rod **2, 3000** and the support rod **6, 3201** are arranged together within the sleeve **3, 3100** the cutting blade **13, 3001** of the cutting rod **2, 3000** is protruding through the slit **31, 3110** of the sleeve **3, 3100**. In the context of various embodiments, the term "cutting device" may be interchangeably referred to as "cutter device", and the term "cutting rod" may be interchangeably referred to as "cutter rod".

[0069] To use the above cutting device, a small transverse skin incision is made in the proximity of the affected area in which it is intended to cut the pulley **130**. Prior to the insertion of the first end of the sleeve **3, 3100** of the cutting device **100** into the incision, the cutter rod **2, 3000** should be in the fully inserted position within the sleeve **3, 3100**. As long as the support rod **6, 3201** is not fully inserted into the sleeve the cutting blade **13, 3001** will not protrude through the slit **31, 3110** of the sleeve **3, 3100**.

[0070] Under the guidance of an ultrasound machine, the sleeve **3, 3100**, with the cutter rod **2, 3000** fully inserted, is inserted between the pulley **130** and the tendon **140** (see **Figure 29**). In doing so, the pulley **130** will be stretched taut. This will facilitate the slitting of the pulley **130** thus releasing the trigger finger. When in position, the support rod **6, 3201** is inserted fully into the sleeve **3, 3100**. This will force the cutting blade **13, 3001** to protrude and pierce through the pulley **130**. The cutter rod **2, 3000** is then pulled backward to longitudinally slit the pulley **130**. This step may be repeated if the desired release is not achieved in the first cut. When the desired release has been achieved, the support rod **6, 3201** is withdrawn to allow the blade **13, 3001** on the cutter rod **2, 3000** to be retracted and the cutting device **100** is withdrawn as a whole. This will prevent any unnecessary damage to the surrounding tissues, such as the digital artery, a nerve and the underlying tendon. The above device cannot only be used for cutting the pulley to release a trigger finger but can also be used for cutting of other tissue layers.

[0071] **Figure 1 and 2** illustrate an embodiment of a cutting device **100** of the present invention. In this embodiment, the circular shaped sleeve **3100** of the cutting device 100 is connected to a positioning member **3004**. The sleeve **3100** can be connected to the positioning member **3004** in any known manner. For example, the sleeve **3100** can be welded to the positioning member **3004** or can be removably inserted into the positioning member **3004**, for example by a push-fit mechanism.

[0072] The positioning member **3004** can have any shape which allows the operating personnel to easily hold and move the connected sleeve **3100** during its insertion into the affected area. In the embodiment illustrated in **Figures 1 and 2** the positioning member **3004** has a T-shape wherein the sleeve **3100** is connected to the horizontal bar of the T-shaped positioning member **3004**. The positioning member **3004** comprises a through-hole at the

CLAIMS

1. A cutting device for cutting tissue comprising:
   - a sleeve having a first end and a second end, the sleeve comprises a slit extending from a position at the first end of the sleeve and wherein the first end of the sleeve is shaped to allow insertion of the sleeve between two tissue layers;
   - a cutting rod carrying a cutting blade at a first end, the cutting rod being insertable into the sleeve through the second end of the sleeve and being movable within the sleeve; wherein the cutting rod is positioned within the sleeve so that the cutting blade can protrude through the slit of the sleeve; and
   - a support rod, the support rod being insertable into the sleeve through the second end of the sleeve and being movable within the sleeve;

   wherein the cutting rod and the support rod fit together into the sleeve; and wherein when the cutting rod and the support rod are arranged together within the sleeve the cutting blade of the cutting rod is protruding through the slit of the sleeve.

2. The cutting device of claim 1, wherein the cutting rod and the support rod are independently of each other movable within the sleeve and insertable in the sleeve.

3. The cutting device according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the cutting rod and the support rod fill out the entire space of the sleeve when fully inserted into the sleeve during use.

4. The cutting device of claim 3, wherein the shape of the cutting rod and the shape of the support rod is the same ~~or different from each other~~.

5. The cutting device of claim 3, wherein the shape of the cutting rod and the shape of the support rod is different from each other.

~~5.~~6. The cutting device of claim 4 or 5, wherein the sleeve is round.

~~6.~~7. The cutting device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the cutting rod and the support rod have a semicircular shape.

~~7.~~8. The cutting device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the first end of the sleeve comprises a tip with a tapered shape.

~~8.~~9. The cutting device of claim ~~7~~8, wherein the first end of the sleeve comprises a tip beveled along a vertical axis.

~~9.~~10. The cutting device of any one of the preceding claims, further comprising a housing comprising a first end and a second end and being connected to the sleeve via the first end;

wherein the housing comprises a movable cutter holder and a movable support rod holder;

wherein the cutter holder supports the cutting rod and the support rod holder supports the support rod;

wherein the cutter holder and the support rod holder are movable independently from each other during use; and

wherein a movement of the cutter holder within the housing allows moving the cuttinger rod within the sleeve and a movement of the support rod holder allows moving the support rod within and out of the sleeve during use.

~~10.~~11. The cutting device of claim ~~9~~10, wherein the first end of the first housing is closed with a front cap which is connected to the sleeve and the second end is closed with an end cap.

