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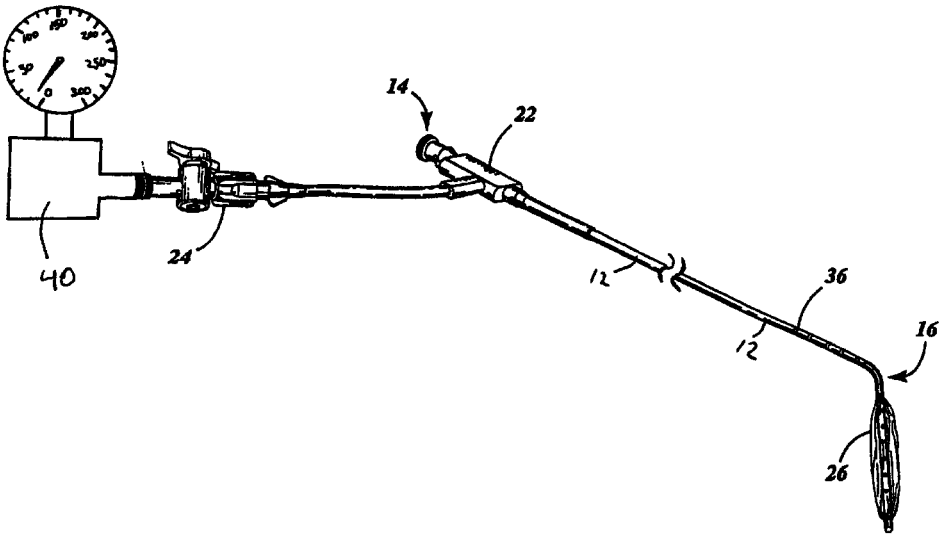
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(54) Title: SIZING CATHETER FOR MEASURING CARDIOVASCULAR STRUCTURES



(57) Abstract: A sizing catheter (10) and method of measuring a preselected internal opening within a patient to provide a rapid and precise determination of first and second stretched diameters of the preselected internal opening. The sizing catheter (10) includes a dilation balloon (26) constructed of a thin expandable plastic, which is inflatable and is utilized to determine a size of the preselected opening. The dilation balloon (26) is affixed to the tubular shaft (12) proximate the distal end (16) of the tubular shaft (12). The dilation balloon (26) is inflated to an inflation threshold wherein the dilation balloon (26) deforms about the preselected opening and the size of the dilation balloon (26) adjacent the preselected opening approximates the first stretched diameter of the preselected opening. The sizing catheter (10) and method may be utilized to determine an appropriate sized device to be positioned within the preselected opening.

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