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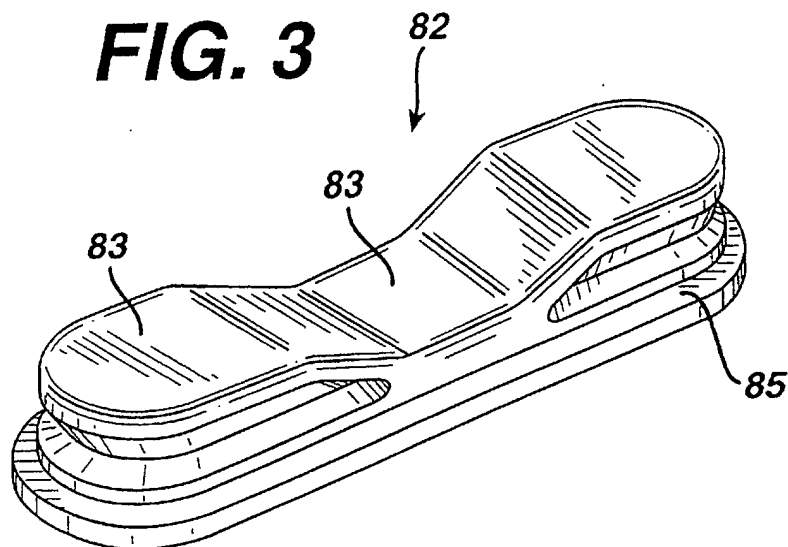
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(54) **Flexible switch members for hand activation handpiece switches**

(57) Methods of controlling fluid flow (e.g., flow of liquids, water vapor and gases) through switch members, e.g., switch buttons, which are used to seal an interior cavity of a surgical handpiece are provided. The switch members provide improved sealing properties

which prevent gas and water vapor transmission across the switch member and into and out of the sealed internal switch chamber. The switch members are also resistant to puncture due to striking by tools or cleaning instruments, or the like.



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 01 30 8926

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
Y A X	US 5 226 904 A (GENTELIA JOHN ET AL) 13 July 1993 (1993-07-13) * column 6, paragraph 1 * * column 7, paragraph 5 * * column 8, paragraph 3 * -----	1,3 2,7,28 45	H01H9/00
Y	US 4 373 124 A (FRAME NORMAN J) 8 February 1983 (1983-02-08) * abstract * -----	1,3	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			H01H A61B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
Munich		12 November 2003	Socher, G
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ----- & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

EPO FORM 1503 03/82 (P04/C01)



CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

- No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

- All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.
- Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

- None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:

1-24,28-31,45-47



The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-24,28-31,45-47

A depressable switch member for use in a surgical handpiece to seal interior of the handpiece comprising a body and a skirt and an impermeable skirt or a metallic layer or a permeability barrier disposed on the body or the skirt.

2. claims: 25-27,32-34

A vent assembly for use in a surgical handpiece for sealing an interior of the handpiece comprising a vent and a membrane.

3. claims: 35-44

A switch assembly for use in a surgical handpiece to seal interior of the handpiece comprising a compressible switch member.

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 01 30 8926

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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12-11-2003

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82