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POLYMER OVERMOLDED BARIATRIC CLAMP AND METHOD OF INSTALLING

Abstract

A bariatric clamp including a partition-forming section including first and second elongated members separated by a first distance; and a passage-forming section including a bight portion. The bight portion includes a first bend section and a second bend section each having a member extending away from the axis of the clamp; and third and fourth members separated by a second distance; and a flexible hinge joining the third and fourth members. When the bariatric clamp is in the closed position, the second distance is greater than the first distance. The flexible hinge may be stretchable to accommodate different stomach thicknesses.

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Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS [0001] Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 119 (e), this application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 18/739,672, entitled “Polymer Overmolded Bariatric Clamp and Method of Installing,” filed Jun. 11, 2024, which claims priority from U.S. patent application Ser. No. 17/403,645, entitled “Polymer Overmolded Bariatric Clamp and Method of Installing,” filed Aug. 16, 2021, and naming Jesús R. Armenteros, Moises Jacobs, and C. Kenneth French as inventors, which claims priority from U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/664,447, entitled “Polymer Overmolded Bariatric Clamp and Method of Installing,” filed Oct. 25, 2019, and naming Jesús R. Armenteros, Moises Jacobs, and C. Kenneth French as inventors, which claims priority from U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/963,998, entitled “Polymer Overmolded Bariatric Clamp and Method of Installing,” filed Aug. 9, 2013, and naming Jesús R. Armenteros, Moises Jacobs, and C. Kenneth French as inventors, which claims priority from U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/681,601, entitled “Polymer Overmolded Bariatric Clamp and Installation Tool,” filed Aug. 9, 2012, naming Jesús R. Armenteros, C. Kenneth French, Moises Jacobs, and Garrett Barker as inventors, and U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 61/798,128, entitled “Polymer Overmolded Bariatric Clamp and Method of Installing,” filed Mar. 15, 2013, naming Jesús R. Armenteros, C. Kenneth French, Moises Jacobs, and Garrett Barker as inventors, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

FIELD

[0002] The present disclosure relates generally to surgical clamps and surgical clamp installation tools.

BACKGROUND

[0003] The statements in this section merely provide background information related to the present disclosure and may not constitute prior art.

[0004] Recently, there has been increased interest in employing surgical clamps to partition sections of a stomach. An example of a bariatric surgical clamp can be found in Jacobs et al., U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/984,452, Jacobs et al., U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/797,537 and Jacobs et al. U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/017,666. The aforementioned patent applications are incorporated by reference herein in their entirety for any purpose.

SUMMARY

[0005] In one embodiment, a method for installing a bariatric clamp having at least a first elongated portion, a second elongated portion, and a flexible hinge, the method comprising:

creating an opening in an abdominal cavity of a patient to access a stomach of the patient; removing tissue connected to an exterior surface of the stomach adjacent areas where the bariatric clamp is to be positioned; positioning the bariatric clamp in an open position such that a first end of the first elongated portion and a first end of the second elongated portion are open relative to one another, and a second end of the first elongated portion and the second end of the second elongated portion are linked through one or more members that include the flexible hinge; inserting the bariatric clamp into the abdominal cavity through the opening while the clamp is positioned in the open position, and wherein the first elongated portion and the second elongated portion of the bariatric clamp separately pass through the opening in the abdominal cavity; positioning the second elongated portion of the bariatric clamp adjacent a portion of the exterior surface of a second side of the stomach; positioning the first elongated portion of the bariatric clamp adjacent a portion of the exterior surface of a first side of the stomach; and closing the bariatric clamp to apply pressure to the portions of the exterior surfaces of the stomach to at least partially partition a cavity inside the stomach.

[0006] In another embodiment, a bariatric clamp having a polymer overmold comprises: a first elongated portion having a first substrate member disposed, at least partially, within the first elongated portion, the first elongated portion including a first adjustable portion; a second elongated portion having a second substrate member disposed, at least partially, within the second elongated portion, the second elongated portion including a second adjustable portion; a bight portion having a first bight substrate member, a second bight substrate member and a flexible hinge formed from the polymer overmold at a proximal end of the bariatric clamp, the bight portion joining the first and second elongated portions; a fastener portion disposed towards a distal end of the second elongated portion; and an engagement portion disposed towards a distal end of the first elongated portion, the engagement portion operable to engage the fastener portion to retain the surgical clamp in a closed position.

