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(54) **CATHETER/FISTULA NEEDLE TO BLOODLINE CONNECTION ASSURANCE DEVICE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

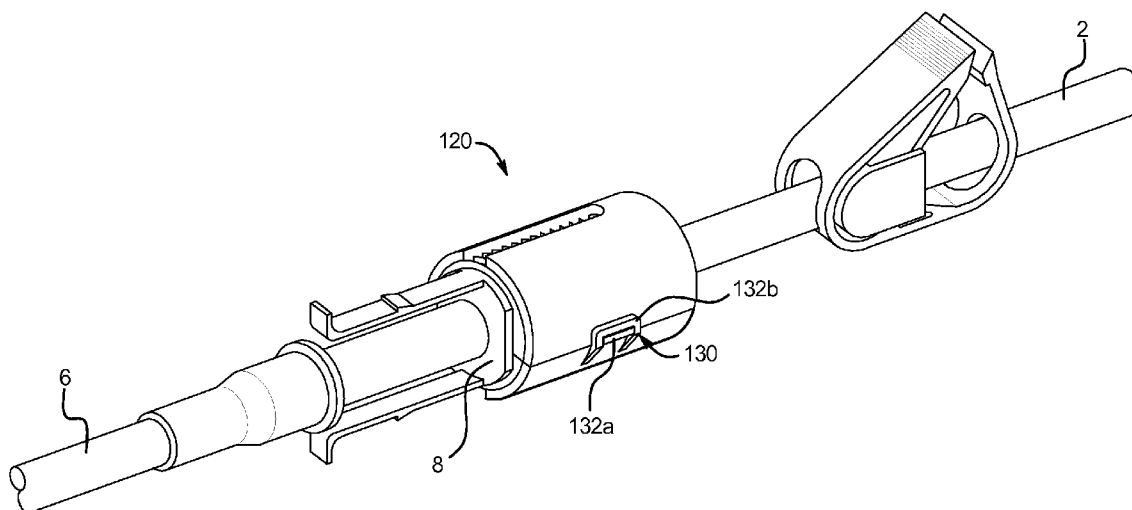
(21) Appl. No.: **14/099,514**

In general, multiple embodiments of a catheter/fistula needle to bloodline connection assurance device, which secures and strengthens a connection between an extension tube end of a catheter or fistula needle and a bloodline, are provided. A first embodiment of the assurance device is configured for use with a bloodline connector having locking clips which are biased slightly outwardly from the bloodline connector. The first embodiment of the assurance device includes clamshell halves that open rotatably about at least one hinge. The first embodiment of the assurance device includes an upper, threaded portion and a lower housing portion. The interior wall of the upper portion defines a plurality of barbs configured to engage with distal or moveable ends of the locking clips. Each locking clip is biased slightly outwardly to enable the distal or moveable end of the locking clip to fit between two respective barbs.

(22) Filed: **Dec. 6, 2013**

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 12/640,696, filed on Dec. 17, 2009, now Pat. No. 8,603,022.



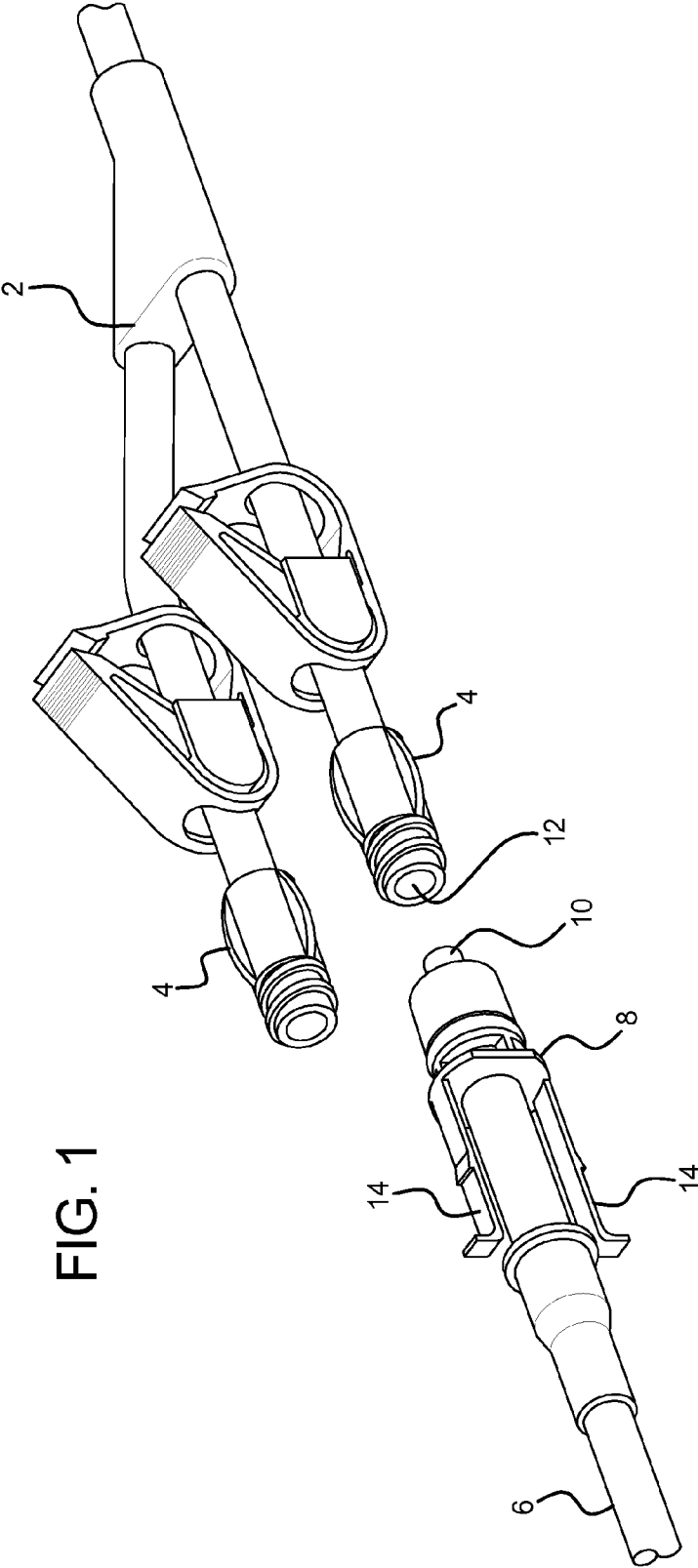
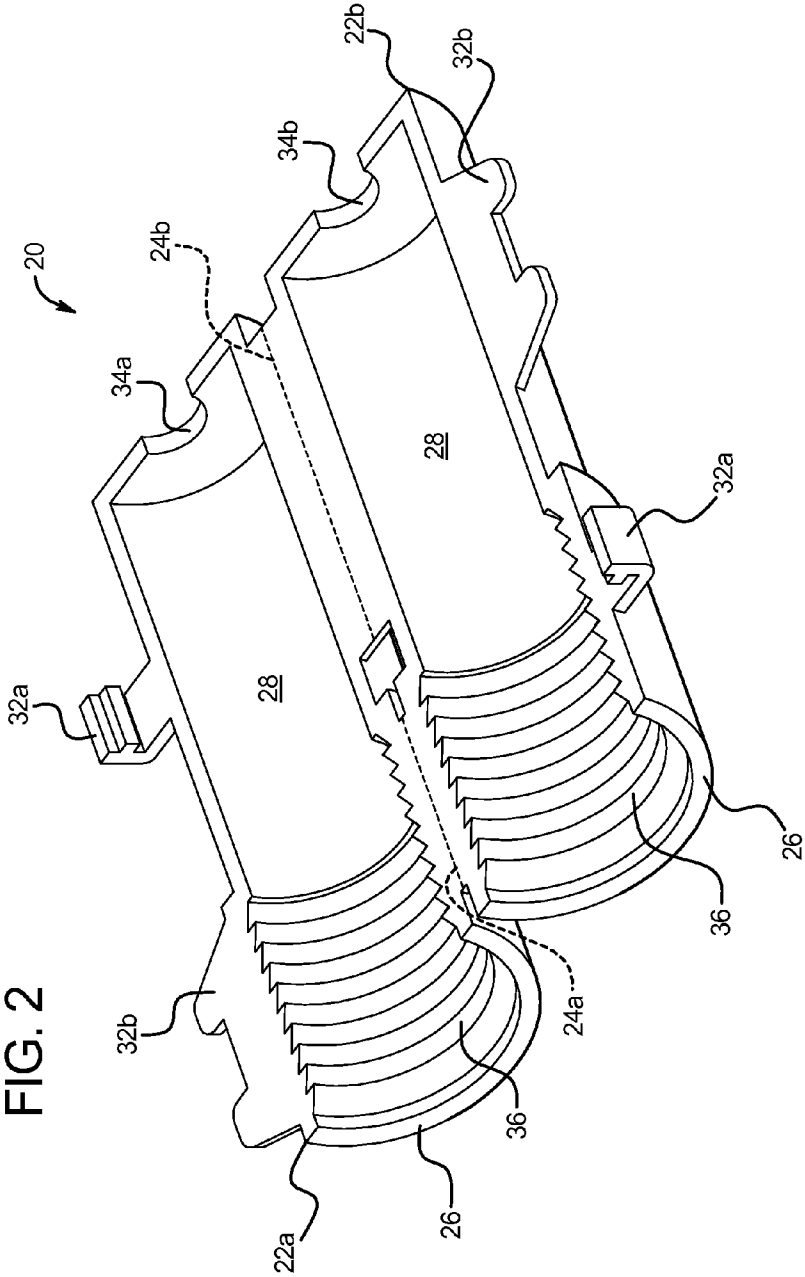


