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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): USGI MEDICAL, INC. [US/US]; 1140 Calle Cordillera, San Clemente, CA 92673 (US).
- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): EWERS, Richard, C. [US/US]; RICHARD C. EWERS, 1437 W. Malvern, Fullerton, CA 92833 (US). VONG, Shirley [US/US]; 57 Bramble Lane, Aliso Viejo, CA 92656 (US). SAADAT,

- Vahid [US/US]; 12679 Kane Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070 (US). MAAHS, Tracy, D. [US/US]; 11 Paseo Simpatico, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 (US). ELMER, Marvin, C. [US/US]; 68 Tiera Seguro, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 (US).
- (74) Agent: HAN, Johney, U.; LEVINE BAGADE LLP, 2483 East Bayshore Road, Suite 100, Palo Alto, CA 94303 (US).
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(54) Title: COMPRESSIBLE TISSUE ANCHOR ASSEMBLIES

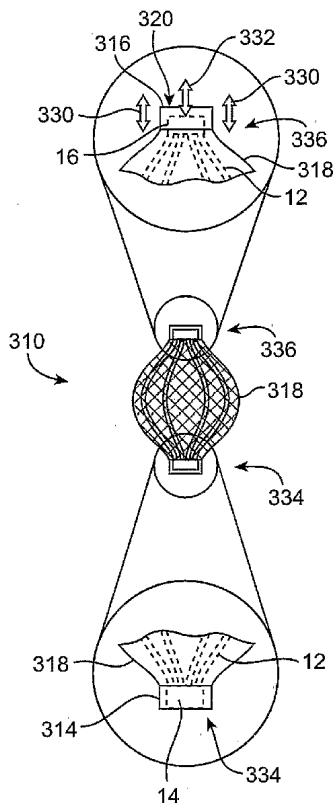


FIG. 23A

(57) Abstract: Apparatus and methods for optimizing anchoring force are described herein. In the securing tissue folds, over-compression of the tissue directly underlying the anchors is avoided by utilizing tissue anchor (10) having expandable arms (12) configured to minimize contact area between the anchor (10) and tissue. When the anchor (10) is in its expanded configuration, a load is applied to the anchor (10) until it is optimally configured to accommodate a range of deflection while the anchor (10) itself exerts a substantially constant force against the tissue. Various devices e.g., stops, spring member, fuses, strain gauges, etc., can be used to indicate when the anchor (10) has been deflected to a predetermined level within the optimal rang. Moreover, other factors to affect the anchor (10) characteristics include, e.g., varying the number of arms (12) or struts (12) of the anchor (10), positioning of the arms (12), configuration of the arms (12), the length of the collars (14, 16), etc.

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FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, NL, PL, PT,
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B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

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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)

EAST

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 6368338 B1 (KONYA et al) 9 April 2002 (09.04.2002), see entire document.	9-36
A	US 6,589,208 B2 (EWERS et al) 8 July 2003 (08.07.2003), see entire document.	1-60
A	US 5,928,260 A (CHIN et al) 27 July 1999 (27.07.1999), see entire document.	1-60

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

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Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201

Authorized officer

MICHAEL G. MENDOZA *Michael Mendoza*

Telephone No. (703) 308-0858 *Len*