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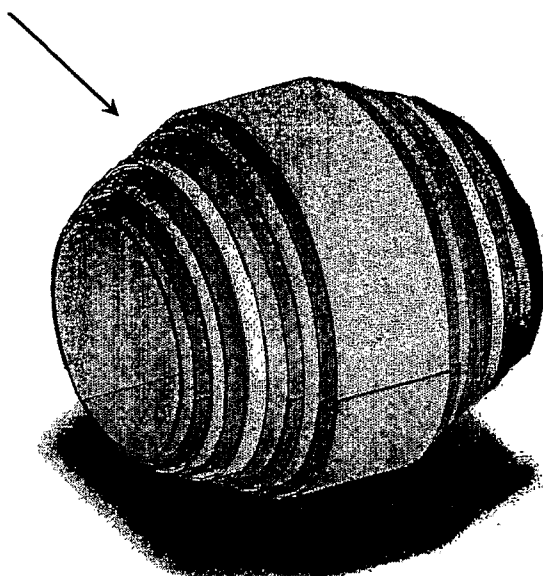
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(54) Title: EXPANDABLE IMPLANT FOR REPAIRING A DEFECTIVE INTERVERTEBRAL NUCLEUS

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(57) Abstract: Expandable implants for repairing a nuclear defect of an intervertebral disc, and methods and apparatuses for delivering the same into the disc. The implants generally have a compressed form having a size adapted for insertion into the intervertebral disc, and a composition that allows the implant to expand from the compressed form into an expanded form after the implant is inserted into the nucleus. The expanded form of the implant has a configuration that fills the nuclear defect. The composition used to make the implant can include a shape memory alloy (SMA) or any other suitable material. Various devices can be used to insert the implants into the area being treated.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
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 USPC: 623/17.11
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B. FIELDS SEARCHED
 Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
 U.S. : 623/17.11, 17.16, 1.15, 1.18, 1.2; 606/61
 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)
 Please See Continuation Sheet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 6,582,467 B (Teitelbaum et al) 24 June 2003 (24.06.2003), Fig. 1c, col. 1, lines 54-56, col. 2, lines 43,44,50, col. 3, lines 20,21, col. 4, lines 18-24,65-67, col. 6, lines 11-13, 55-60.	1,11,13,15-19,25,49
X	US 6,224,630 B1 (Bao et al) 01 May 2001 (01.05.2001), Figs. 1, 3,7, col. 3, lines 8-15, col. 4, lines 15-21,50-53,60,65, col. 12, lines 1-9,21-25,32-36.	1,11,19 ----- 5,6

Y		
X	US 5,171,278 A (Pisharodi) 15 December 1992 (15.12.1992), Fig. 3, col. 3, lines 19-21.	1,11,27,37
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Y		
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

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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 2004/0010315 A (Song) 15 January 2004 (15.01.2004), Figs. 1,9, paragraphs 21,23, 29.	1,11,15-18 ----- 14,19-26,40
Y	US 4,950,227 A (Savin et al) 21 August 1990 (21.08.1990), Fig. 1, col. 4, lines 9,10,23, 37, 38.	14,26,40
X --- Y	US 5,556,413 A (Lam) 17 September 1996 (17.09.1996), Figs. 2,9A,9B, col. 3, lines 11-22,35,62,64-66, col. 6, lines 50-58, col. 12, lines 30-37.	1,4,11,14- 18,27,30,37,39-44,49 ----- 28,29,33-36
Y	US 6,488,710 B2 (Besselink) 03 December 2002 (03.12.2002), Figs. 4a,5a,5b, col. 2, lines 28-31, col. 3, lines 29-39.	38,46
Y	US 2003/0102469 A1 (Jones) 05 June 2003 (05.06.2003), See paragraphs 231,233,321,380.	27,31,32

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Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 3:

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