FIG. 1



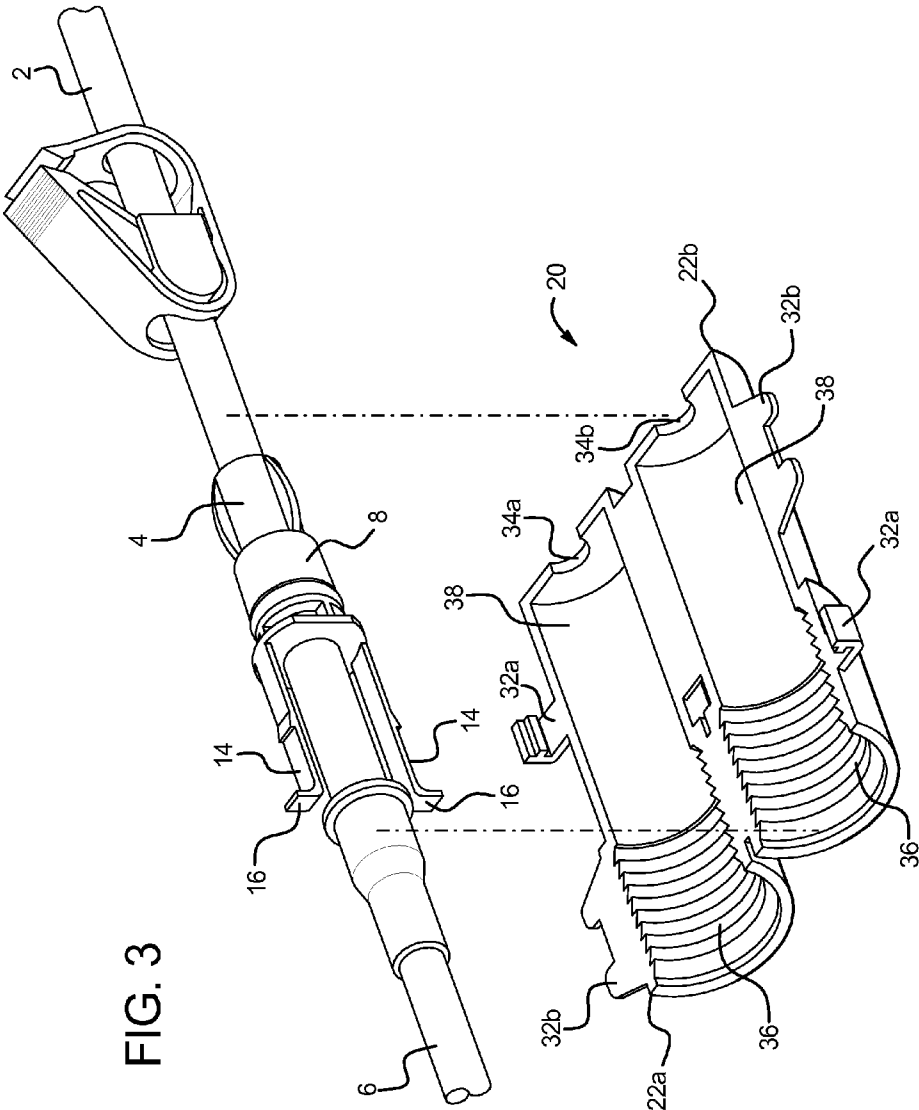


FIG. 3

