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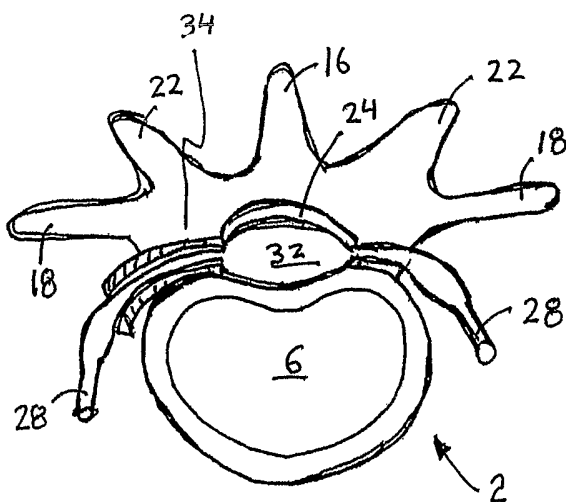
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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROTECTING NEUROVASCULAR STRUCTURES



(57) Abstract: Devices and methods for protecting the neurovascular structures about the vertebral column (2) are provided. One embodiment of the invention comprises a neuroprotective stent or device (36) adapted for placement in an intervertebral foramen (26) of a vertebral column (2) and configured to resist compression or impingement from surrounding structures or forces. The stent or device may further comprise a flange (140) to facilitate attachment of the device (36) to the vertebrae (4) or a hinge region (144) to facilitate insertion of the device (36) in the foramen (26).

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US05/04511

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 IPC: **A61B 17/08(2006.01);A61N 1/00(2006.01);A61F 2/04(2006.01)**

 USPC: **606/152;607/117,118;623/23.7**
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B. FIELDS SEARCHED
 Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
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 Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

 Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
 EAST search search terms foramen, spine(s), vertebra\$3

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X, P	US 2004/0199187 A1 (Loughran) 7 October 2004, figures 3 and 4	5-7, 10-13 and 19
X	US 6,106,558 A (Picha) 22 August 2000, figures 3-4	1, 4-5, 12, 14-20
X	US 5,400,784 A (Durand et al) 28 March 1995, figure 10	1-17
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Y		18-20
X	US 4,573,471 A (Rudner) 4 March 1986, figure 7	1-10, 12, 14-17
X	US 5,487,756 A (Kallesoe et al) 30 January 1996, figures 1, 8 and 9	1-2, 4-10, 12-17
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Y		18-20

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C. (Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X --- Y	US 6,600,956 B2 (Maschino et al) 29 July 2003, figures 1a, 1C	1-10, 12-17 ----- 18-20