[0007] Another embodiment provides a bariatric clamp comprising: a first elongated member having an engagement portion disposed at a first end of the first elongated member and a first receiving portion disposed towards a second end of the first elongated member; a second elongated member having a fastener portion disposed at a first end of the second elongated member and a second receiving portion disposed towards a second end of the second elongated member; and a bight member having a first retention feature operable to couple the bight member to the first receiving portion of the first elongated member, and having a second retention feature operable to couple the bight member to the second receiving portion of the second elongated member; wherein the first elongated member and second elongated member comprise a partition-forming section of the bariatric clamp, and the bight member comprises a passage-forming section of the bariatric clamp.

[0008] In yet another embodiment, the present disclosure provides a bariatric clamp having a polymer overmold, the bariatric clamp comprising: a first elongated portion having a first adjustable substrate member disposed, at least partially, within the first elongated portion; a second elongated portion having a second adjustable substrate member disposed, at least partially, within the second elongated portion; a bight portion having a flexible hinge formed from the polymer overmold at a proximal end of the bariatric clamp, the bight portion joining the first and second elongated portions; a fastener portion disposed towards a distal end of the second elongated portion; and an engagement portion disposed towards a distal end of the first elongated portion, the engagement portion operable to engage the fastener portion to retain the surgical clamp in a closed position.

[0009] Further embodiments and apparatuses, including other areas of applicability, will become apparent from the description provided herein. It should be understood that the description and specific examples are intended for purposes of illustration only and are not intended to limit the scope of the present disclosure in any manner.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] For a more complete understanding of various embodiments of the present invention and the advantages thereof, reference is now made to the following brief description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings and detailed description, wherein like reference numerals represent like parts, and in which:

[0011] FIG. 1 is a view of an embodiment of a surgical clamp engaged with an embodiment of a surgical clamp installation tool having an articulating head;

[0012] FIG. 2 is a set of views illustrating engagement of the surgical clamp to the articulating head of the surgical clamp installation tool at FIGS. 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c), and actuation of the clamp at FIG. 2(d) to a closed position at FIG. 2(e), and illustrating a six-sided view of the clamp, including a top view at FIG. 2(f), a left side view at FIG. 2(g), a bottom view at FIG. 2(h), a right side view at FIG. 2(i), a view facing the distal end at FIG. 2(j), and a view facing the proximal end at FIG. 2(k);

[0013] FIG. 3 is a set of views illustrating the surgical clamp installation tool from six sides with the right side of the housing of the handle shown removed, including a left side view at FIG. 3(a), a top view at FIG. 3(b), a right side view at FIG. 3(c), a bottom view at FIG. 3(d), a view facing the distal end at FIG. 3(e), and a view facing the proximal end at FIG. 3(f);

[0014] FIG. 4(a) is a perspective view illustrating an exemplary surgical clamp installation tool with the right side of the housing of the handle shown removed;

[0015] FIGS. 4(b), 4(c), 4(d), and 4(e) provide side cutaway views of various aspects of an embodiment of the surgical clamp installation tool;

[0016] FIG. 5 is a view of another embodiment of a surgical clamp engaged with another embodiment of a surgical clamp installation tool having an articulating head;

[0017] FIG. 6A is a top view of a rigid member having a male clasp end for the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0018] FIG. 6B is a side view of the rigid member of FIG. 6A having the male clasp end for the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0019] FIG. 6C is a side view showing the male clasp end of FIG. 6B in greater detail;

[0020] FIG. 6D is a cross-sectional view showing a cross-section of the rigid member of FIG. 6A;

[0021] FIG. 7A is a top view of a rigid member having a female clasp end for the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0022] FIG. 7B is a side view of the rigid member of FIG. 7A having the female clasp end for the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0023] FIG. 7C is a side view showing the female clasp end of FIG. 7B in greater detail;