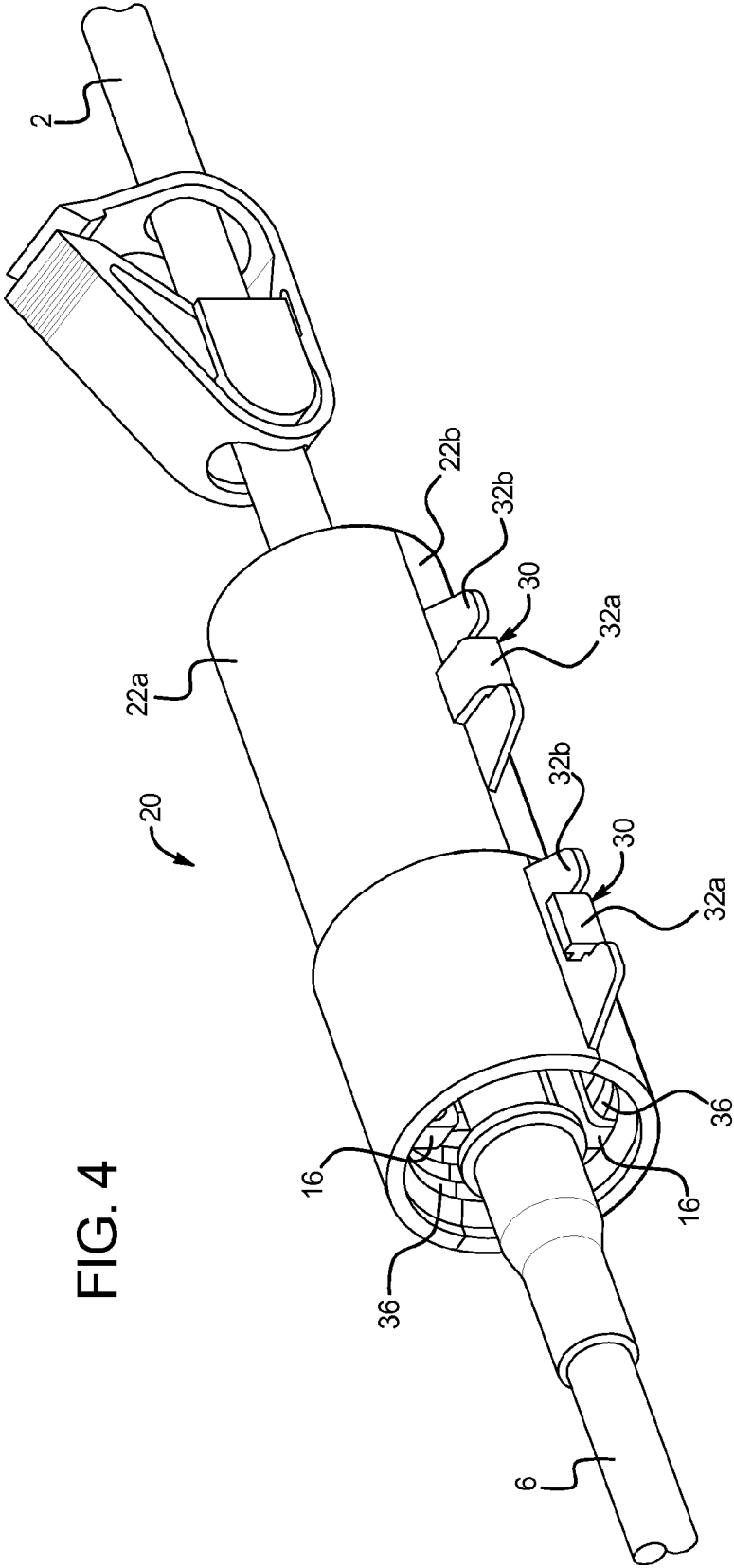
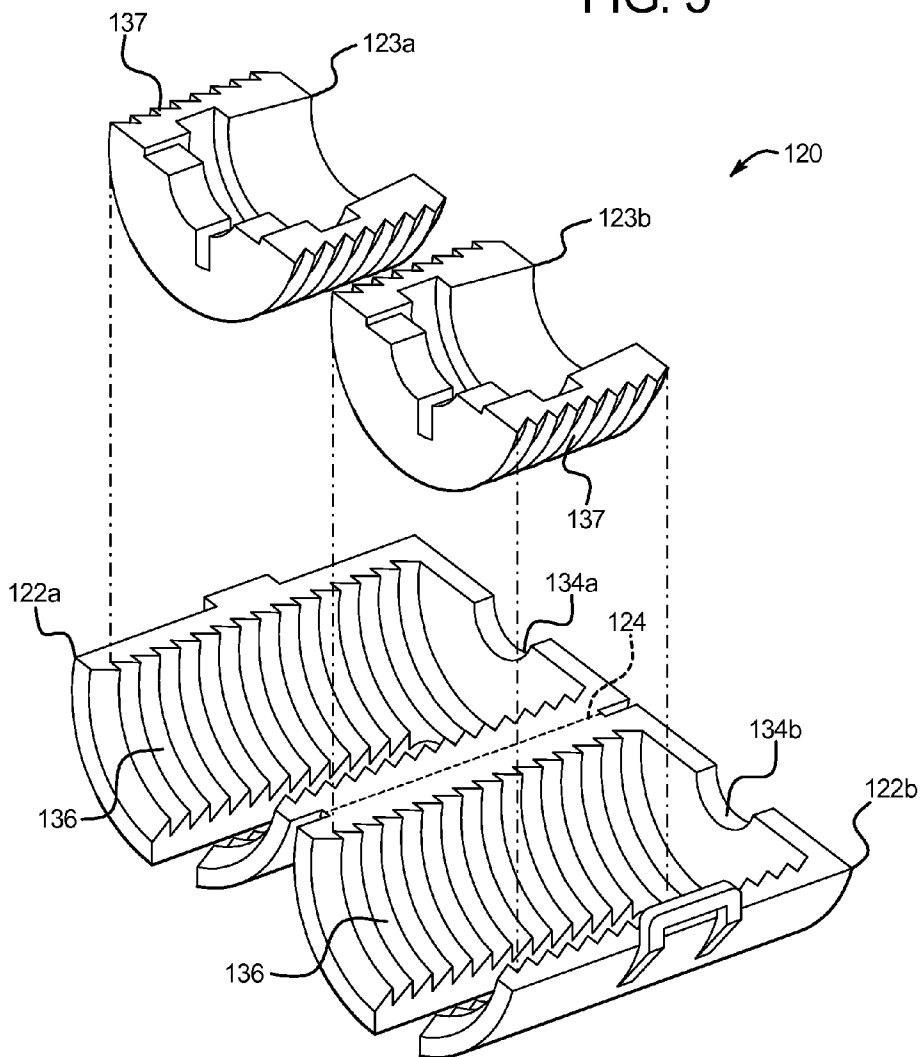


