

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
24 November 2022 (24.11.2022)



(10) International Publication Number
WO 2022/245774 A2

(51) International Patent Classification:

A61M 25/06 (2006.01) A61M 25/00 (2006.01)
A61M 39/02 (2006.01) A61M 25/09 (2006.01)
A61M 39/06 (2006.01) A61B 17/34 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/US2022/029561

(22) International Filing Date:

17 May 2022 (17.05.2022)

(25) Filing Language:

English

(26) Publication Language:

English

(30) Priority Data:

63/189,549 17 May 2021 (17.05.2021) US

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BN, BR, BW, BY, BZ,
CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DJ, DK, DM, DO,
DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN,
HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IQ, IR, IS, IT, JM, JO, JP, KE, KG, KH,
KN, KP, KR, KW, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LU, LY, MA,
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NO, NZ, OM, PA, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU,
RW, SA, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM,
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, WS, ZA, ZM,
ZW.

(54) Title: RAPIDLY INSERTABLE CENTRAL CATHETERS, CATHETER INSERTION ASSEMBLIES, AND METHODS

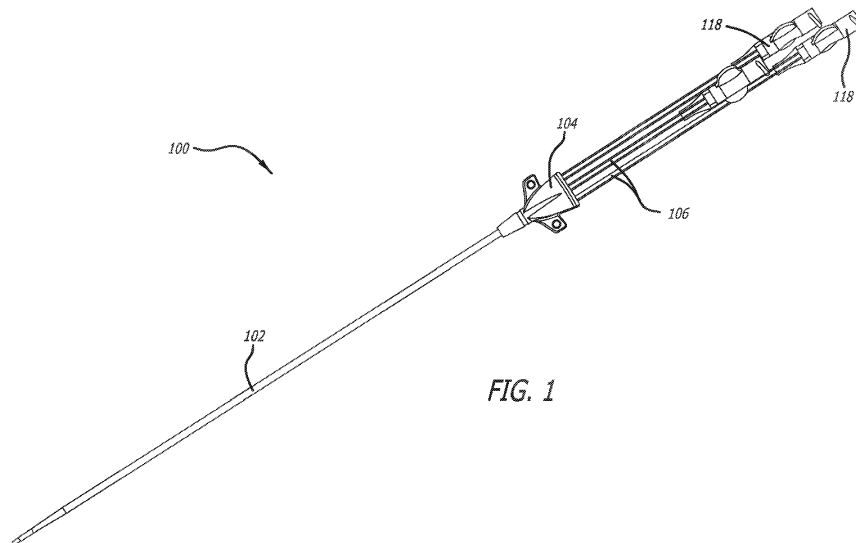


FIG. 1

(57) **Abstract:** Rapidly insertable central catheters ("RICCs"), RICC insertion assemblies, and methods are disclosed. For example, a RICC insertion assembly can include a RICC, an introducer, and an access guidewire. An introducer needle can include a needle shaft having a longitudinal gap extending from a proximal portion of the needle shaft through a needle tip. An introducer sheath can include a splittable sheath hub coupled to a splittable sheath body. The introducer sheath can be disposed over the introducer needle with the sheath body sealing the needle shaft for drawing a vacuum through the introducer needle. The access guidewire can extend along an entirety of a primary lumen of the RICC, through a splittable valved port of the sheath hub, along a sheath body-covered needle channel of the needle shaft, and to a location in the introducer proximal of the needle tip in a ready-to-operate state of the RICC insertion assembly.

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(84) Designated States (*unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available*): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, RW, SD, SL, ST, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, RU, TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, KM, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Declarations under Rule 4.17:

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Published:

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