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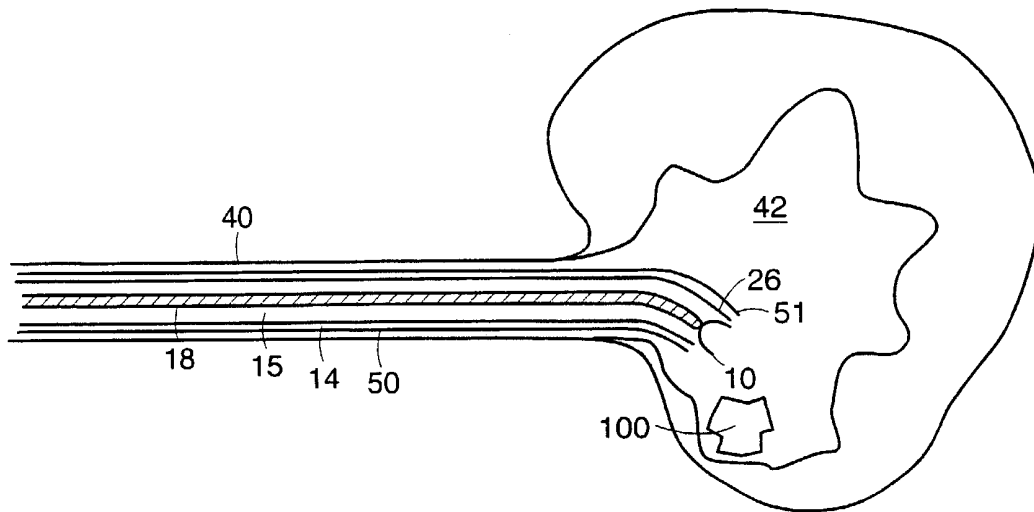
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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: SHEATH WITH INTERMEDIATE SECTION HAVING GREATER FLEXIBILITY FOR A MEDICAL DEVICE



(57) Abstract: A medical device includes a handle, a sheath, and an object-engaging unit. The distal end portion of the sheath is strong enough to resist being deformed by the object-engaging unit, yet another portion of the sheath is flexible enough to bend sufficiently.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/US 00/15864

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 IPC 7 A61B17/22 A61M25/00

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)

IPC 7 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	EP 0 702 936 A (OLYMPUS OPTICAL CO) 27 March 1996 (1996-03-27) column 4, line 26 -column 4, line 33; figure 4	1-24
X	US 3 964 468 A (SCHULZ WERNER P) 22 June 1976 (1976-06-22) column 2, line 25 -column 3, line 37; figure 2	1, 13
X	DE 36 41 935 A (MASLANKA HARALD) 19 June 1987 (1987-06-19) abstract; figure 1	1, 13
X	US 5 254 107 A (SOLTESZ PETER P) 19 October 1993 (1993-10-19) column 4, line 29 -column 5, line 14; claim 1; figures 1-3	7-11, 19-24
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

° Special categories of cited documents :

- *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
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- *Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- *&* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

Date of mailing of the international search report

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5 807 354 A (KENDA RAJKO) 15 September 1998 (1998-09-15) column 3, line 55 -column 5, line 36; figures 1-7 -----	7-11, 19-24
X	US 5 897 537 A (BERG TODD A ET AL) 27 April 1999 (1999-04-27) abstract; figures 2,3,10,11,13,14 -----	7-11, 19-24
A	US 5 759 173 A (JARACZEWSKI RICHARD S ET AL) 2 June 1998 (1998-06-02) column 7, line 33 - line 59; figures 2,3 -----	1,7

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No. **PCT/US 00/15864**

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of Item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.: **25, 26**
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
Rule 39.1(iv) PCT - Method for treatment of the human or animal body by surgery
2. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
3. Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of Item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this International application, as follows:

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/US 00/15864

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