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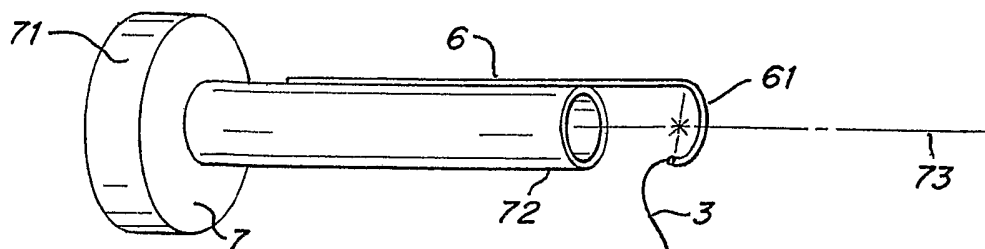
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SUTURE PLACEMENT



(57) Abstract: An apparatus and method for placing a suture by manipulating a cannula and attached needle. The cannula may be usable in a minimally invasive surgical procedure, and the needle may be selectively attached to and/or separated from the cannula. The cannula and needle may include complementary locking members that engage with each other and allow the needle to be used to place a suture by manipulation of the cannula.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
INV. A61B17/04

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)
A61B

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 practical, search terms used)
EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 6 221 084 B1 (FLEENOR RICHARD P) 24 April 2001 (2001-04-24) figures 1,2	1-13
X	US 5 681 333 A (BURKHART ET AL) 28 October 1997 (1997-10-28) figure 1	1,2
A	DE 299 12 712 U1 (SARBU, JOAN) 20 April 2000 (2000-04-20) the whole document	1-13

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

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Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 6221084	B1	24-04-2001	NONE
US 5681333	A	28-10-1997	NONE
DE 29912712	U1	20-04-2000	NONE