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(54) FLEXIBLE HEART VALVE LEAFLETS

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- (*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.
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Related U.S. Application Data

- (63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 09/332,759, filed on Jun. 14, 1999.
- (60) Provisional application No. 60/117,445, filed on Jan. 26, 1999.
- (51) Int. Cl.⁷ A61F 2/06; A61F 9/00
- (52) U.S. Cl. 623/2.13; 623/212; 623/904

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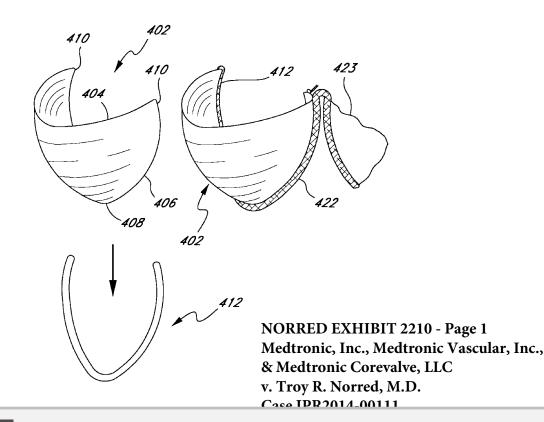
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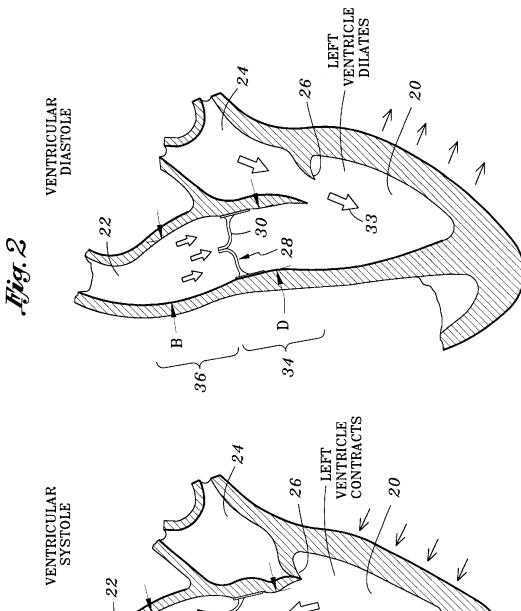
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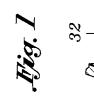
ABSTRACT

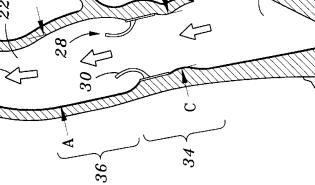
A heart valve with a structural stent and radially moveable cusps and commissures. The stent may be of three separate elements, each having a cusp portion and two commissure portions. The commissures may be pivotally or flexibly coupled, and may separate into independent leaflets. A connecting band may be provided that follows the cusps and commissures and extend outwardly. The valve may be connected to the natural tissue along the undulating connecting band. A multi-legged holder having legs alternating between each cusp and commissure may be used for implantation. A method of implantation is also disclosed, as is a system for implanting independent valve leaflets in the native annulus.

