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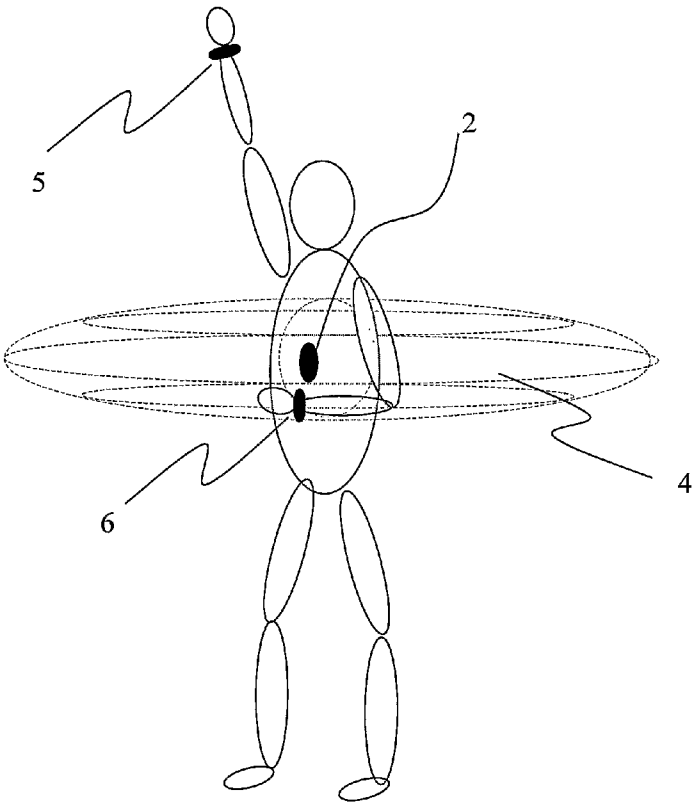
(54) Title: A SYSTEM FOR MEASURING BLOOD PRESSURE IN AN ARTERY



(57) Abstract: A sensor system for measuring the blood pressure in such a way that the sensing position is in a correct position relative to the heart is devised. The system consists of a wireless sensing device, a transceiver, and a computing and recording device. The sensor reading is recorded wirelessly. The sensor is placed at a convenient location on the body. The coupling antennas are designed in such a way that the antenna characteristics ensures that only when the sensors is within a predetermined position relative to the heart will a recording of the blood pressure actually take place.

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Published:

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— *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments*

A SYSTEM FOR MEASURING BLOOD PRESSURE IN AN ARTERY

FIELD OF INVENTION

The present invention relates to a system for non-interfering blood pressure measurements. In particular, the invention relates to systems for validating the recording of the blood pressure in relation to the position of the sensor relative to the heart.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

Blood pressure can be measured in a number of ways: by use of an invasive pressure sensor, an oscillometric sensor, an auscultatory sensor and a tonometric sensor. These methods will inevitably affect the state of the patient. It has been reported that a considerable number of measurements performed at the office of a medical doctor or at a hospital are affected by the general circumstances and may be quite erroneous compared to what would have been measured if the patient had not been affected by the medical environment.

US 6,558,335 discloses a sensor that is mounted on the wrist of a person/patient in order to make blood pressure measurements less complicated and less dependent on having the patient in a fixed well defined position.

A system for passive pressure sensing with an implantable device is described in US 6,855,115. Another description of a wireless pressure sensor in system for measuring the pressure in a tube is given in US 7,059,196.

However, the measured blood pressure at the wrist of a patient will depend on the position of the wrist in relation to the heart, in particular on the elevation of the sensor relative to the heart and the transceiver.

