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(71) Applicant *(for all designated States except US)*: **SUTURTEK INCORPORATED** [US/US]; 51 Middlesex Street, North Chelmsford, MA 01863 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants *(for US only)*: **MEADE, John, C.** [US/US]; 85 Millville Road, Mendon, MA 01756 (US). **MACARTHUR, Douglas, M.** [US/US]; 18 Olde Surrey Drive, Acton, MA 01720 (US). **BLINN, Stephen, M.** [US/US]; 14 Upham Road, Amherst, NH 03031 (US). **SAULINER, Christopher** [US/US]; 12 B Street, Brunswick, ME 04011 (US). **EDWARDS, Brian, R.** [US/US]; 85 Mill Street, Raymond, ME 04071 (US). **BRECHER, Gerald, I.** [US/US]; 488 Pleasant Street, North Andover, MA 01845 (US).

(74) Agent: **POLLACK, Brian, R.**; EDWARDS ANGELL PALMER & DODGE LLP, P.o.box 55874, Boston, MA 02205 (US).

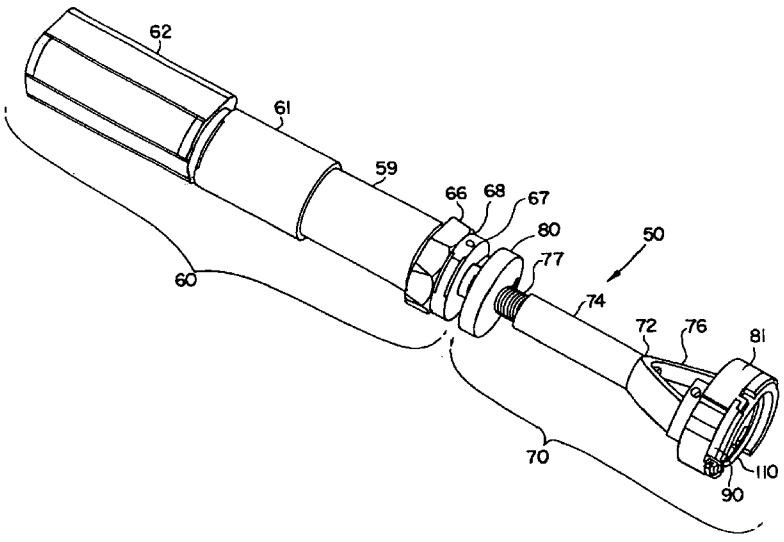
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(54) **Title:** APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR TISSUE CLOSURE




(57) **Abstract:** A tissue closure device includes a pusher assembly having a drive arm extending from a drive shaft and a drive mechanism at a distal end of the drive arm, wherein the drive mechanism is capable of releasably engaging and rotating a suturing needle having a pointed end and a blunt end about a rotational axis and a cartridge having a protective housing and the suturing needle, the cartridge extending from a distal end of a cartridge holder assembly and releasably attached to the cartridge holder assembly. A pointed end of the suturing needle may be positioned within the protective housing before and after a complete rotation of the suturing needle about the rotational axis. A removable electronic module may be provided controlled by an actuator that mechanically engages the drive shaft to rotate the drive shaft and the drive mechanism, thereby rotating the suturing needle about the rotational axis.

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