

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
27 December 2002 (27.12.2002)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2002/102236 A3

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **A61B 17/04**

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2002/019316

(22) International Filing Date: 19 June 2002 (19.06.2002)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
09/884,782 19 June 2001 (19.06.2001) US
09/915,107 25 July 2001 (25.07.2001) US
10/036,690 21 December 2001 (21.12.2001) US

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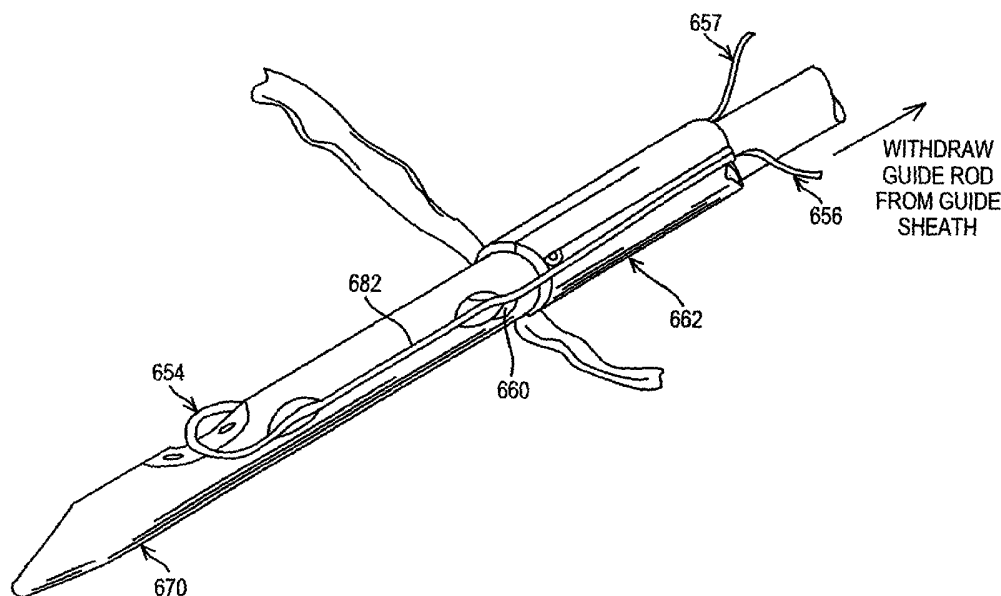
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(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: ADVANCED WOUND SITE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND METHODS



(57) Abstract: An introducer comprises a sheath, a guide rod, and at least one wire stabilization guide. The guide rod is sized to fit within the inside diameter of the sheath. The guide rod has at least one slot along its length for releasably holding the wire stabilization guide. One or more wire stabilization guides are coupled to the sheath. In one exemplary embodiment, the wire stabilization guides are inserted into a wound site and are dimensioned so as to cause an outward stretching force on the wound site. In another embodiment, the wire stabilization guides may form a loop, so that when the sheath is approximated to a wound site, the loop is approximated to tissue surrounding the wound site to hold the sheath approximately centered on the wound site. In other embodiments, the wire stabilization guides may include a retention device to hold the sheath approximate to the wound site.

WO 2002/102236 A3



Published:

- *with international search report*
- *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments*

(88) Date of publication of the international search report:

5 February 2004

(15) Information about Correction:

Previous Correction:

see PCT Gazette No. 10/2003 of 6 March 2003, Section II

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US02/19316

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : A61B 17/04

US CL : 606/213

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. : 606/213, 139, 144, 148

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)

Please See Continuation Sheet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,397,310 A (CHU et al.) 14 March 1995, cols. 1-2 & col. 3, lines 1-35.	44 & 58-59
A	US 5,919,207 A (TAHERI) 06 July 1999, col. 1, lines 25-62.	1-43,45-57 & 60-112
A	US 6,004,341 A (ZHU et al.) 21 December 1999, see summary of invention.	1-43,45-57 & 60-112



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:		"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
"A"	document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
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"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		

Date of the actual completion of the international search

Date of mailing of the international search report

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03 DEC 2003

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

PCT/US02/19316

Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 3:
EAST

606/213, key terms: guidewire, suture, sheath, loop