FIG. 4

FIG. 5



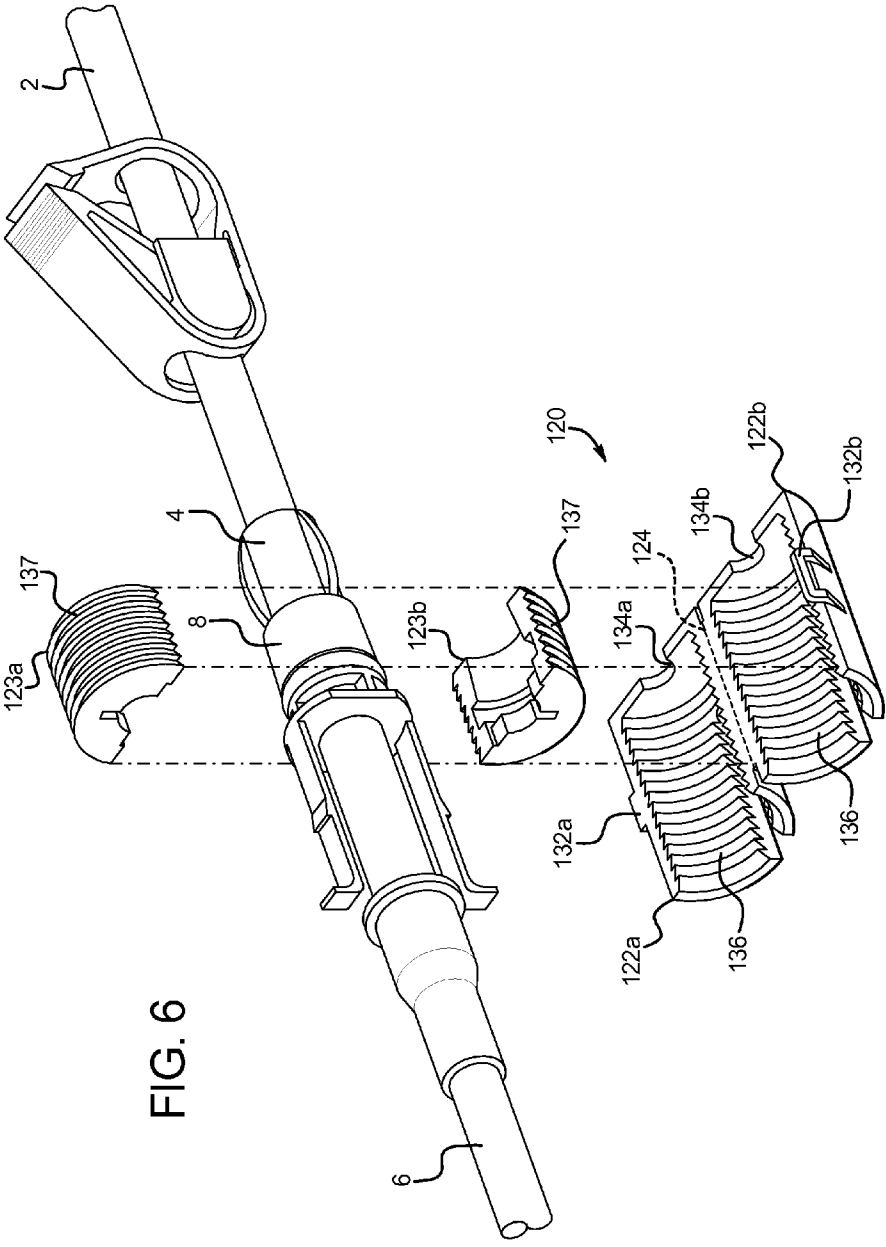


FIG. 6

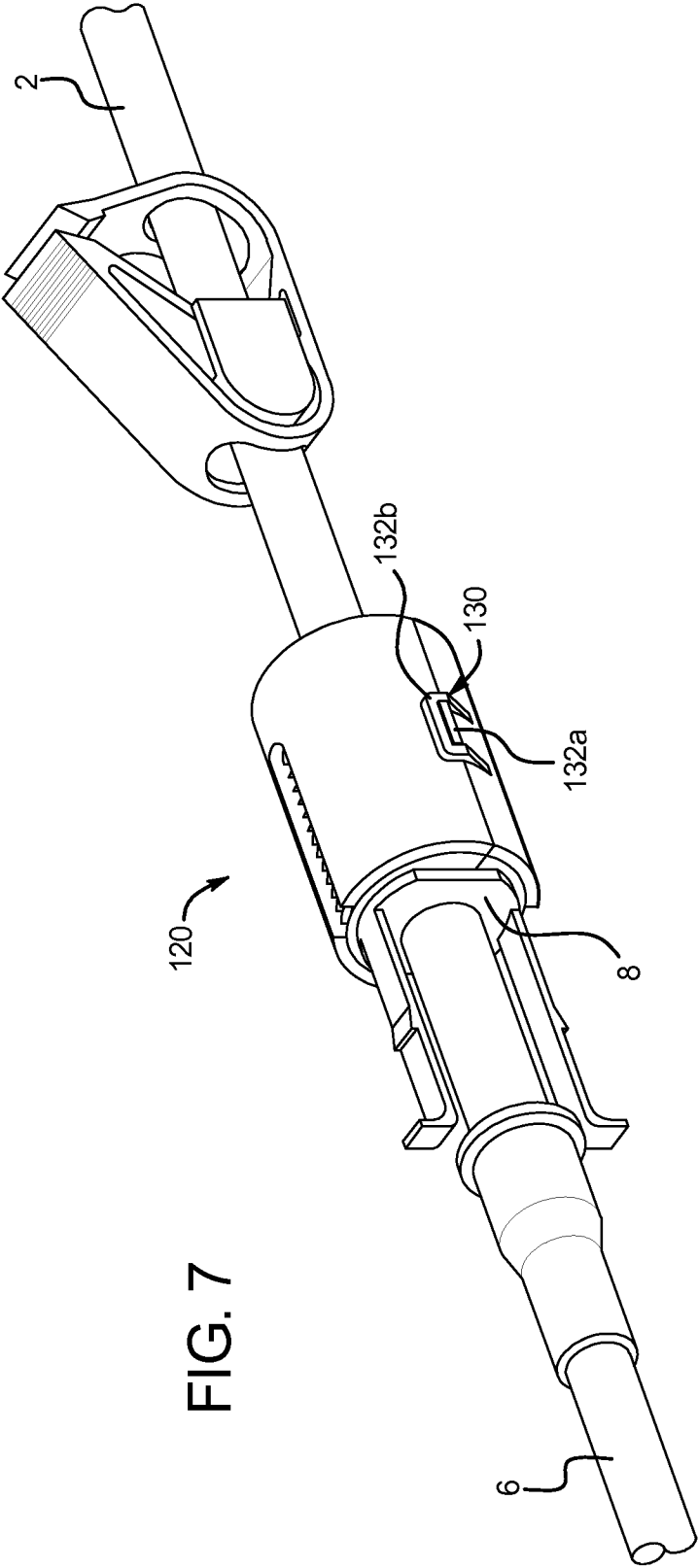
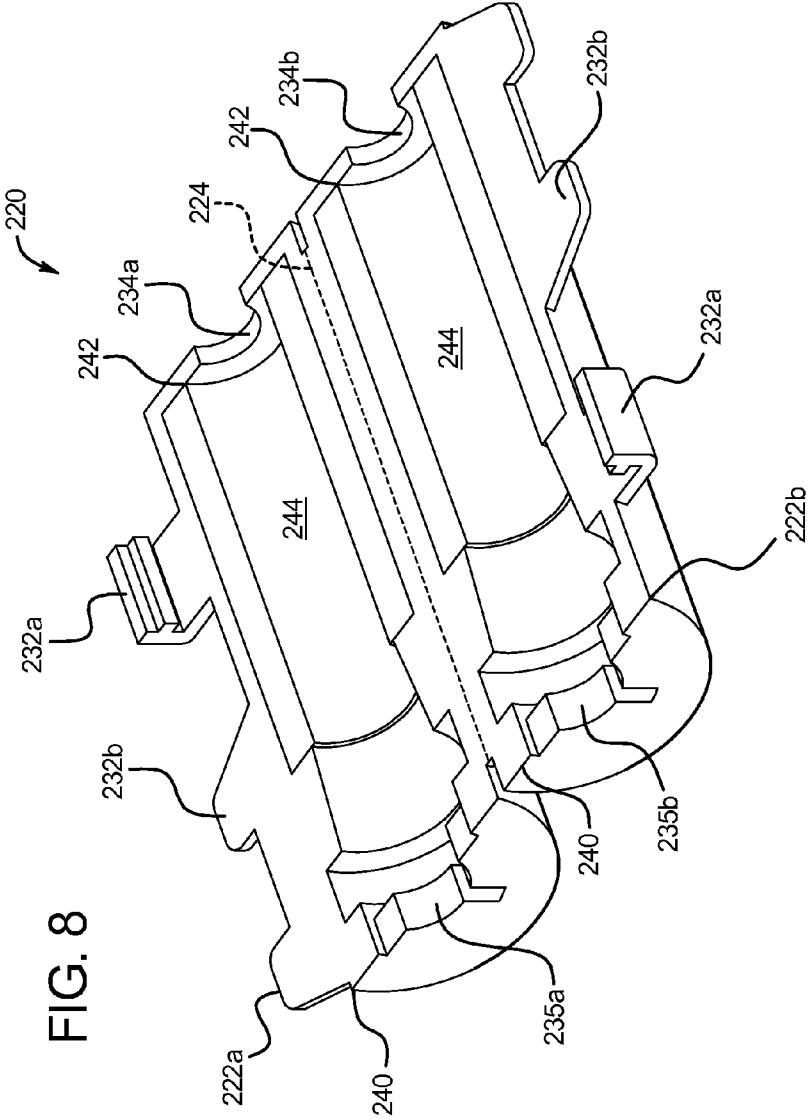


