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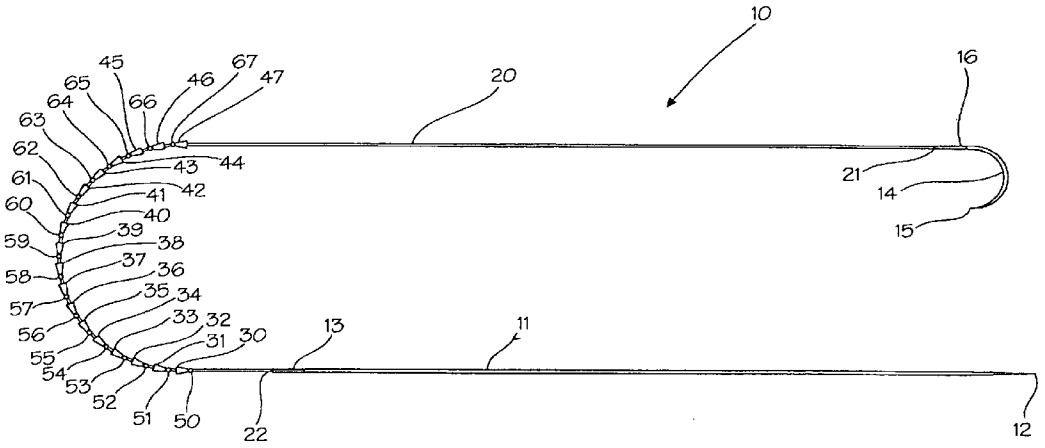
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(54) **Title:** SUTURE FOR WOUND CLOSURE, TISSUE APPROXIMATION, TISSUE SUPPORT, SUSPENSION AND/ OR FIXATION



(57) **Abstract:** A suture assembly includes an elongated flexible body which may be either a single filament for a multiple strand braided or woven body, supporting a plurality of shaped tissue- engaging elements in a generally spaced arrangement thereon. A curved body having a sharp point is joined to one end of the flexible body while a straight pointed body is joined to the remaining end of the flexible body. In alternate embodiments, the tissue-engaging elements define a variety of cross-section shapes. In a further alternate embodiment, the tissue-engaging elements are divided into first and second oppositely facing sets to provide a bidirectional suture. In a still further alternate embodiment, the elongated flexible body supports an elongated tissue- bonding sleeve.

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