[0024] FIG. 7D is a cross-sectional view showing a cross-section of the rigid member of FIG. 7A;

[0025] FIG. 8A is a top view of a spring member for the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0026] FIG. 8B is a side view of the spring member for the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0027] FIG. 8C is a cross-sectional, close-up view showing a cross-section of the spring member of FIG. 8B;

[0028] FIG. 8D is a proximal end view of the spring member of FIG. 5;

[0029] FIG. 9A is a side view of the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0030] FIG. 9B is a bottom view of the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0031] FIG. 9C is a proximal end view of the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0032] FIG. 9D is a perspective view of the clamp of FIG. 5;

[0033] FIG. 10 is a view illustrating the surgical clamp installed in a substantially vertical position on a human stomach;

[0034] FIG. 11 is a flow diagram illustrating an embodiment of a method for clamping an internal organ;

[0035] FIG. 12 is a flow diagram illustrating another embodiment of a method for clamping an internal organ;

[0036] FIG. 13 is a view of yet another embodiment of a surgical clamp engaged with yet another embodiment of a surgical clamp installation tool having an articulating head;

[0037] FIG. 14 is a perspective view of the surgical clamp of FIG. 13;

[0038] FIG. 15(a) is a top view of the surgical clamp of FIG. 14;

[0039] FIG. 15(b) is a left view of the surgical clamp of FIG. 14;

[0040] FIG. 15(c) is a bottom view of the surgical clamp of FIG. 14;

[0041] FIG. 15(d) is a right view of the surgical clamp of FIG. 14;

[0042] FIG. 15(e) is a proximal spring end on view of the surgical clamp of FIG. 14;

[0043] FIG. 15(f) is a distal latch end on view of the surgical clamp of FIG. 14;

[0044] FIG. 16 is a detailed view of a latch end of a bottom arm of the surgical clamp of FIG. 14;

[0045] FIG. 17(a) is a top view of the surgical clamp installation tool of FIG. 13;

[0046] FIG. 17(b) is a left view of the surgical clamp installation tool of FIG. 13;

[0047] FIG. 17(c) is a bottom view of the surgical clamp installation tool of FIG. 13;

[0048] FIG. 17(d) is a right view of the surgical clamp installation tool of FIG. 13;

[0049] FIG. 17(e) is a proximal handle end on view of the surgical clamp installation tool of FIG. 13;

[0050] FIG. 17(f) is a distal head end on view of the surgical clamp installation tool of FIG. 13;

[0051] FIG. 18 is a detailed left side view of a handle end of the surgical clamp installation tool FIG. 13 in which the left side of the handle housing is shown removed;

[0052] FIG. 19 is a perspective view of the surgical clamp of FIG. 14 having a silicone sleeve engaged therewith;

[0053] FIG. 20 is a perspective view of the silicone sleeve of FIG. 19 in a disengaged state;

[0054] FIG. 21 is a bottom view of the silicone sleeve of FIG. 20;

[0055] FIG. 22 is a proximal end-on view of the silicone sleeve of FIG. 20;

[0056] FIG. 23 is a top view of the silicone sleeve of FIG. 20;

[0057] FIG. 24 is a left side view of the silicone sleeve of FIG. 20;

[0058] FIG. 25 is a cross-sectional view of a distal end of the silicone sleeve of FIG. 23;

[0059] FIG. 26 is a cross-sectional view of a proximal end of the silicone sleeve of FIG. 24;

[0060] FIG. 27 is a cross sectional view of a proximal end of FIG. 23;

[0061] FIG. 28 is a flow diagram illustrating a method of performing endoscopic surgery utilizing the silicone sleeve, clamp, and installation tool of FIGS. 13-27;

[0062] FIG. 29 is a perspective view of an embodiment of a one-piece surgical clamp comprised of first and second substrate members overmolded in a polymer material;

[0063] FIGS. 30(a) and 30(b) illustrate respective side and perspective views of the one-piece surgical clamp of FIG. 29, wherein the polymer material is illustrated semitransparent to show the first and second substrate members;

[0064] FIGS. 31(a) and 31(b) illustrate the respective first and second substrate members of the one-piece surgical clamp of FIG. 29;

