

CLAIMS

1. Apparatus, comprising:

an implantable annuloplasty structure comprising:

a primary body portion; and

5 a contracting member having (1) a first portion extending along a longitudinal length of the primary body portion of the annuloplasty structure, and (2) a second portion extending away from the primary portion of the annuloplasty structure;

at least one fastener configured to surround the contracting member, the fastener comprising a clamping structure that:

10 (a) is biased toward assuming a closed state, in the closed state, the clamping structure is configured to clamp onto the contracting member passed therethrough, and

(b) can be flexed to an open state through which the contracting member can move;

15 a stop removably coupled to the fastener and configured to maintain the fastener in the open state; and

a severing tool comprising:

a static cutting element having a first cutting surface; and

20 a dynamic cutting element having a second cutting surface that opposes the first cutting surface; and

one or more graspers configured to pull the stop proximally and remove the stop from the fastener, wherein:

a portion of the contracting member passes through the static cutting element and through the dynamic cutting element, and

25 once pulled proximally, the stop contacts the cutting element and is configured to push against and move the dynamic cutting element with respect to the static cutting element in order to facilitate severing of the contracting member.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first and second cutting surfaces are
30 each concave.

3. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first and second cutting surfaces are each diagonal.

4. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the severing tool is arranged such that the severing tool provides a safety mechanism whereby movement of the dynamic cutting element with respect to the static cutting element is possible only with pushing of the stop against the dynamic cutting element.

5. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a housing that houses the fastener and the stop, and wherein the severing tool is coupled to the housing as the graspers grasp the stop.

6. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the severing tool is configured to deliver the housing, the fastener, and the stop to the implantable annuloplasty structure.

7. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the implantable annuloplasty structure comprises the housing.

8. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the stop is shaped so as to define an overhang, and wherein the graspers are configured to grip the overhang in order to initially couple the severing tool to the fastener.

9. The apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising an outer sleeve portion configured to surround the graspers in order to lock the graspers with respect to the overhang.

10. Apparatus for use with a wire, the apparatus comprising:
a fastener configured to receive the wire therethrough such that the fastener surrounds the wire, the fastener comprising a clamping structure that:

(a) is biased toward assuming a closed state, in the closed state, the clamping structure is configured to clamp onto the wire passed therethrough, and

(b) can be flexed to an open state through which the wire can move;

a stop removably coupled to the fastener and configured to maintain the fastener in the open state; and

a severing tool comprising:

a cutting element configured to cut the wire; and

one or more graspers configured to engage the stop and to pull the stop proximally and remove the stop from the fastener such that:

the fastener transitions toward the closed state, and

the stop pushes against and moves the cutting element in a manner that severs

the wire.

11. The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the severing tool is arranged such that the severing tool provides a safety mechanism whereby movement of the cutting element is possible only with pushing of the stop against the cutting element.

12. The apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising a housing that houses the fastener and the stop, and wherein the severing tool is coupled to the housing as the graspers grasp the stop.

13. The apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising an implantable annuloplasty structure, wherein the severing tool is configured to deliver the housing, the fastener, and the stop to the implantable annuloplasty structure.

14. The apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising an implantable annuloplasty structure, wherein the implantable annuloplasty structure comprises the housing.

15. The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the stop is shaped so as to define an overhang, and wherein the graspers are configured to grip the overhang in order to initially couple the severing tool to the fastener.

16. The apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising an outer sleeve portion configured to surround the graspers in order to lock the graspers with respect to the overhang.

17. A system, comprising:

an implant comprising a contracting member;

at least one contracting-member-fastener configured to surround the contracting member, the contracting-member-fastener comprising a clamping structure that (a) is biased toward assuming a closed state, in the closed state, the clamping structure is configured to

clamp onto the contracting member passed therethrough, and (b) can be flexed to an open state through which the contracting member can move;

a stop removably coupled to the contracting-member-fastener and configured to maintain the contracting-member-fastener in the open state; and

5 a severing tool comprising a cutting element configured to cut the contracting member;

wherein when pulled proximally, the stop contacts the cutting element and is configured to push against and move the cutting element in order to facilitate severing of the contracting member by the cutting element.

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18. The system according to claim 17, wherein the severing tool is arranged such that the severing tool provides a safety mechanism whereby movement of the cutting element is possible only with pushing of the stop against the cutting element.

15 19. The system according to claim 17, further comprising a housing that houses the fastener and the stop, and wherein the severing tool is coupleable to the housing.

20. The system according to claim 19, wherein the implant is an implantable annuloplasty structure, and wherein the severing tool is configured to deliver the housing, the fastener,

20 and the stop to the implantable annuloplasty structure.