FIG. 7



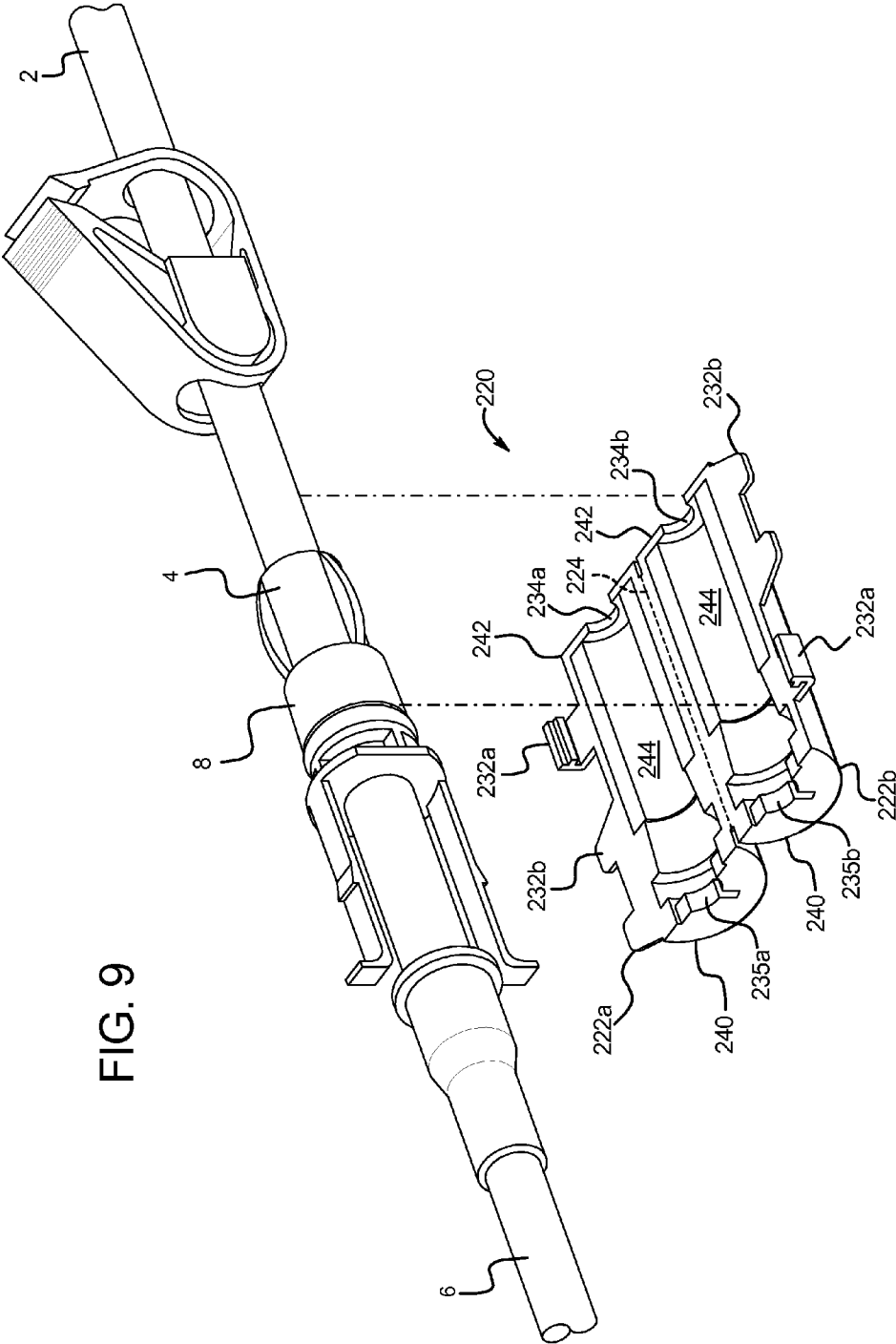


FIG. 9

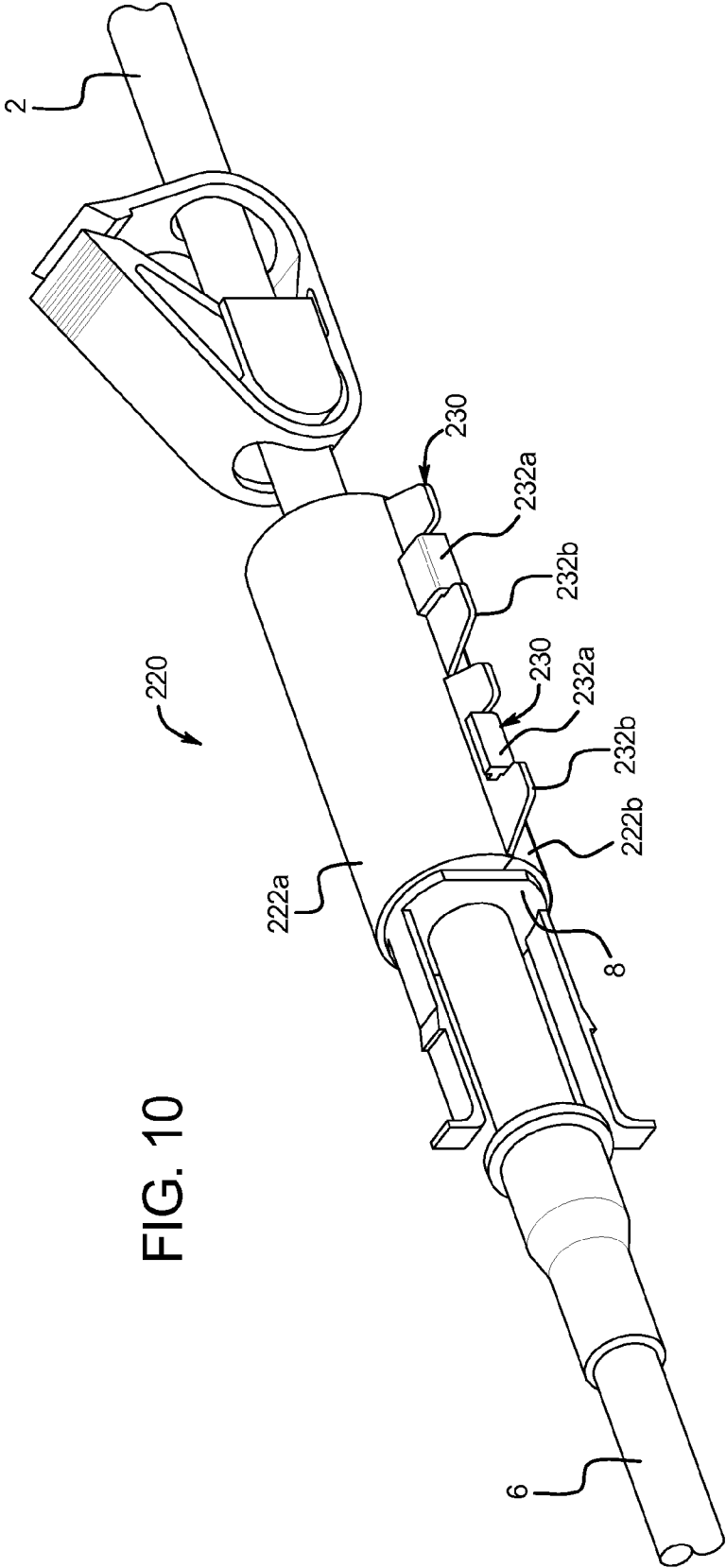


FIG. 10

CATHETER/FISTULA NEEDLE TO BLOODLINE CONNECTION ASSURANCE DEVICE

PRIORITY CLAIM

[0001] This application is a continuation of application Ser. No. 12/640,696, filed Dec. 17, 2009, which claims the benefit of application Ser. No. 61/139,325 filed Dec. 19, 2008, the entire contents of each of which are hereby incorporated by reference and relied upon.

BACKGROUND

[0002] The present disclosure relates to securing and strengthening a connection between an extension tube end of a catheter or fistula needle (device gaining access to a patient's vein) and a bloodline (running to a blood treatment machine).

[0003] Catheters and fistula needles used with a blood treatment machine typically have two connectors, one for attachment to a venous bloodline and the other for attachment to an arterial bloodline; the venous and arterial bloodlines attached then being to the blood treatment machine. While the catheter and fistula needle connectors can be provided in a variety of shapes and sizes, the connectors are typically female luer connector. The distal end (with respect to the blood treatment machine) of each of the venous and arterial bloodlines includes a bloodline connector having a male luer, which connects to respective catheter or fistula needle connectors, or female luer connectors.

[0004] A disconnection or failure of the connection of such bloodline connectors and catheter or fistula needle connectors while a patient is connected to a blood treatment machine for treatment can cause serious blood loss. A need therefore exists for a device that prevents the bloodlines from coming free from the catheter or fistula needle during treatment, for example, if tension is applied inadvertently to the bloodline.

[0005] The most commonly used method to date for securing a catheter or fistula needle to a bloodline for treatment is tape. Tape is wrapped around the connection and then secured to a patient's skin. However, many patients are irritated by the tape and will remove it from their skin, or will not even apply tape to the connection or their skin to begin with, placing them at risk of accidental disconnection. Accordingly, another need exists for the device is that it eliminates the need for tape.

