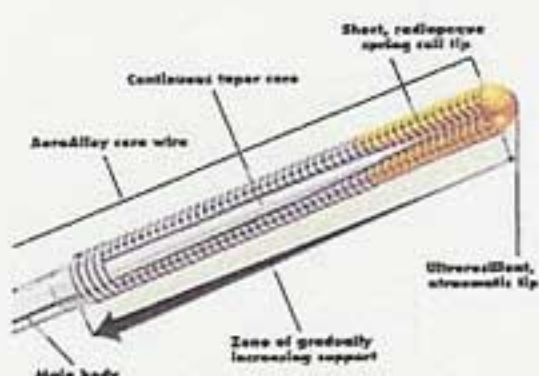


## NEWS UPDATE

### GUIDEWIRE TIPS



### Interventional Technologies Relies on Precision-Quality Wire to Fill Demand for Fail-Proof Invasive Devices

Interventional Technologies (San Diego, Calif.) makes devices such as the TEC (Transluminal Extraction Catheter) System, essentially a "mini Roto-Rooter" attached to a vacuum that excises and extracts plaque simultaneously.

When designing a wire tip coil for their guidewire product, which delivers medical devices like the TEC to the right treatment location, Interventional Technologies had trouble finding a supplier who could meet the rigorous requirements. Wire quality is absolutely critical to the device, since a wire tip must steer the trailing guidewire effectively and safely through the patient's fragile arterial system. If the tip coil is too rough, it can irritate the blood vessels it passes through; if it has impurities, the tip bonding process can be compromised; if it is too sharp or rigid, it can perforate the artery.

"We found out the hard way that finding the right supplier is not an easy process," said Doug Rimer, Vice President of Operations at Interventional Technologies. "But we eventually discovered California Fine Wire, tried their wire, and found that it met our specifications. They were ultimately selected because of their ability to consistently manufacture wire that works for us."

California Fine Wire (CFW) (Grover Beach, Calif.) has been producing fine wire for over 7,000 customers since 1961. CFW's fine wire production is an exacting process. The wire quality and condition of the die are extremely important, considering that even a microscopic burr can produce an unacceptable scratch in the finished wire.

To make a guidewire tip, Interventional Technologies winds ultrafine gold alloy wire from CFW into a coil, inserts the coil over the tip of the guidewire core, then joins the coil to the core with a plasma arc welder. Because the guidewire coil is wound in an extremely tight radius — about .003", which is very close to the diameter of the wire itself — there is a high level of elongation required in order for it to

wind into a coil without cracking or being damaged. The wire needs to be ductile, but strong enough not to pull apart or break easily.

Interventional Technologies has big plans for the future. A new product, the Cutting Balloon, has captured about 10% of the angioplasty market in Japan and is in widespread use in Europe and the rest of the world. While developing new microsurgical devices to combat heart disease, Interventional Technology plans to expand its guidewire line that delivers medical devices to critical organs. Development plans include guidewire tips with different taper configurations, such as pre-bend "ready-to-go" tips for cardiologists.

"For every Cutting Balloon we sell, we've got a guidewire right along with it," said Rimer. "CFW helps us by maintaining their consistent product. We have something that not only works, but works well."

CIRCLE READER SERVICE CARD, No. 41