[0065] FIG. 32 illustrates another embodiment of a one-piece surgical clamp comprised of first and second substrate members overmolded in a polymer material;

[0066] FIG. 33 is a perspective view of an embodiment of an installation tool used to install a one-piece surgical clamp;

[0067] FIGS. 34(a), 34(b) and 34(c) illustrate various views of yet another embodiment of a one-piece surgical clamp comprised of first and second substrate members overmolded in a polymer material;

[0068] FIG. 35 is a perspective view of yet another embodiment of a one-piece surgical clamp comprised of first and second substrate members overmolded in a polymer material;

[0069] FIG. 36 is a flow diagram illustrating an embodiment of a method for clamping an internal organ;

[0070] FIG. 37 is a flow diagram illustrating another embodiment of a method for clamping an

internal organ;

[0071] FIG. **38** is a perspective view of an embodiment of a two-piece surgical clamp comprised of first and second substrate members, each overmolded in a polymer material;

[0072] FIGS. **39(a)**, **39(b)** and **39(c)** illustrate various views of the two-piece surgical clamp of FIG. **38**;

[0073] FIG. **40** is a perspective view of another embodiment of a two-piece surgical clamp comprised of first and second substrate members, each overmolded in a polymer material;

[0074] FIGS. **41(a)**-**41(e)** illustrate various views of an embodiment of a bariatric clamp;

[0075] FIGS. **42(a)** and **42(b)** illustrate an embodiment of an adjustable bariatric clamp in a retracted position and an extended position, respectively;

[0076] FIGS. **43(a)** and **43(b)** illustrate an embodiment of an adjustable bariatric clamp in a retracted position and an extended position, respectively;

[0077] FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)** illustrate an embodiment of an adjustable bariatric clamp having a ratchet feature, wherein the clamp is shown in a retracted position and an extended position, respectively;

[0078] FIG. **45** is a flow diagram illustrating a method of installing a bariatric clamp;

[0079] FIG. **46** illustrates the bariatric clamp of FIGS. **41(a)**-**41(e)** in a substantially expanded position;

[0080] FIG. **47** is a flow diagram illustrating a method of inserting a bariatric clamp into the abdominal cavity of the patient;

[0081] FIGS. **48(a)** and **48(b)** illustrate various views of a patient's stomach;

[0082] FIGS. **49(a)** and **49(b)** illustrate various views of an example embodiment of an alignment device;

[0083] FIGS. **50(a)**, **50(b)**, **50(c)** and **50(d)** illustrate an embodiment of the disclosed bariatric clamp in various closed and opened positions;

[0084] FIGS. **51(a)**, **51(b)** and **51(c)** illustrate an embodiment of the disclosed bariatric clamp in various contorted positions;

[0085] FIG. **52(a)** illustrates an embodiment of the disclosed clamp in a closed position, wherein the flexible hinge is in a compressed, or non-expanded position;

[0086] FIG. **52(b)** illustrates an embodiment of the disclosed clamp in the closed position wherein the flexible hinge is stretched or expanded;

[0087] FIGS. **53(a)**-**53(e)** illustrate various views of the engagement feature and fastener portion of an embodiment of the disclosed bariatric clamp;

[0088] FIG. **54(a)** illustrates an embodiment wherein an embodiment of the disclosed bariatric clamp is installed on a stomach and first and second adjustable portions are hinged such that the bight portion is angled in a first direction relative to the first and second elongated portions;

[0089] FIG. **54(b)** illustrates another embodiment wherein an embodiment of the disclosed bariatric clamp is installed on a stomach and first and second adjustable portions are hinged such that the bight portion is angled in a second direction relative to the first and second elongated portions; and

[0090] FIG. **55** illustrates an embodiment of the disclosed clamp having suturing needles embedded in the polymer overmolding.

[0091] For FIGS. **5-9**, dimensions are given in inches. However, it should be understood that various embodiments are not limited to the dimensions provided. Such dimensions are purely illustrative.

