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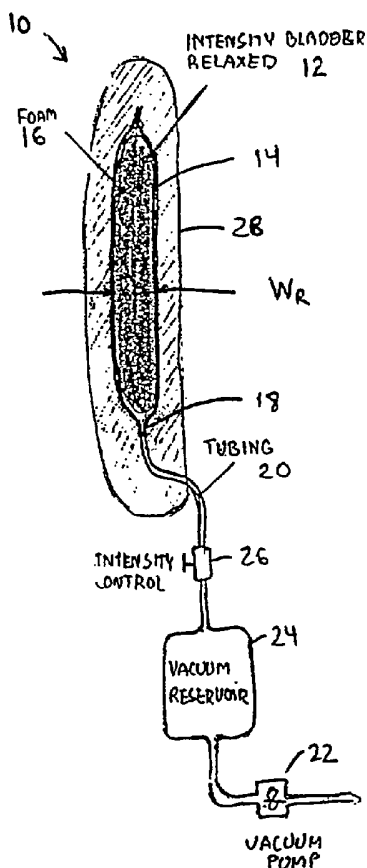
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: INTENSITY CONTROL FOR MASSAGE DEVICES



(57) Abstract: An air-tight foam-filled bladder is used for varying massage intensity in a massage chair, massage mat, or other massage device. The bladder may be compressed from a default or relaxed thickness by evacuating air from the bladder. The thickness of the foam-filled bladder may be reduced to a collapsed thickness in which the foam is compressed within the bladder. In use, the foam-filled bladder is placed proximate a conventional fixed massage mechanism in a massage device, such as in the back rest of a massage chair. By controlling the amount of air evacuated from the bladder, the intensity of the massage is controlled by varying the amount of pressure exerted by the fixed massage mechanism on the user. In the case of a massage chair, the user may advantageously sit back in the chair without discomfort when the user does not want a massage, and may control the intensity of the massage provided by the chair. In another embodiment, an active pump may be used to inflate one or more bladders that may or may not include a foam insert. The number, size and location of the bladders may be varied in any of the embodiments.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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<p>B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) U.S. : 297/284.6, 284.1, 452.41, DIG.1, DIG.3, 217.3; 5/910, 933, 709, 654</p>																									
<p>Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched</p>																									
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<p>C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category *</th> <th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th> <th>Relevant to claim No.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>US 6,367,106 (GRONSMAN) 9 April 2002 (09/04.2002), column 3-7</td> <td>1-5, 7-15, 17-20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>X,P</td> <td>US 6,671,911 (HILL et al.) 6 January 2004, (06.01.2004), column 5, line 15-67 and column 6, lines 1-67).</td> <td>1,2,4,7-13,15,17-20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>US 5,320,409 (KATOH et al.) 14 June 1994 (14.06.1994).</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>US 6,592,184 (SEGAL et al.) 15 July 2003 (15.07.2003).</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>US 4,890,885 (GROSSMAN) 2 January 1990 (02.01.1990).</td> <td>1-5, 7-15, 17-20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>---</td> <td></td> <td>-----</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y</td> <td></td> <td>6, 16</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.	X	US 6,367,106 (GRONSMAN) 9 April 2002 (09/04.2002), column 3-7	1-5, 7-15, 17-20	X,P	US 6,671,911 (HILL et al.) 6 January 2004, (06.01.2004), column 5, line 15-67 and column 6, lines 1-67).	1,2,4,7-13,15,17-20	A	US 5,320,409 (KATOH et al.) 14 June 1994 (14.06.1994).		A	US 6,592,184 (SEGAL et al.) 15 July 2003 (15.07.2003).		X	US 4,890,885 (GROSSMAN) 2 January 1990 (02.01.1990).	1-5, 7-15, 17-20	---		-----	Y		6, 16
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<p>Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (703)305-3230</p>	<p>Authorized officer Peter Cuomo Telephone No. 703-308-0827</p>																								