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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **SIMPIR-ICA SPINE, INC.** [US/US]; 270 Chestnut Street, Ste. 101, Redwood City, California 94063 (US).

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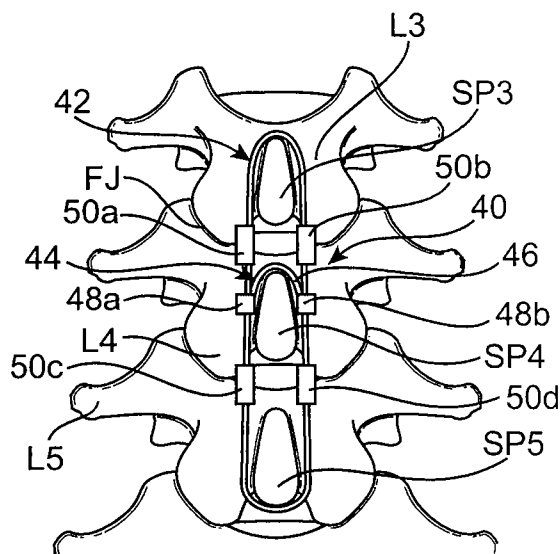
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- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **ALAMIN, Todd** [US/US]; 168 Eleanor Drive, Woodside, California 94062 (US). **BENNETT, Ian** [US/US]; 4832 25th Street, #2, San Francisco, California 94114 (US). **FIELDING, Louis** [US/US]; 1057 Montgomery Street, San Carlos, California 94070 (US). **CAHILL, Colin** [US/US]; 544 27th Street, Apt. 1, San Francisco, California 94131 (US).
- (74) Agents: **HESLIN, James, M.** et al.; Townsend And Townsend And Crew LLP, Two Embarcadero Center, 8th Floor, San Francisco, California 94111-3834 (US).

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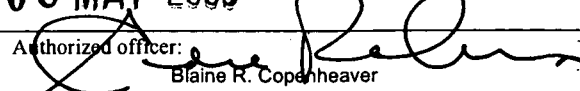


(57) Abstract: Methods, apparatus and systems for constraining spinous processes to elastically limit flexion of two or more adjacent spinal segments rely on placing a tether structure over at least three adjacent vertebral bodies or two adjacent vertebral bodies and the sacrum. The tether structures may be continuous, for example in the form of a continuous loop, or may be discontinuous, for example in the form of a loop or elongate element having at least two anchor structures for securing in bone.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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<p>A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC(8) - A61B 17/00 (2008.04) USPC - 606/151 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(8) - A61B 17/00 (2008.04) USPC - 606/151</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 practicable, search terms used) PatBase</p>												
<p>C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category*</th> <th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th> <th>Relevant to claim No.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>X — Y</td> <td>US 2004/0215341 A1 (SYBERT et al) 28 October 2004 (28.10.2004) entire document</td> <td>1, 2, 3, 6, 7 — 4, 5, 8-10, 15, 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>X — Y</td> <td>US 5,609,634 A (VOYDEVILLE) 11 March 1997 (11.03.1997) entire document</td> <td>11-14, 16, 17 — 4, 5, 8-10, 15, 18</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.	X — Y	US 2004/0215341 A1 (SYBERT et al) 28 October 2004 (28.10.2004) entire document	1, 2, 3, 6, 7 — 4, 5, 8-10, 15, 18	X — Y	US 5,609,634 A (VOYDEVILLE) 11 March 1997 (11.03.1997) entire document	11-14, 16, 17 — 4, 5, 8-10, 15, 18	
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<p>Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US, Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. 571-273-3201</p>		<p>Authorized officer:  Blaine R. Copenhaver PCT Helpdesk: 571-272-4300 PCT OSP: 571-272-7774</p>										