[0092] For FIGS. **4(b)**, **4(c)**, **17(a)**-**17(d)**, **21**, **23**, and **24**, broken lines indicate variability in length of the discontinuous portions.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0093] The following description is merely exemplary in nature and is not intended to limit the present disclosure, application, or uses. It should be understood at the outset that although an exemplary implementation of the present invention is illustrated below, the present invention may

be implemented using any number of techniques, whether currently known or in existence. The present invention should in no way be limited to the exemplary implementations, drawings, and techniques illustrated below, including the exemplary design and implementations illustrated and described herein. Additionally, the drawings contained herein are not necessarily drawn to scale, and may be provided in a variety of different dimensions, shapes and configurations. Any provided dimensions are provided only to illustrate a particular exemplary implementation, and should in no way be construed to limit the present invention absent an explicit recitation of such dimensions and then only with respect to the claim or claims reciting the dimension or dimensions.

[0094] Referring to FIG. 1, an embodiment of a surgical clamp **100** (also referred to herein as a bariatric clamp) engages with an embodiment of a surgical clamp installation tool **102**. In these embodiments, the clamp **100** and the installation tool **102** are designed for performing bariatric surgery through a surgical trocar. The clamp **100**, in a preferred embodiment, may be approximately fifteen to thirty centimeters in length to accommodate partitioning of a human stomach. To accommodate insertion through a trocar, the closed clamp **100** will preferably have a diameter or circumference less than fifteen millimeters over the entirety of its length or along the majority of its length. A non-handle section of the installation tool **102** intended for insertion through the trocar has a similar diameter or a smaller diameter. It is envisioned that other embodiments of the clamp and installation tool can be of other sizes. It is additionally envisioned that the clamp may be articulated in at least one plane to provide different angles and lengths of partition to the stomach. It is also envisioned that other embodiments of the clamp and installation tool can be used for clamping other parts of the human body and/or for clamping other types of bodies or structures. Finally, it should be understood that the installation tool **102** may be used to install embodiments of the surgical clamp other than those explicitly illustrated in the figures.

[0095] Referring to FIG. 2(a), the surgical clamp **100** has two elongated members **104A** and **104B**. A bight portion **106** joins the two elongated members at a proximal end of the clamp **100** and biases the two elongated members in an open position at a distal end of the clamp **100**. As used herein, a bight is a loop, bend, hinge, corner angle, hollow, fold, or similar structure. In some embodiments, the bight portion has one or more engagement features, such as, for example, a slotted aperture **108** such as that shown in FIG. 2(b). It should be understood that, in some embodiments, the engagement feature(s) of the bight portion may be referred to as an attachment feature. A clasp mechanism, in one embodiment, has a male component **110** disposed on one of the two elongated members at the distal end, and a female component **112** disposed on the other of the two elongated members at the distal end.

[0096] Particularly to partially partition a stomach in performing bariatric surgery, spacing between the two elongated members **104A** and **104B** effects two or more clamp sections as best shown in FIG. 2(e). At least one of the sections is a partition forming section **105A** located nearer the distal end of the clamp **100** than the proximal end of the clamp **100**. At least another of the sections is a passage forming section **105B** located nearer the proximal end of the clamp **100**, such as near the bight portion **106**, than the distal end of the clamp **100**.

[0097] In order to reduce injury to the partitioned organ, a padding material **116** can be connected to one or more of the two elongated members. For example, padding material **116** can connect to the elongated member **104B** at least at a location corresponding to at least part of the partition forming section. In some embodiments, the padding material can be composed predominantly of silicone or fully of silicone, or other polymer material. It is also envisioned that the opposing limbs of the clamp may be fitted with magnets to facilitate closure.

[0098] In some embodiments, the engagement feature at the proximal end of the clamp **100** can be a slotted aperture **108** as shown in FIG. 2(b) having a width and a length larger in size than the width. The length of the slotted aperture can be oriented perpendicular or angled with reference to a longitudinal axis of the clamp **100**. It is envisioned that other types engagement features can be employed, such as a socket, a loop, a hook, a clasp, a string, magnet, etc.

