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(71) Applicant: DANFORTH BIOMEDICAL INCORPORAT-ED [US/US]; 1505 Adams Drive, Suite D, Menlo Park,

CA 94025-1439 (US).

(74) Agent: JAFFER, David, H.; Rosenblum, Parish & Isaacs, 160 West Santa Clara Street, 15th Floor, San Jose, CA 95113 (US).

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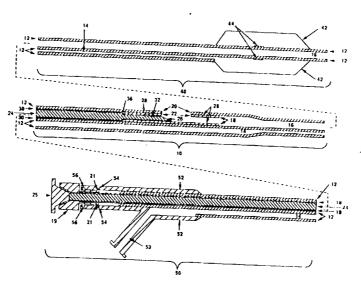
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(54) Title: CONVERTIBLE CATHETER



(57) Abstract

The present invention is a catheter having a guide wire lumen (16) with a slidable sleeve (18). The lumen and sleeve have aligned apertures (20), (22), which may be closed by moving the slidable sleeve (18). When the apertures (20), (22) are aligned, a guide wire may be loaded from the distal end of the catheter (10) through the lumen (16). The guide wire is forced out of the lumen by a ramp (26) in the lumen (16). The ramp (26) is at the end of a removable core member (24), which provides enhanced shaft rigidity. The catheter may be converted from a "monorail" to an "over-the-wire" configuration by moving the slidable sleeve (18) to close the aperture and advancing a replacement guide wire through the guide wire lumen (16) past the now sealed aperture. A non-circular cross section is used for the lumen (16), removable core member (24), and slidable sleeve (18), thereby maintaining orientation of the lumen and slidable sleeve aperture should the catheter undergo

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#### INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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