None of the systems disclosed in the above mentioned documents include validation schemes that relates to the position of the sensor relative to the transceiver.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention a system for measuring blood pressure in an artery by wireless reading of a sensor is provided, the system comprising: a sensor having a sensor antenna, the sensor being mounted in close proximity to an artery and emitting

a sensor signal in response to the blood pressure in the artery, and wherein the sensor antenna allows for wireless reading of the sensor signal, and a transceiver having a transceiver antenna and being adapted to wirelessly read the sensor signal from a position close to the heart of the patient. The antenna properties of the sensor antenna and the transceiver antenna may be designed so that a reading of the sensor signal can only be performed when the sensor is within a predetermined space relative to the transceiver.

The system according to the invention is a sensor system for measuring the blood pressure with a minimum of interference to the patient. The system consists of a sensing device in the form of a sensor, a transceiver, and a computing and recording device. The sensor is typically placed at the wrist. Preferably the sensor is an extra corporal sensor. The transceiver can wirelessly read the state of the sensor.

Typically, the transceiver is attached to the patient, e.g. by a strap around the waist or the chest and thus, the position of the transceiver in relation to the heart may be well defined. In an embodiment, the transceiver may be incorporated in a bandage and fastened to the skin close to the heart.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the sensor antenna is designed to have a direction independent gain and the transceiver antenna is designed to have a directional gain which provides for a large sensitivity when the sensor is within a predetermined space relative to the transceiver and a small sensitivity when the sensor is positioned outside this space.

The wireless coupling between the sensor and the transceiver may be an inductive coupling, a capacitive coupling and/or an electromagnetic coupling. The transceiver may be adapted for handling more than one coupling scheme, e.g. an inductive coupling and an electromagnetic coupling.

In an embodiment of the present invention, the wireless reading of the sensor signal is based on inductive coupling between the sensor and the transceiver. A transceiver coil of the transceiver antenna may be shaped so that the desired antenna characteristic is attained. The transceiver may be adapted such that the transceiver coil may have a loop shape with the largest dimension substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the patient. The loop shape may be expressed as an ellipse or a higher order ellipse. The transceiver may comprise one or more coils, such as two, three, four, or more

coils. The antenna characteristic of the transceiver antenna may have a cross section substantially forming an ellipse or a higher order ellipse.

Inductive coupling can be exploited by using two coils, e.g. a first coil in the sensor and a second coil in the transceiver. Let us assume that one coil, e.g. the second coil, is powered by an oscillating current. The other coil, e.g. the first coil, is then defined as the passive coil that receives energy from the power coil. In order to obtain a signal from the passive coil the coupling efficiency has to exceed a certain value, which depends on the amplitude and frequency of the current in the power coil, on the modulation effect associated with the passive coil, and on the noise properties of the electronic circuitry.

A necessary requirement for inductive coupling is that the spacing between the coils in the sensor and the transceiver is much smaller than the wavelength of the electromagnetic radiation emitted by the power coil and that the magnetic field lines of the power coil have a component that is perpendicular to the plane of the passive coil. The best coupling is obtained if the two coupling coils are of the same diameter and placed right on top of each other. Let the planes defined by the two coils be parallel. If the passive coil is moved in various directions we may obtain a sensitivity diagram similar to the radiation pattern of a dipole antenna as illustrated in Fig. 3. The specific shape of the pattern may be tailored by shaping the coils, e.g. by having an elliptic shape the acceptance angle may be larger in the horizontal plane than in the vertical plane.

If the distance between the sensor and the transceiver is larger than the wavelength the coupling is based on electromagnetic interaction like in radio antennas. Accordingly, the wireless reading of the sensor signal may be based on electromagnetic waves.

In an embodiment of the present invention, the sensor antenna is omni directional. The transceiver antenna may be selected from the group consisting of a dipole; a modified dipole; a synthesized antenna based on materials with special electromagnetic properties like a ceramic material and/or a meta material; a synthesized antenna comprising one or more resonators; and an antenna array comprising phase delays to obtain the desired directional properties.

The resonators may be split-ring resonators. The meta material may be formed as a set or an array of split-ring resonators.

If the transceiver has a simple dipole antenna with an antenna length smaller than the wavelength a toroidal radiation pattern is observed. This is also is called the Gain of the antenna. The axis of the toroid centers about the dipole. The cross section of the torus is circular. If the length of the dipole is increased a flattened pattern may be observed. This is desirable for the present application.

