

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

PCT

To:

see form PCT/ISA/220

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY
(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) see form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet)

Applicant's or agent's file reference
see form PCT/ISA/220

FOR FURTHER ACTION
See paragraph 2 below

International application No.
PCT/EP2007/055775

International filing date (day/month/year)
12.06.2007

Priority date (day/month/year)
13.06.2006

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC
INV. A61C8/00

Applicant
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1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- Box No. II Priority
- Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. **FURTHER ACTION**

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will usually be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

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Date of completion of
this opinion

see form
PCT/ISA/210

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Box No. I Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
 - the international application in the language in which it was filed
 - a translation of the international application into , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1 (b)).
2. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
 - a. type of material:
 - a sequence listing
 - table(s) related to the sequence listing
 - b. format of material:
 - on paper
 - in electronic form
 - c. time of filing/furnishing:
 - contained in the international application as filed.
 - filed together with the international application in electronic form.
 - furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3. In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
4. Additional comments:

Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability

The questions whether the claimed invention appears to be novel, to involve an inventive step (to be non obvious), or to be industrially applicable have not been examined in respect of

- the entire international application
- claims Nos. 1-26

because:

- the said international application, or the said claims Nos. relate to the following subject matter which does not require an international search (*specify*):
- the description, claims or drawings (*indicate particular elements below*) or said claims Nos. 1-26 are so unclear that no meaningful opinion could be formed (*specify*):

see separate sheet

- the claims, or said claims Nos. are so inadequately supported by the description that no meaningful opinion could be formed (*specify*):
- no international search report has been established for the whole application or for said claims Nos.
- a meaningful opinion could not be formed without the sequence listing; the applicant did not, within the prescribed time limit:
 - furnish a sequence listing on paper complying with the standard provided for in Annex C of the Administrative Instructions, and such listing was not available to the International Searching Authority in a form and manner acceptable to it.
 - furnish a sequence listing in electronic form complying with the standard provided for in Annex C of the Administrative Instructions, and such listing was not available to the International Searching Authority in a form and manner acceptable to it.
 - pay the required late furnishing fee for the furnishing of a sequence listing in response to an invitation under Rules 13ter.1(a) or (b).
- a meaningful opinion could not be formed without the tables related to the sequence listings; the applicant did not, within the prescribed time limit, furnish such tables in electronic form complying with the technical requirements provided for in Annex C-bis of the Administrative Instructions, and such tables were not available to the International Searching Authority in a form and manner acceptable to it.
- the tables related to the nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing, if in electronic form only, do not comply with the technical requirements provided for in Annex C-bis of the Administrative Instructions.
- See Supplemental Box for further details

Re Item III.

The application as a whole lacks clarity in the sense of Article 6 PCT because of some inconsistencies the claims and the description as well as some unclear wording in the claims:

III.1. The wording "said threads are symmetrical with respect to a plane through which said long axis extends" defines a mirror symmetry relative to "a" plane containing the axis of the implant. Such a mirror symmetry would imply that for each right thread formed on the outer surface of the implant, a symmetrical left thread is also present. However, the detailed embodiments of the invention illustrated in the description of the present application do not present such left and right threads.

Therefore, the wording of the independent claims appears incorrect and improper.

In the whole description, the only type symmetry of the threads mentioned concerns the specific embodiment having four threads (see p. 23, point 1): this embodiment presents "a double symmetry on two right-angled axes positioned on a plane perpendicular to the axis of the screw".

However, it is clear, e.g. from page 24, point 8, that the applicant also intend to claim implants having two threads only. The kind of symmetry these two threads should have is not clear.

These inconsistencies between the claims and the description are to such an extent that no opinion can be formulated with regard to the compliance with Article 33(2) and (3) PCT.