THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Apparatus for forming a linear channel in soft tissue for implantation of an aggregate of living cells or a soft tissue fragment comprising or consisting of an oblong rigid pin having a front end and a rear end and a layer comprising or consisting of dry gel forming agent disposed on a pin section extending from the front end in a distal direction and enclosing said section, wherein said layer contains less than 20 % by weight of water, wherein the pin is sufficiently rigid to allow it to be inserted into nervous tissue in absence of its layer comprising or consisting of dry gel forming agent; wherein the pin comprises a passage extending between its front end and its rear end, wherein the passage is rectangular, rhomboid or trapezoid or about rectangular, rhomboid or trapezoid in a transverse section.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the soft tissue is nervous tissue; and/or wherein the soft tissue fragment is a fragment of embryonic tissue; and/or wherein said layer contains less than 10 % by weight of water; or wherein said layer contains less than 5 % by weight of water.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein a radial width of the passage at a given axial position is greater by a factor of two or three or five or more than the radial width perpendicular to it.

4. The apparatus of any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the pin, in a transverse section, is cylindrical, elliptic, rectangular, rhomboid or trapezoid or about cylindrical, elliptic, rectangular, rhomboid or trapezoid.

5. The apparatus of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the pin is of metal or comprises metal or is of polymer material.

6. The apparatus of any one of claims 1 to 5, comprising one or more means selected from electrode means, optical fiber means, and sensor means.

7. The apparatus of any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the axially extending passage is plugged at its distal opening by a plug which is dissolvable or degradable in aqueous body fluid.

8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the plug consists of or comprises a gel forming agent.

9. The apparatus of any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the agent capable of forming a gel in contact with aqueous body fluid comprises one or more agents selected from the group consisting of gel-forming protein, carbohydrate, and glycoprotein.

10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the protein is a biocompatible gel forming agent.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the biocompatible gel forming agent is selected from the group consisting of gelatin, hyaluronic acid, chemically modified gelatin, recombinant gelatin, chemically modified hyaluronic acid, recombinant hyaluronic acid, and salts thereof.

12. The apparatus of any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein the layer comprises a pharmacologically active agent.

13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the pharmacologically active agent is selected from the group consisting of coagulant, anticoagulant, antibiotic, osmotic pressure adjusting agent, anti-inflammatory agent, nutrient, factor stimulating growth, factor stimulating cell differentiation, hormone, and immunosuppressive agent.