More sophisticated antenna designs may be incorporated as can be found in standard literature on antenna design (see for example Johnson, Richard C (Ed) "Antenna Engineering Handbook (3rd Edition)", 1993 McGraw-Hill, Chapter 4 section 2 and 8). High dielectric materials may be incorporated in order to reduce the physical size of the antennas, because a high dielectric constant will reduce the effective wavelength at the antenna. Novel materials like meta materials may be applied to obtain an even further reduction in size. Meta materials, which incorporates structures that can be in the form of locally conducting resonators allows for arbitrary designs for the permittivity and the permeability including negative values at specific frequencies.

The transceiver may be designed so as primarily to be sensitive, i.e. read the sensor signal, in a horizontal plane.

In an embodiment of the present invention, the transceiver may discard measurements if the coupling between the sensor and the transceiver is not sufficient, e.g. below a certain threshold value, indicating that the sensor is outside of the predetermined space. Thus, the transceiver may be adapted to detect presence/absence of the sensor in the predetermined space and record measurements accordingly. The measured values of the blood pressure may be adjusted in accordance with the position of the transceiver and/or the depending on the position of the patient, e.g. whether the patient is lying down or standing up.

In an embodiment of the invention, a desirable gain pattern of the transceiver is that of a torus with a cross-section of a super ellipse.

The vertical position of the sensor in relation to the heart is of importance to the accuracy of the blood pressure measurement. In an embodiment, the predetermined space covers a height range of from 15 cm below to 15 cm above the heart of the patient. Other height ranges may lead to a satisfying result. The radius of the predetermined space may range from 0 to about 1 m, preferably from about 5 cm to about 50 cm.

The wireless reading of the sensor signal may in an embodiment be based on ultrasound.

The coupling antennas may be designed in such a way that the antenna characteristics ensures that only when the sensor(s) is/are in a position within a predetermined space relative to the heart will a recording of the blood pressure actually take place.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will now be described in further detail with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Fig. 1 shows an embodiment of the system according to the invention,

Fig. 2 illustrates operation of the transceiver and sensors within and outside a measurement space,

Fig. 3 illustrates the gain pattern of a dipole, and

Fig. 4 illustrates a part of a cross section of a gain pattern of a dipole.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Fig. 1 shows an embodiment of the system according to the invention. The system comprises a sensor 1 having a sensor antenna, the sensor being adapted to be mounted in close proximity to an artery on the wrist of the patient. The sensor emits a sensor signal via the sensor antenna in response to the blood pressure in the artery, and the sensor antenna in the sensor allows for wireless reading of the sensor signal. Further, the system comprises a transceiver 2 that is placed on the surface of the patient in close proximity to the heart. The transceiver 2 has a transceiver antenna and is adapted to wirelessly read the sensor signal from a position close to the heart of the patient. The antenna properties of the sensor antenna and the transceiver antenna are designed so that a reading of the sensor signal can only be performed when the sensor is within a predetermined space relative to the transceiver.

The sensor antenna has an omnidirectional gain pattern and the transceiver antenna used for reading the state of the sensor, i.e. the sensor signal, has a gain pattern implying that no signal is obtained if the sensor is not positioned within the desired, predetermined space around the transceiver, e.g. if the elevation of the sensor is very different from the elevation of the transceiver as illustrated in Fig. 2

Fig. 2 illustrates the predetermined space 4 where the transceiver 2 reads the sensor signal from the sensor. The sensor 5 is positioned outside the space 4 and the sensor 6 is positioned inside the space, i.e. the sensor 5 is not read by the transceiver 2 and the sensor 6 may be read by the transceiver 2. Thus, the number of defective measurements from the sensor 1, 5, 6 is reduced, since the transceiver 2 does not read the sensor signal when the sensor is in a position that leads to defective measurements.

