

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

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



G00002



(43) International Publication Date
15 August 2002 (15.08.2002)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/062235 A3

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **A61B 17/17**,
A61F 2/46

(21) International Application Number: PCT/US02/00010

(22) International Filing Date: 3 January 2002 (03.01.2002)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
09/756,492 8 January 2001 (08.01.2001) US

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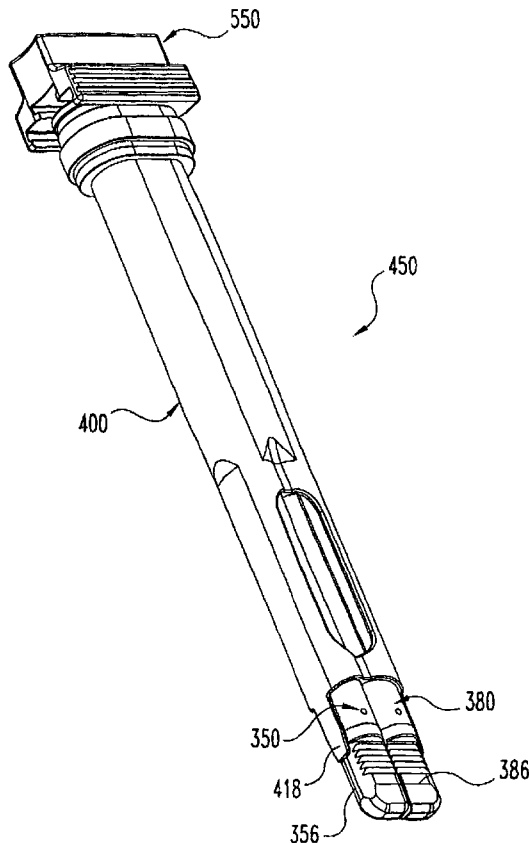
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(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

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(54) Title: METHODS AND INSTRUMENTATION FOR VERTEBRAL INTERBODY FUSION



(57) Abstract: Methods and instrumentation particularly adapted for disc space preparation for insertion of implants from an anterior approach to the spine are provided. The instruments include a guide sleeve (400) defining a channel (430) having overlapping cylindrical working channel portions (407, 409) and lateral non-distracting extensions (418, 420) extending from reduced thickness wall portions (414, 415). The guide sleeve (400) has an overall reduced width configuration. A pair of distractors (356, 386) are provided. A first distractor (350) includes a shaft (354) and distal tip (356), each having convex walls. A second distractor (380) includes a shaft (384) and distal tip (386) including a recessed area (394) at least along the tip (386). The first distractor (350) is at least partially received within the recessed area (394) of the second distractor (380) when the first and second distractors (350, 380) are in side-by-side relation and a reduced overall width of the distractors (350, 380) is obtained. Preferably, the first and second distractors (350, 380) are used with the guide sleeve (400). Methods using the disclosed instruments are also provided.



162162

WO 02/062235 A3

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WO 02/062235 A3



(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

(88) Date of publication of the international search report:
16 January 2003

(15) Information about Correction:

Previous Correction:

see PCT Gazette No. 44/2002 of 31 October 2002, Section II

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

Published:

— with international search report