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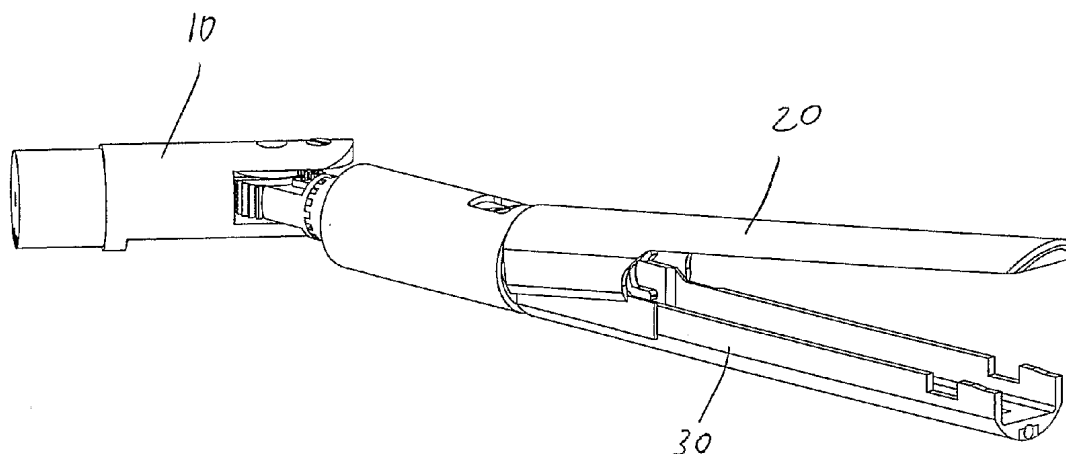
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(54) Title: **SURGICAL STAPLING AND CUTTING DEVICE AND METHOD FOR USING THE DEVICE**



(57) Abstract: A medical device includes a control handle having an articulation joint actuator, a surgical end effector, and a passive articulating joint connecting the end effector to the control handle. The articulation joint actuator, when unactuated, holds the passive articulation joint and, thereby, the end effector, in a substantially fixed articulation position, and, when actuated, releases the passive articulation joint into a freely articulating state to permit free articulation of the end effector with respect to the control handle dependent upon external forces acting upon the end effector. A method for operating the end effector includes retaining the passive articulation joint in a stable position with an articulation lock and actuating a release of the articulation lock to unlock the passive articulation joint and, thereby, permit articulating motion of the end effector through the passive articulation joint dependent upon the external forces acting upon the end effector.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC: A61B 17/068(2006.01)

USPC: 227/175.1, 19, 175.3, 176.1, 180.1

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S.: 227/175.1, 19, 175.3, 176.1, 178.1, 180.1; 606/139, 219

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)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5,465,895 A (KNODEL et al.) 14 November 1995. See entire document.	1-41
X	US 5,673,840 A (SCHULZE et al.) 07 October 1997. See entire document.	1-28 & 32-41
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Y		29-31
A	US 5,797,537 A (OBERLIN et al.) 25 August 1998. See entire document.	1-41
A	US 6,250,532 A (GREEN et al.) 26 June 2001. See entire document.	1-41
A	US 6,330,965 A (MILLIMAN et al.) 18 December 2001. See entire document.	1-41
A	US 6,644,532 A (GREEN et al.) 11 November 2003. See entire document.	1-41



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"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
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"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

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