Fig. 3 shows the gain pattern of a dipole. The gain pattern of the dipole forms a torus, which can be flattened or altered by modifying the dipole. Fig. 4 shows the cross section of one ring of the torus of an antenna gain pattern. The cross section of the torus may be elliptic.

CLAIMS

1. A system for measuring blood pressure in an artery by wireless reading of a sensor comprising:

a sensor having a sensor antenna, the sensor being mounted in close proximity to an artery and emitting a sensor signal in response to the blood pressure in the artery, and wherein the sensor antenna allows for wireless reading of the sensor signal, and

a transceiver having a transceiver antenna and being adapted to wirelessly read the sensor signal from a position close to the heart of the patient,

wherein antenna properties of the sensor antenna and the transceiver antenna are designed so that a reading of the sensor signal can only be performed when the sensor is within a predetermined space relative to the transceiver.

2. A system according to claim 1, wherein the sensor antenna is designed to have a direction independent gain and the transceiver antenna is designed to have a directional gain which provides for a large sensitivity when the sensor is within a predetermined space relative to the transceiver and a small sensitivity when the sensor is outside this space.

3. A system according to any of the claims 1-2, wherein the wireless reading of the sensor signal is based on inductive coupling between the sensor and the transceiver.

4. A system according to claim 3, wherein a transceiver coil of the transceiver antenna is shaped so that the desired antenna characteristic is attained.

5. A system according to claim 4, wherein the transceiver coil has a loop shape with the largest dimension substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the patient.

6. A system according to claim 5, wherein the antenna characteristic has a cross section substantially forming an ellipse or a higher order ellipse.

7. A system according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the wireless reading of the sensor signal is based on electromagnetic waves.

8. A system according to claim 7, wherein the sensor antenna is omni directional, and the transceiver antenna is selected from the group consisting of a dipole; a modified dipole; a synthesized antenna based on materials with special electromagnetic

properties like a ceramic material and/or a meta material; a synthesized antenna comprising one or more split-ring resonators; and an antenna array comprising phase delays to obtain the desired directional properties.

9. A system according to any of the claims 1-2, wherein the wireless reading of the sensor signal is based on ultrasound and the transceiver is designed so as primarily to be sensitive in a horizontal plane.

