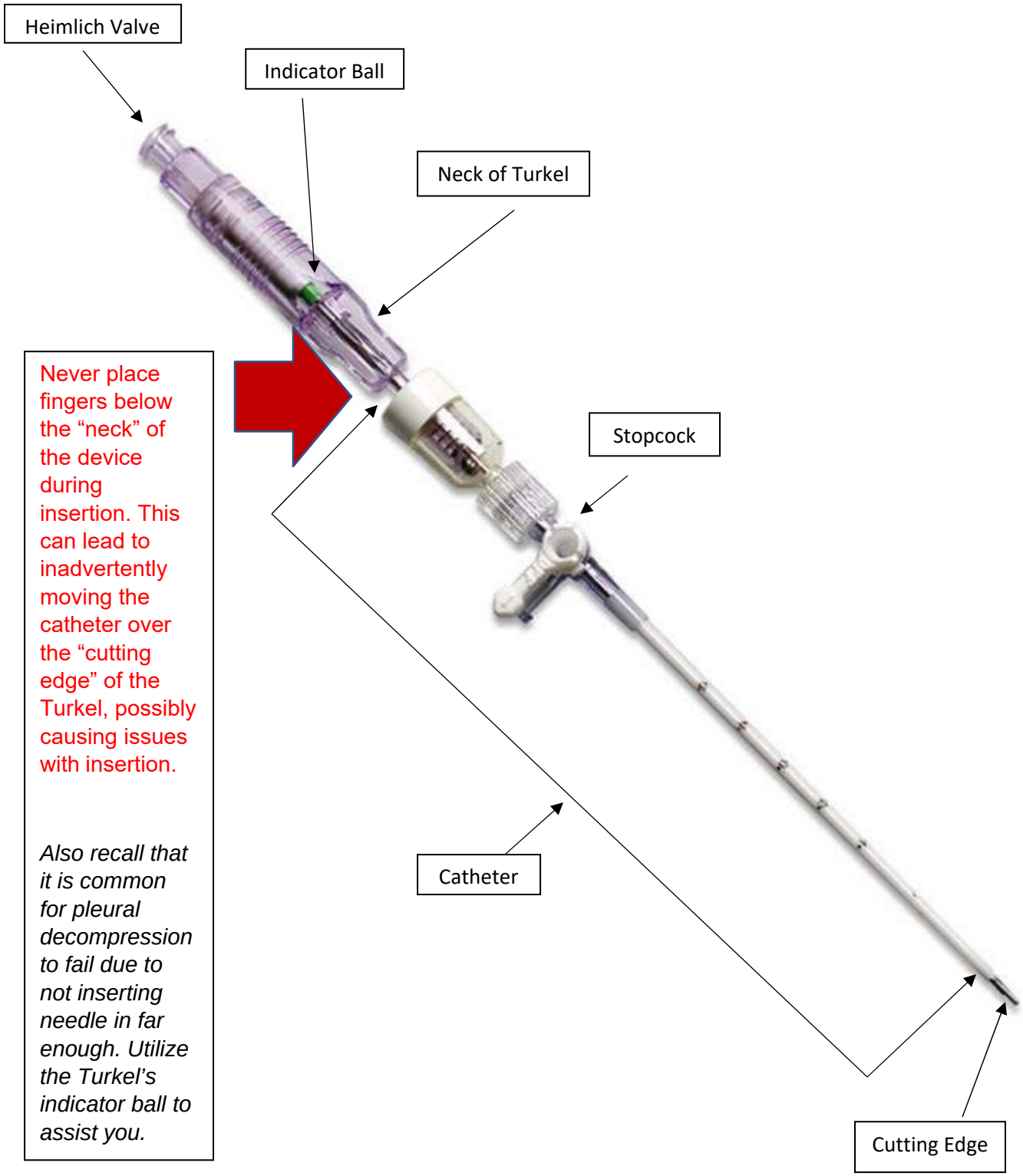
- Gloves and goggles
- Alcohol or Betadine wipes
- Scalpel
- Turkel needle

Pleural Decompression Procedure

- Identify appropriate Site
  - 4th intercostal space, midaxillary line
  - 2nd intercostal space, midclavicular line
- Prep Site
- Take scalpel and create a small 'knick' at the site you wish to place Turkel needle.
- Assure that you are holding the 'neck' of the Turkel (space above the indicator ball) to assure that you do not inadvertently slide the catheter over the cutting edge of the Turkel.
- Insert Turkel needle just over (superior to) rib. Indicator ball will turn red initially.
- Once in the parietal space, the indicator ball should turn green and you should hear a rush of air from the heimlich valve at the top of the device.
- Advance catheter into chest and withdraw needle
- If no air is aspirated review adequacy of technique, remove needle leaving catheter in place, and dress site as appropriate
- Assure that the stopcock on the device is closed to keep air from entering the parietal space.
- Advise medical control physician of procedure
- Monitor patient to assure adequate re-expansion of lung
  - Breath sounds
  - Neck veins
  - Vital signs
  - Oximetry
- If tension pneumothorax recurs, open stopcock to release built up air.
  - Consider possibility of bilateral pneumothorax.
  - If hemothorax present, close stopcock. Do not hook up to suction.

****REMEMBER*****Go just above the rib!* All of the major structures, arteries, veins, and nerves lie below the rib. The closer you stay to the top of the rib, the less chance of complications.

PLEURAL DECOMPRESSION cont.



Never place fingers below the "neck" of the device during insertion. This can lead to inadvertently moving the catheter over the "cutting edge" of the Turkel, possibly causing issues with insertion.

Also recall that it is common for pleural decompression to fail due to not inserting needle in far enough. Utilize the Turkel's indicator ball to assist you.