~~11.~~12. The cutting device of claim ~~10~~11, wherein the cutter holder and the support rod holder are movably supported by a guiding member and wherein the guiding member is comprised in the housing.

~~12.~~13. The cutting device of any one of claims ~~9~~10 to ~~11~~12, further comprising a tensible member positioned between the first end of the first housing and the cutter holder such that a movement of the cutter holder towards the first end of the first housing cocks the tensible member and positions the cutter holder in a cocked position.

~~13.~~14. The cutting device of claim ~~12~~13, further comprising at least one side guide mounted at a side of the housing and comprising an engaging region located near the first end of the housing; wherein a protrusion located at at least one side of the cutter holder engages the engaging region of the at least one side guide through an opening of the housing to keep the cutter holder in the cocked position when the tensible member is cocked during use.

~~14.~~15. The cutting device of claim ~~13~~ 14 comprising two side guides, wherein the two side guides are positioned at opposing sides of the housing.

~~15.~~16. The cutting device of claim ~~13~~ 14 or ~~14~~15, wherein the cutter holder further comprises at least one slit separating the cutter holder into a central core region and a side member;

wherein the central core region supports the cutting rod and provides a contact region for the tensible member;

wherein the side member comprises the protrusion which engages the engaging region of the at least one side guide to keep the cutter holder in the cocked position when the tensible member is cocked during use; and

wherein the side member is movable towards the central core region from which it is separated by the slit upon exerting pressure on the side member; wherein a movement of the side member of the cutter holder towards the central core region allows to uncock the cutter holder from its cocked position by disengaging the connection between the protrusion and the side guide.

~~16.~~17. The cutting device of claim ~~15~~16, wherein the cutter holder comprises two slits separating a section of the cutter holder into a central core region and two side members which are located at opposing sides of the cutter holder.

~~17.~~18. The cutting device of any one of claims ~~9~~10 to ~~16~~17, wherein the second end of the housing comprises a first opening for inserting a control rod into the device, wherein the first opening is positioned to allow the control rod to engage the cutter holder and to move the cutter holder towards the first end of the housing when inserted into the device.

~~18.~~19. The cutting device of any one of claims ~~9~~10 to ~~17~~18, wherein the second end comprises a second opening for inserting a retrieval rod into the device or for inserting a control rod into the device,

wherein the second opening is positioned to allow a retrieval rod to engage the support rod holder and to move the support rod holder towards the second end of the housing when inserted into the device and thus moving the support rod supported by the support rod holder out of the sleeve; or

wherein the second opening is positioned to allow the control rod to move the support rod holder towards the first end of the housing and thus moving the support rod supported by the support rod holder into the sleeve.

~~19.~~20. The cutting device of any one of claims 1 to ~~8~~9, wherein the cutting device further comprises a support rod guiding member connected to the support rod and comprising a through hole extending from one end of the support rod guiding member to the other end.

~~20.~~21. The cutting device of claim ~~1~~920, wherein the cutting rod is adapted to fit through the through hole of the support rod guiding member.

~~21.~~22. The cutting device of any one of claims 1 to ~~8~~9 and ~~19~~20 to ~~20~~21, wherein the sleeve is connected to a positioning member adapted to allow positioning of the sleeve at a specific position in a tissue of a subject.

~~22. A control rod for use in a device of any one of claims 1 to 18, the control rod having a first end and a second end, wherein the control rod comprises a first section and a second section, wherein the first and the second section have different diameters; wherein the diameter of the first section located at the first end of the rod is smaller than the diameter of the second section following the first section.~~

~~23. The control rod of claim 22, wherein the control rod further comprises a handle located at the second end of the control rod.~~

~~24. The control rod of claim 22 or 23, wherein the diameter of the first section is adapted to be insertable through the first opening of the second end of the housing of the cutting device and the diameter of the second section is adapted to be larger than the diameter of the first opening of the second end of the housing of the cutting device.~~

~~25. The control rod of any one of claims 22 to 24, wherein the diameter of the second section is adapted to be insertable through the second opening of the second end of the housing of the cutting device.~~

~~26. A retrieval rod for use in a device of any one of claims 1 to 18, the retrieval rod having a first end and a second end, wherein the retrieval rod comprises an engaging member at the first end of the retrieval rod for engaging the support rod holder.~~

~~27. The retrieval rod of claim 26, wherein the retrieval rod further comprises a handle located at the second end of the control rod.~~

~~28. The retrieval rod of claim 26 or 27, wherein the engaging member has a thread.~~

~~28. A support rod guiding member for use in a device of any one of claims 1 and 19 to 21, the support rod comprising a through hole extending from one end of the support rod guiding member to the other end.~~

~~29.~~23. A system for cutting tissue comprising:

- a cutting device of any one of claims 1 to ~~18~~17;
- a control rod ~~of any one of claims 22 to 25~~ having a first end and a second end, the control rod comprising a first section of a first diameter located at said first end and a second section of a second diameter located at said second end, the second diameter greater than the first diameter; and
- a retrieval rod ~~of any one of claims 26 to 28~~ having a first end and a second end, wherein the retrieval rod comprises an engaging member at the first end of the retrieval rod for engaging the support rod holder of the cutting device.

~~30.~~24. The system for cutting tissue of claim ~~30~~ 23 further comprising an ultrasound device.