25 Claims, 18 Drawing Sheets

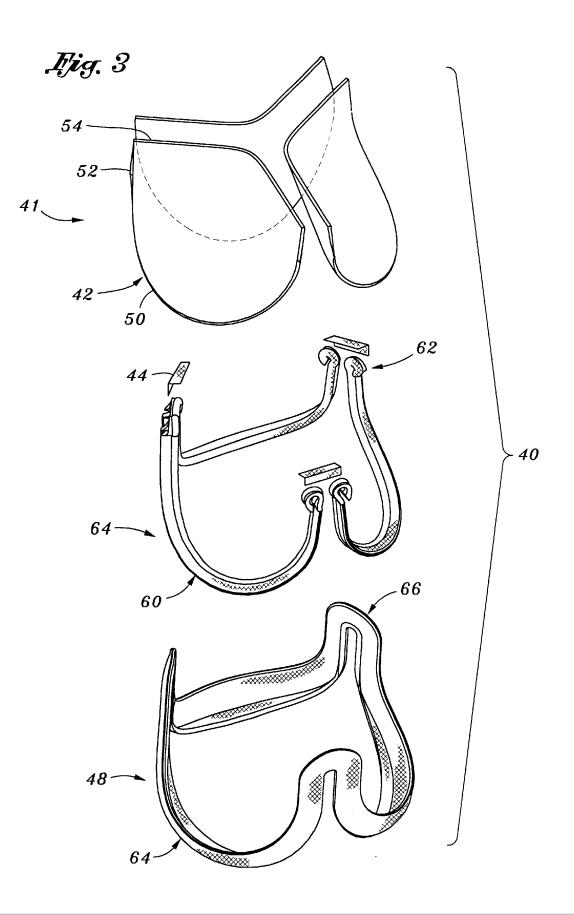


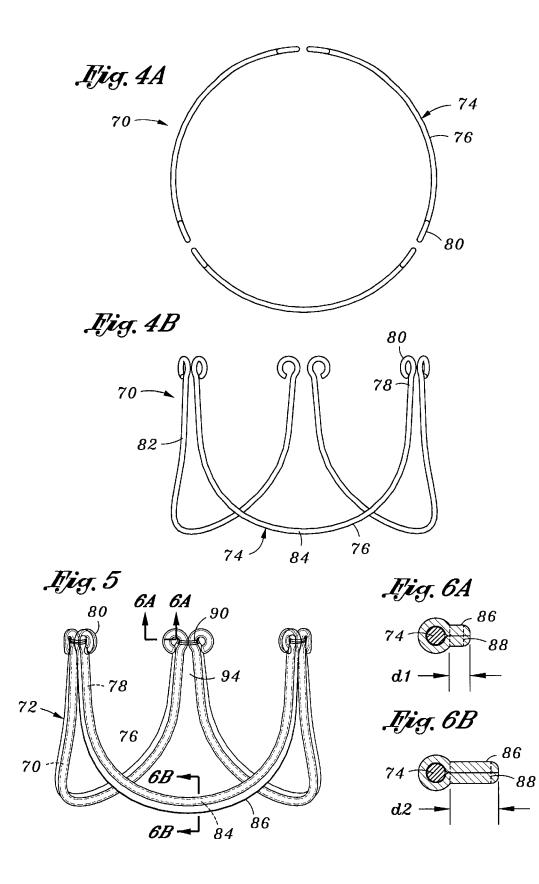




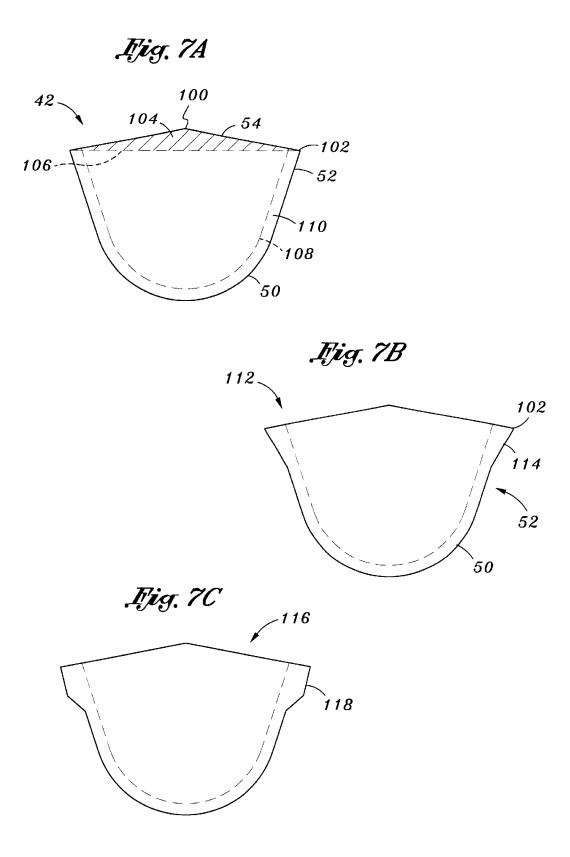


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