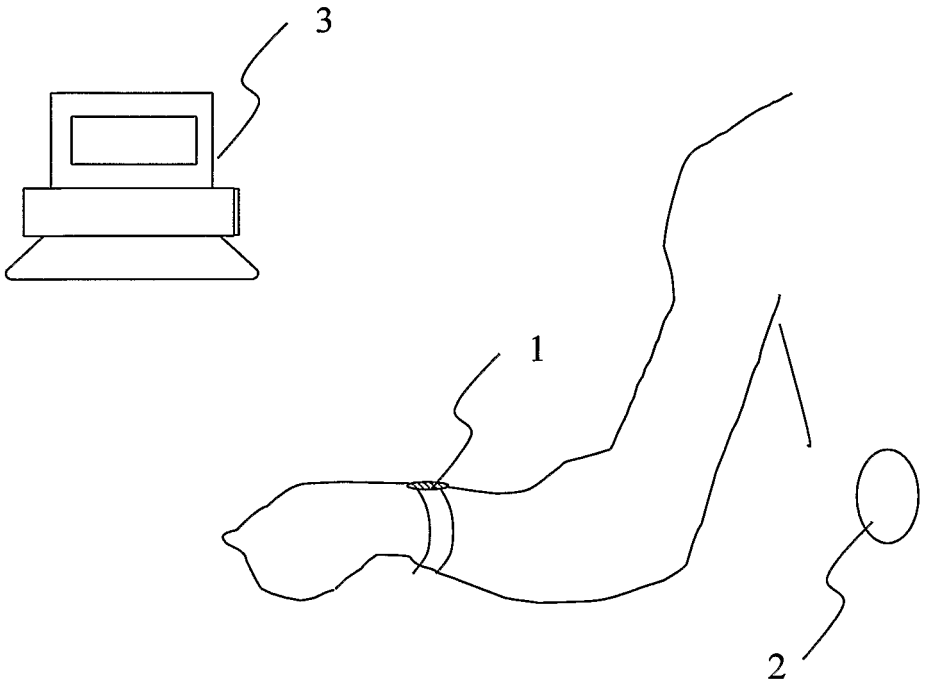

Fig. 1

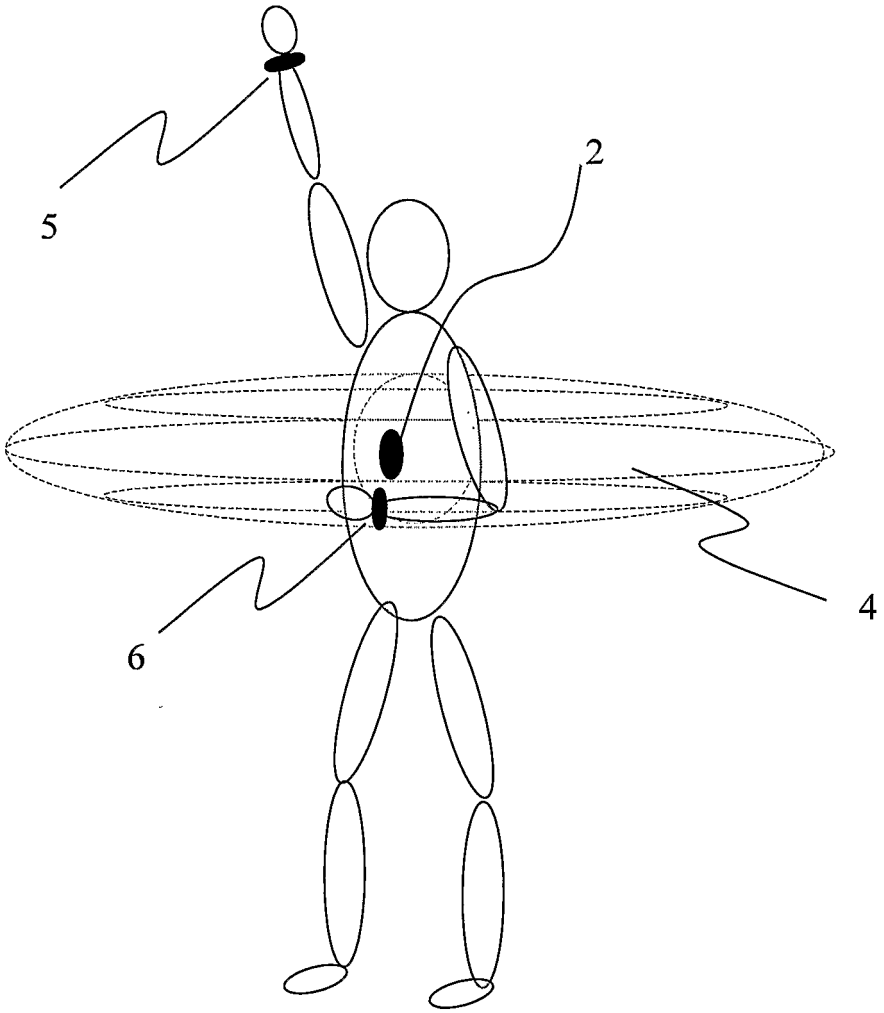

Fig. 2

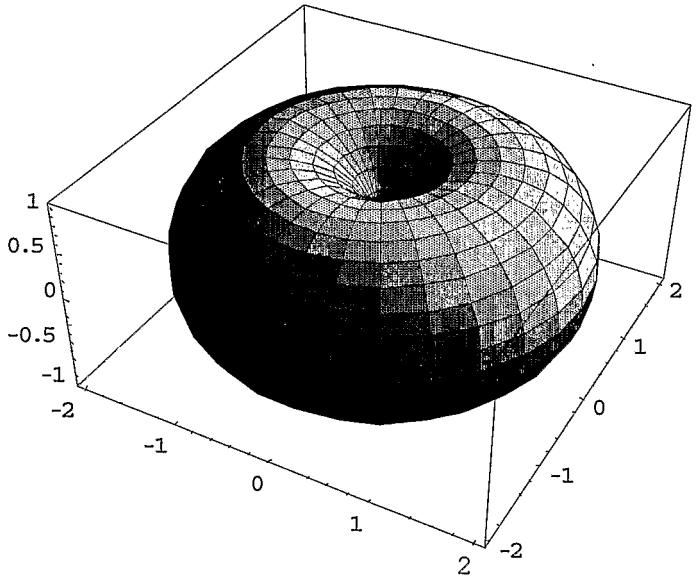

Fig. 3

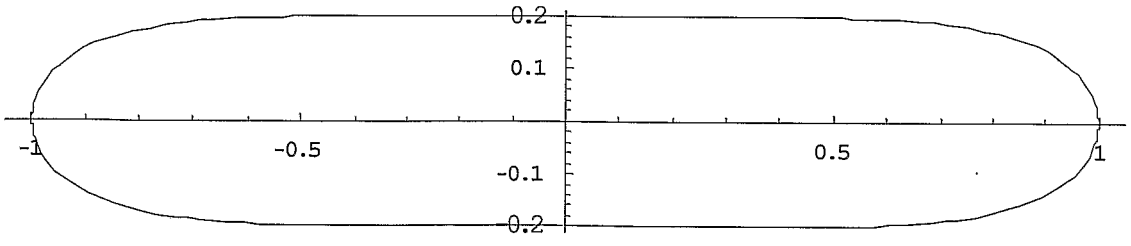

Fig. 4

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/DK2007/000553

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
INV. A61B5/00 A61B5/022

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
A61B

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)
EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 1 658 807 A (SU TSUNG-KUN [TW]) 24 May 2006 (2006-05-24) paragraphs [0012], [0013], [0019]	1
A	EP 1 405 592 A (BRAUN GMBH [DE]) 7 April 2004 (2004-04-07) paragraphs [0020] - [0027], [0036]; figures	1
A	DE 10 2004 032579 A1 (BRAUN GMBH [DE]) 9 February 2006 (2006-02-09) paragraph [0026]; figures	1

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☒ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
21 April 2008	07/05/2008

Name and mailing address of the ISA/	Authorized officer