[0006] As mentioned above, catheter and fistula needle connectors, while typically being female luer connectors, are provided in a variety of shapes and sizes by a variety of manufacturers. Thus, a further need also exists for the device to be compatible with the variety of industry catheter and fistula needle connectors.

SUMMARY

[0007] In general, multiple embodiments of a catheter fistula to bloodline connection assurance device ("assurance device"), which secures and strengthens a connection between an extension tube end of a catheter or fistula needle and a bloodline are provided herein. The assurance device secures both catheter and fistula needle types of patient access. For convenience, the present disclosure may only refer to one of either a catheter or fistula needle. It should be appreciated however that in such instances, the present disclosure refers to both a catheter and fistula needle unless specified otherwise.

[0008] A first primary embodiment of the assurance device is configured to be compatible with any industrial catheter/fistula needle female luer connector and is specifically configured for use with a bloodline connector having locking clips that are biased slightly outwardly from the bloodline connector.

[0009] The first embodiment of the assurance device is generally cylindrical and includes clamshell halves that open rotatably about at least one hinge. The first embodiment of the assurance device includes a barbed portion (the barbed end of the assurance device being the bloodline-to-machine end) and a luer housing portion (the luer end of the assurance device being the patient access end). Each of the barbed and luer portions includes a closing clip positioned at the open outer or non-hinged side of the respective clamshell halves. Each closing clip includes a male element and a female element, which lock together to hold the assurance device closed when closed about the mated bloodline and patient access luer connectors. A user opens the Assurance Device by manually disengaging the male elements from their respective female elements.

[0010] The catheter/fistula needle or patient access end of the first embodiment of the assurance device defines an opening that accommodates an extension tube of any suitable industrial catheter or fistula needle. The bloodline end of the assurance device is left open, such that in one implementation, there is no end wall or surface extending inwardly from the clamshell halves at the far bloodline end. The open end accommodates the bloodline connector locking clips.

[0011] Each of the assurance device embodiments is made of a suitable plastic, which does not need to be approved for contact with medical fluids. A more rigid polymer, such as polycarbonate may be desirable.

[0012] The first embodiment of the assurance device makes use of the locking clips on the bloodline connector. The interior wall of the barbed portion of the clamshell halves defines a plurality of barbs that are configured to engage with the distal or moveable ends of the locking clips. Each locking clip is biased slightly outwardly to fit between two respective barbs. The barbs are spaced as close together as possible to prevent any axial movement of the bloodline connector when the assurance device is engaged about the mated connectors.

[0013] The interior wall of the luer housing portion does not define barbs and instead has a diameter that is large enough to house any suitable industrial catheter/fistula needle female luer connector.

[0014] After a user connects the catheter or fistula needle to the bloodline, the user places the connected catheter connector and bloodline connector into the assurance device, which when closed, locks the barbs onto the slightly outwardly biased locking clips of the bloodline connector. The locking prevents axial movement of the bloodline connector relative to the Assurance Device.

[0015] Accordingly, in the first embodiment, a connection assurance device for securing a connection of a mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector can include a cylindrical housing defined by a first half rotatably connected to a second half, the cylindrical housing having a first portion, an inside wall of the first portion defining a plurality of barbs configured to engage with a distal end of a clip which is biased outwardly from the bloodline connector, to prevent axial movement of the bloodline connector relative to the connection assurance device when the cylindrical housing is engaged about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline

connector, and a second portion, the second portion configured to accommodate the patient-end connector; and at least one closing mechanism for releasably securing the first half of the cylindrical housing to the second half of the cylindrical housing.

[0016] The patient-end connector can be a connector of an extension tube of a device selected from the group consisting of: a catheter and a fistula needle. The at least one closing mechanism can include a clip having a male element and a female element. In an embodiment, when the cylindrical housing is engaged about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector, the distal end of the clip is engaged between two of the plurality of barbs. The two clips can be biased outwardly from the bloodline connector and engage with the plurality of barbs. In an embodiment, the patient end connector includes a female luer receiver and the bloodline connector includes a male luer. Further, luer portion can be configured to accommodate a plurality of shapes of patient-end connectors when the cylindrical housing is engaged about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector.

[0017] A second primary embodiment of the Assurance Device is also configured to be compatible with any suitable industrial catheter/fistula needle connector. The second embodiment includes internal and external clamshells. Internal clamshell halves (could be hinged) pressure seal to the bloodline connector, and form outwardly extending barbs.

[0018] The external clamshell opens rotatably about at least one hinge and includes inwardly facing threads that catch the outer barbs of the internal clamshell. The outer clamshell also defines a housing that accommodates any industrial catheter/fistula connector. The external clamshell includes a closing clip similar to the closing clip of the first embodiment of the assurance device.

[0019] The catheter/fistula needle end of the external clamshell defines an opening that accommodates an extension tube of any industrial catheter or fistula needle. The bloodline end of the external clamshell is left open, just as in the first embodiment of the assurance device to accommodate a desired bloodline connector. It should be appreciated however that the second embodiment does not require the bloodline connector to have the locking clips as does the first embodiment.

[0020] After a user connects the catheter or fistula needle to the bloodline, the user closes the internal clamshell about the bloodline connector. Then, the user closes the external clamshell about the internal clamshell, causing the inwardly facing barbs of the external clamshell to engage the outwardly facing barbs of the internal clamshell. Such engagement prevents axial movement of the bloodline connector (engaged by the internal clamshell halves) relative to the external clamshell.

[0021] Accordingly, in the second primary embodiment, a connection assurance device for securing a connection of a mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector can comprise an external cylindrical housing defined by a first half rotatably connected to a second half, an inner wall of the external cylindrical housing including a plurality of inwardly extending barbs; an internal cylindrical housing defined by a first half and a second half each configured to engage about the bloodline connector, an outer wall of the internal cylindrical housing including a plurality of outwardly extending threads configured to engage with the plurality of inwardly extending barbs of the external cylindrical housing when the external cylindrical housing is engaged about the internal

cylindrical housing; and at least one closing mechanism for releasably securing the first half of the external cylindrical housing to the second half of the external cylindrical housing.

[0022] The patient-end connector can be a connector of an extension tube of a device selected from the group consisting of: a catheter and a fistula needle. The at least one closing mechanism can include a clip having a male element and a female element. An inner wall of the internal cylindrical housing can define a cavity configured to engage an outwardly extending portion of the bloodline connector. In an embodiment, the patient end connector includes a female luer receiver and the bloodline connector includes a male luer. The connection assurance is again compatible with a plurality of shapes of patient-end connectors. In an embodiment, the first half of the internal cylindrical housing is rotatably connected to the second half of the internal cylindrical housing.

[0023] A third primary embodiment of the assurance device is also configured to be compatible with any suitable industrial catheter/fistula needle connector. The third embodiment of the assurance device includes a clamshell having two halves that open rotatably about at least one hinge. The assurance device includes a male luer portion that pressure seals to the male luer portion of the bloodline connector. The bloodline male luer portion of the device extends to a female luer portion, which is lined with a compressible material that conforms around any industrial catheter/fistula needle connector when the assurance device is closed about the mated connectors. The third embodiment of the assurance device includes closing clips similar to those in the first and second embodiments.

[0024] The catheter end of the third embodiment of the assurance device defines an opening that accommodates any industrial catheter or fistula female luer connector. The bloodline end defines an opening that accommodates the bloodline connector, which as with the second embodiment may or may not include locking clips.

