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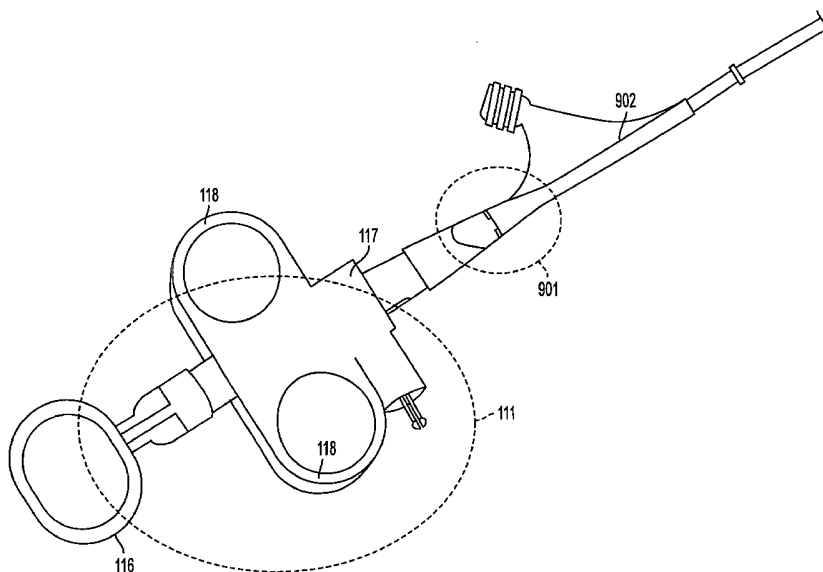
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: METHOD OF AND APPARATUS FOR POSITIONING AND MAINTAINING THE POSITION OF ENDOSCOPIC INSTRUMENTS



(57) Abstract: The present invention provides an apparatus for, and a method of, accurate rotational positioning of endoscopic instruments. Accurate positioning of the instruments is accomplished through the inclusion of a steering ability within the device. After the endoscopic instrument is properly positioned the present invention may use rapid exchange technology, soft locks, and mechanical locks to maintain the position of the endoscopic instrument. Rapid exchange technology is used to minimize displacement forces present on the guidewire or catheters. Soft locks and mechanical locks resist movements caused by displacement forces. The device consists of a catheter rotationally connected to a handle with means to lock the rotational connection.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Interr 1 Application No
PCT/US 02/37749

<p>A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC 7 A61B18/14</p>		
<p>According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC</p>		
<p>B. FIELDS SEARCHED</p>		
<p>Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC 7 A61B</p>		
<p>Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched</p>		
<p>Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal</p>		
<p>C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT</p>		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	WO 00 42926 A (GEN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CORP) 27 July 2000 (2000-07-27) see summary of the invention page 10, paragraph 5 -page 11, paragraph 1; figures 1,5 ---	1,23
A	US 5 176 702 A (SMITH KEVIN W ET AL) 5 January 1993 (1993-01-05) column 7, line 10-41; figures 4A,4B column 9, line 54 -column 10, line 20; figures 9A-E ---	1,23
A	US 5 066 295 A (KOZAK MARK ET AL) 19 November 1991 (1991-11-19) abstract; figure 1 ---	1
A	US 6 015 381 A (OUCHI TERUO) 18 January 2000 (2000-01-18) ---	
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<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patent family members are listed in annex.</p>		
<p>* Special categories of cited documents :</p> <p>"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance</p> <p>"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date</p> <p>"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)</p> <p>"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means</p> <p>"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed</p> <p>"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention</p> <p>"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone</p> <p>"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.</p> <p>"&" document member of the same patent family</p>		
<p>Date of the actual completion of the international search 31 January 2003</p>		<p>Date of mailing of the international search report 18. 06. 2003</p>
<p>Name and mailing address of the ISA European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016</p>		<p>Authorized officer PAPONE, F</p>

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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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.
A	US 6 235 026 B1 (SMITH KEVIN W) 22 May 2001 (2001-05-22) -----	

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US 02/37749

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.: 12-22, 37
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
Rule 39.1(iv) PCT - Method for treatment of the human or animal body by surgery
2. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
3. Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:
1-11, 23-36

Remark on Protest

- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. Claims: 1-11,23-36,

an apparatus consisting of a handle with a rotating catheter and a locking mechanism

2. Claims: 38-41

an apparatus consisting of a handle with a rotating catheter and a thinned exterior wall.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/US 02/37749

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Information on patent family members

International Application No

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