European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL – 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Küster, Gunilla

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (April 2005)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No
PCT/DK2007/000553

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
EP 1658807 A	24-05-2006	CN 1778270 A	31-05-2006
EP 1405592 A	07-04-2004	DE 10246255 A1	22-04-2004
		DE 20320386 U1	03-06-2004
DE 102004032579 A1	09-02-2006	EP 1768550 A1	04-04-2007
		WO 2006002881 A1	12-01-2006

专利名称(译)	一种用于测量动脉血压的系统		
公开(公告)号	EP2096985A1	公开(公告)日	2009-09-09
申请号	EP2007846423	申请日	2007-12-20
申请(专利权)人(译)	SENSE A / S		
当前申请(专利权)人(译)	SENSE A / S		
[标]发明人	LADING LARS		
发明人	LADING, LARS		
IPC分类号	A61B5/00 A61B5/022		
CPC分类号	A61B5/0002 A61B5/022 A61B5/681 A61B2560/0261		
优先权	200700008 2007-01-04 DK		
其他公开文献	EP2096985B1		
外部链接	Espacenet		

摘要(译)

设计了一种用于测量血压的传感器系统，使得感测位置相对于心脏处于正确的位置。该系统包括无线传感设备，收发器和计算和记录设备。传感器读数以无线方式记录。传感器放置在身体上方便的位置。耦合天线以这样的方式设计，即天线特性确保仅当传感器相对于心脏处于预定位置时才会实际记录血压。