[0025] After a user connects the catheter to the bloodline, the user positions the male luer portion of the third embodiment of the assurance device into engagement with the male luer of the bloodline connector. Once the assurance device is closed, this prevents axial movement of the bloodline connector relative to the assurance device. The female luer is accordingly positioned along the compressible material in the female luer portion of the third embodiment of the assurance device, causing the compressible material to conform about the female luer when the assurance device is closed about the mated connectors, and preventing both axial and rotational movement of the female luer connector relative to the assurance device.

[0026] Accordingly, the third primary embodiment of the connection assurance device for securing a connection of a mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector can include a cylindrical housing defined by a first half rotatably connected to a second half, the cylindrical housing having: a first portion defined by the cylindrical housing, the first portion configured to engage the bloodline connector when the cylindrical housing is engaged about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector, and a second portion defined by the cylindrical housing, the second portion including a compressible material extending inward from an inner wall of the lower portion, the compressible material configured to conform about the patient-end connector when the cylindrical housing is engaged about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector; and at least one closing

mechanism for releasably securing the first half of the cylindrical housing to the second half of the cylindrical housing.

[0027] The patient-end connector can be a connector of an extension tube of a device selected from the group consisting of: a catheter and a fistula needle. The at least one closing mechanism can include a clip having a male element and a female element. The compressible material can be a sponge-like material, and memory foam or be configured to absorb a fluid. An inner wall of the first portion can define a cavity configured to engage an outwardly extending portion of the bloodline connector. The second portion can be configured to accommodate a plurality of shapes of patient-end connectors when the cylindrical housing is engaged about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector.

[0028] It is accordingly an advantage of the present disclosure to secure a machine tube to a patient access tube to increase safety during an extracorporeal treatment, which may be performed at home.

[0029] Additional features and advantages are described herein, and will be apparent from the following Detailed Description and the figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0030] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a distal end (with respect to a blood treatment machine) of a bloodline having a bloodline connector including a male luer, and the extension tubes of a catheter or fistula needle, each of the extension tubes including a female luer connector.

[0031] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of the assurance device.

[0032] FIG. 3 is an exploded perspective view of the first embodiment of the assurance device in relation to a mated bloodline connector and catheter or fistula needle connector.

[0033] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the first embodiment of the assurance device in a closed position about a mated bloodline connector and catheter or fistula needle connector.

[0034] FIG. 5 is an exploded perspective view of a second embodiment of the assurance device.

[0035] FIG. 6 is an exploded perspective view of the second embodiment of the assurance device in relation to a mated bloodline connector and catheter or fistula needle connector.

[0036] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the second embodiment of the assurance device in a closed position about a mated bloodline connector and catheter or fistula needle connector.

[0037] FIG. 8 is an exploded perspective view of a third embodiment of the assurance device.

[0038] FIG. 9 is an exploded perspective view of the third embodiment of the assurance device in relation to a mated bloodline connector and catheter or fistula needle connector.

[0039] FIG. 10 is a perspective view of the third embodiment of the assurance device in a closed position about a mated bloodline connector and catheter or fistula needle connector.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0040] Referring now to the drawings and in particular to FIG. 1, each embodiment of the assurance device discussed herein secures and strengthens a connection between an extension tube end of a catheter or fistula needle (device gaining access to a patient's vein) and a bloodline (running to a blood treatment machine). FIG. 1 shows an example of a catheter 2 having two connectors 4, one for attachment to a

venous bloodline and the other for attachment to an arterial bloodline. While the connectors 4 may be provided in a variety of shapes and sizes, each of connectors 4 is a female luer connector in one preferred embodiment.

[0041] FIG. 1 also illustrates an example of a distal end (with respect to blood treatment machine) of a bloodline 6 and a bloodline connector 8, which connects to catheter connector 4, or female luer connector. The bloodline connector 8 accordingly includes a male luer 10 housed in an internally threaded cavity that engages with the female luer receiver 12 of the catheter connector 4. The bloodline connector 8 in FIG. 1 includes two spring-like locking clips 14 that extend externally from the bloodline connector 8. The locking clips 14 attach the distal end of the bloodline 6 to the machine (not shown) in certain instances, such as for priming and rinse-back.

[0042] Referring now to FIGS. 2 to 4, a first primary embodiment of the assurance device is illustrated by device 20, which is compatible with any industrial suitable catheter/fistula needle female luer connector and is specifically configured for use with the bloodline connector 8 having spring-like locking clips 14 shown in FIG. 1, or a similar bloodline connector.

[0043] Referring to FIGS. 2 to 4, assurance device 20 is at least substantially cylindrical and includes clamshell halves 22a and 22b that open rotatably about hinges 24a and 24b. It should be appreciated that in various embodiments, the assurance device 20 may include a single hinge or multiple hinges. Halves 22a and 22b of the assurance device 20 may alternatively be free from each other.

[0044] Assurance device 20 includes a barbed portion 26 and a luer housing portion 28. Each of barbed portion 26 and luer portion 28 includes a closing clip 30 (FIG. 4) positioned at the open outer or non-hinged side of the clamshell halves 22a and 22b. Each closing clip 30 includes a male element 32a and a female element 32b, which lock together to hold the assurance device 20 closed when the device is closed about the mated luer connectors 4 and 8. A user opens the assurance device 20 by manually disengaging the male elements 32a from their respective female elements 32b.

[0045] It should be appreciated that in various embodiments, the assurance device 20 may include a single closing clip 30 or other desirable number of closing clips. Closing clip alternatively or additionally includes snap-fitting elements assurance devices could be held together using a loop and pile (Velcro) tape releasable fastener.

[0046] The catheter end of the assurance device 20 defines an opening formed from opening portions 34a and 34b defined by respective the clamshell halves 22a and 22b. The opening 34a/34b accommodates any industrial suitable catheter or fistula needle extension tube, such as those of catheter 2 in FIG. 1. The bloodline end of the Assurance Device 20 is left open to accommodate the bloodline connector 8, as seen in FIG. 4.

[0047] As seen best in FIGS. 3 and 4, the first embodiment of the assurance device 20 makes use of the spring-like locking clips 14 of bloodline connector 8. The interior wall of the barbed portion of the clamshell halves 22a and 22b defines a plurality of barbs 36 that are configured to engage with the distal or moveable ends 16 of the locking clips 14. Each spring-like locking clip 14 is biased slightly outwardly to cause the distal or moveable ends 16 to fit between two respective barbs 36. The barbs 36 are spaced as close together

as possible to prevent any axial movement of the bloodline connector **8** when the assurance device **20** is engaged about the mated connectors **4** and **8**.

[0048] The interior wall **38** of the luer housing portion **28** does not define barbs and has a diameter that is large enough to house any suitable industrial catheter/fistula needle connector, such as connector **4** illustrated in FIG. **1**.

[0049] As seen in FIGS. **3** and **4**, after a user connects the catheter or fistula needle **2** to the bloodline **6**, the user places the connected catheter connector **4** and bloodline connector **8** into the assurance device **20**, which when closed, locks barbs **36** onto the moveable ends **16** of the slightly outwardly biased locking clips **14** of the bloodline connector **8**.

[0050] Referring now to FIGS. **5** to **7**, a second primary embodiment of the assurance device is illustrated by assurance device **120**, which is configured to be compatible with any suitable industrial catheter/fistula needle connector and is specifically configured for use with the bloodline connector **8** or a similar bloodline connector.

[0051] Assurance device **120** includes internal and external clamshells. Internal clamshell halves **123a** and **123b** pressure seal to bloodline connector **8** and form outwardly extending barbs **137**. In an alternative embodiment, internal clamshell halves **123a** and **123b** are hinged together and hingedly close about bloodline connector **8**.

[0052] External clamshell halves **122a** and **122b** rotatably open about hinge **124** and include inwardly facing threads **136** that catch or lock onto outer barbs **137** of the inner clamshell halves **123a** and **123b**. The outer clamshell halves **122a** and **122b** also define a housing that accommodates any suitable industrial catheter/fistula connector.

[0053] Assurance device **120** includes a closing clip **130** (FIG. **7**) positioned at the open outer or non-hinged side of the external clamshell halves **122a** and **122b**. Closing clip **130** includes a male element **132a** and a female element **132b**, which lock together to hold the assurance device **120** closed when closed about the mated luer connectors **4** and **8**. A user opens the assurance device **120** by manually disengaging the male element **132a** from the respective female element **132b**. Any alternatives discussed above for locking clip **30** is also applicable to closing clip **130**.

[0054] The catheter end of the external clamshell defines an opening formed of opening portions **134a** and **134b** defined by respective clamshell halves **122a** and **122b**. Opening **134a/134b** accommodates tube extending off of any suitable industrial catheter or fistula needle, such as those of catheter **2** in FIG. **1**. The bloodline end of the external clamshell is left open to accommodate the bloodline connector **8**, as seen in FIGS. **6** and **7**.

[0055] Referring to FIGS. **6** and **7**, after a user connects the catheter or fistula needle **2** to the bloodline **6**, the user pressure fits the internal clamshell halves **123a** and **123b** about the bloodline connector **8**. Then, the user closes the external clamshell halves **122a** and **122b** about the internal clamshell halves **123a** and **123b**, causing the inwardly facing barbs **136** of the external clamshell halves **122a** and **122b** to engage the outwardly facing barbs **137** extending from the internal clamshell halves **123a** and **123b**.

[0056] Referring now to FIGS. **8** to **10**, a third primary embodiment of the assurance device is illustrated by assurance device **220**, which is compatible with any suitable industrial catheter/fistula needle connector and is specifically configured for use with the bloodline connector **8** or a similar bloodline connector. It should be noted that blood line con-

nectors **8** may, but do not have to, include spring-line clips **14** discussed above for either assurance device **120** or **220**.

[0057] As best illustrated in FIG. **8**, assurance device **220** includes a clamshell having two halves **222a** and **222b** that open rotatably about hinge **224**. It should be appreciated that although FIGS. **8** and **9** illustrate the clamshell halves **222a** and **222b** having one hinge **224**, the clamshell halves **222a** and **222b** may be attached by a single hinge or other desired number of hinges or may be separate pieces.

[0058] Assurance device **220** includes a male luer portion **240** that pressure seals to bloodline connector **8**. Male luer portion **240** extends to a female luer housing portion **242**, which is lined with a compressible material **244** that conforms around any suitable industrial catheter/fistula needle connector when the assurance device **220** is closed about the mated connectors. Material **244** is in one embodiment a rubber, sponge rubber, or memory foam having a relatively high coefficient of friction. Silicone or neoprene may be suitable materials. Material **244** is adhered to female luer portion **242** in one embodiment. Material **244**, if sponge-like, also provides the added benefit of absorbing fluid or blood in the event of luer disconnection. Frictional material **244** also prevents rotation of the catheter/fistula needle female luer connector **4** within device **220** and relative to the bloodline connector **8**.

[0059] Each of the male luer portion **240** and female luer portion **242** includes a closing clip **230** positioned at the open outer or non-hinged side of the clamshell halves **222a** and **222b**. Each closing clip **230** includes a male element **232a** and a female element **232b**, which lock together to hold the assurance device **220** closed when closed about the mated luer connectors **4** and **8**. A user opens the assurance device **220** by manually disengaging the male elements **232a** from their respective female elements **232b**. Closing clip **230** includes any of the alternative embodiments discussed above for clip **30**.

[0060] The catheter end of the clamshell defines an opening formed from opening portions **234a** and **234b** located on respective clamshell halves **222a** and **222b**. Opening **234a/234b** accommodates a tube exiting from any suitable industrial catheter or fistula needle, such as those of catheter **2** in FIG. **1**. The bloodline end of the assurance device **220** defines an opening formed from opening portions **235a** and **235b** located on respective clamshell halves **222a** and **222b**. Opening **235a/235b** accommodates bloodline connector **8**.

[0061] As seen in FIGS. **9** and **10**, after a user connects the catheter to the bloodline, the user positions the upper portion of the assurance device **220** in engagement with the bloodline connector **8**. The female luer connector **4** is accordingly positioned along the compressible material in the female luer portion **238** of the assurance device **220**, which causes compressible material **244** to squeeze to and conform about the female luer connector **4** when the assurance device **220** is closed about the mated connectors **4** and **8**. Again, device **200** is advantageous in one respect because it confines female luer connector **4** movement both axially and rotationally.

[0062] It should be understood that various changes and modifications to the presently preferred embodiments described herein will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Such changes and modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present subject matter and without diminishing its intended advantages. It is therefore intended that such changes and modifications be covered by the appended claims.

The invention is claimed as follows:

1. A method for securing a blood tubing connection comprising:

connecting a patient-end connector to a bloodline connector;
placing a housing about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector such that

- (i) a first portion of the housing engages a feature of the bloodline connector, preventing axial movement of the bloodline connector relative to the housing, and
- (ii) a second portion of the housing accommodates the patient-end connector; and

releasably securing the housing about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector.

2. The method of claim **1**, wherein the patient-end connector is connected to a catheter or a fistula needle, while the bloodline connector is connected to an arterial or venous bloodline.

3. The method of claim **1**, which includes interlocking a male element to a female element of the housing to releasably secure the housing.

4. The method of claim **1**, which includes biasing the bloodline connector feature to engage the first portion of the housing.

5. The method of claim **1**, which includes projecting the first portion of the housing inwardly to engage the feature of the bloodline connector.

6. The method of claim **1**, which includes hingedly placing the housing about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector.

7. The method of claim **1**, which includes sizing the second portion of the housing to accommodate differently shaped patient-end connectors.

8. A method for securing a blood tubing connection comprising:

enabling a user to connect a patient-end connector to a bloodline connector;

enabling a housing to be placed about the mated patient-end connector and bloodline connector, such that

- (i) a first portion of the housing engages a feature of one of the patient-end connector or the bloodline connector, preventing axial movement of the mated connectors relative to the housing, and
- (ii) a second portion of the housing accommodates the other of the patient-end connector or the bloodline connector; and

releasably securing the housing about the mated patient-end connector and the bloodline connector.

9. The method of claim **8**, which includes providing two housings to secure both arterial and bloodline connectors.

10. The method of claim **8**, which includes enabling the housing to be reused at least one time.

11. The method of claim **8**, which includes biasing the feature to engage the first portion.

12. The method of claim **8**, which includes providing the first portion of the housing with a plurality of inwardly directed projections to engage the feature.

13. The method of claim **8**, which includes preventing rotational movement of the patient-end connector with respect to the bloodline connector by releasably securing the housing about the mated connectors.

14. The method of claim **8**, which includes preventing axial movement of the patient-end connector with respect to the bloodline connector by releasably securing the housing about the mated connectors.

15. A method for securing a blood tubing connection comprising:

enabling a patient-end connector to be connected to a patient;

enabling a bloodline to be placed in operable communication with a dialysis machine, the bloodline including a bloodline connector;

enabling the patient-end connector to be mated with the bloodline connector; and

providing a housing that is placed about the mated patient-end connector and the bloodline connector, the housing preventing (i) radial movement of the patient-end connector relative to the bloodline connector and (ii) axial movement of the patient-end connector relative to the bloodline connector.

16. The method of claim **15**, which includes enabling the patient-end connector to be threaded to the bloodline connector.

17. The method of claim **15**, which includes enabling the housing to be hingedly closed about the mated connectors.

18. The method of claim **15**, which includes biasing one of the mated connectors against the housing to aid with (i) and (ii).

19. The method of claim **15**, which includes interlocking the housing with one of the mated connectors to aid with (i) and (ii).

20. The method of claim **15**, which includes interlocking the housing with the bloodline connector while enclosing the patient-end connector so as to accommodate different sized and shaped patient connectors.

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