[0099] In some embodiments, the male component **110** of the clasp at the distal end of the clamp can be an end of the elongated member **104A** that flares away from a longitudinal axis of the clamp when the clamp is forced to a closed position. Accordingly, the female component **112** can be a loop attached to the end of the elongated member **104B** and disposed to engage the male component **110** of the elongated member **104A** when the clamp is forced to the closed position. This can be seen more clearly in connection with FIG. 2(e). It is envisioned that other types of clasp components can be employed, such as those found in a hinge, such as a living hinge, hook and loop, spring ring, lobster or trigger, toggle, tube, bolt and bolt hole, screw and threaded aperture, or any other type of closure arrangement.

[0100] Returning to FIG. 1 and referring generally to both FIG. 1 and FIG. 2, the clamp **100**, in use, engages with the installation tool by the slotted aperture **108**. For example, the installation tool **102** has an elongated member, such as a pull-rod **138**, having a proximal end and a distal end that has an engagement feature. The distal end of the elongated member of the installation tool **102** engages with the proximal end of the clamp **100** through the slotted aperture **108** of the bight portion **106**. In some embodiments, the engagement feature takes the form of a T-bar **118**. This T-bar **118** is sized and shaped to allow insertion thereof through the slotted aperture **108** to engage the clamp **100**. It is envisioned that another engagement features may have an X-shape, and be sized for insertion through an X-shaped slot in the clamp. Other shapes are also possible.

[0101] The installation tool **102** may include a lever radially engaged with the pull-rod at its proximal end at a handle **122** that may be configured as a thumbwheel **120** that extends out of the handle **122** of the installation tool **102** through an aperture. While the T-bar **118** is inserted through the slotted aperture **108**, actuating the thumbwheel **120** can cause the T-bar **118** to rotate ninety degrees as illustrated in one embodiment from a first position shown in FIG. 2(c) and in a second position as shown in FIG. 2(d).

[0102] At this point, retracting the pull rod, which may be achieved by squeezing a trigger **128** to retract the pull rod, forces the proximal end of the clamp **100** up against and progressively further between guide members of the surgical clamp installation tool **102**, such as a pair of wedges **124A** and **124B**, formed in the articulating head **126** of the installation tool **102** (see FIG. 2(b)). A curvature or incline imparted to the articulating head of the installation tool **102** by the pair of wedges can be keyed to a curvature or incline of the bight portion **106** of the clamp **100** in such a way that fully or more fully retracting the pull-rod forces the normally open clamp **100** to a closed position such as that shown in FIG. 2(e).

[0103] Turning to FIGS. 2(f)-2(k), the various clamp features can be readily appreciated. These features include bight portion **106**, slotted aperture **108**, male component **110**, female component **112**, and padding material **116**. It should be readily understood that the padding material **116** can be configured as a pair of sleeves as shown, but that other configurations may also be employed. Moreover, non-linear shapes may be utilized for various types of applications in clamping various types of organs, as desired.

[0104] Turning now to FIG. 3 and referring generally to FIG. 1 and FIG. 3, retraction of the pull-rod of the installation tool **102** is accomplished by actuation or movement of another lever or trigger that is engaged to the proximal end of the pull-rod, such as through an axial engagement. This lever can be configured as the trigger **128** that extends out of the handle **122** through an aperture or slotted opening. The shape of the handle and disposition of the trigger are, preferably, ergonomically configured to allow the surgeon to hold the installation tool parallel to the ground near waist level to grip the handle **122** and the trigger **128** in one hand. The thumbwheel **120** is disposed to be within easy reach of the thumb of that hand to facilitate holding of the clamp **100** by the surgeon in the other hand while engaging the clamp to the articulating head **126**. The thumbwheel **120** may be conveniently adjusted to rotate the T-bar **118** to a desired position to lock the T-bar **118** to the clamp **100** at the bight portion **106** through the slotted aperture **108**. In one embodiment, the thumbwheel **120** may rotate the T-bar **118** by ninety degrees.

[0105] Once the surgeon has rotated and retracted the pull-rod using T-bar **118** and trigger **128** with one hand, the surgeon's other hand becomes free for other tasks, such as actuating yet another lever protruding from the handle **122** and configured, for example, as a dial **130**. With the clamp **100** pulled closed or partially closed against the pair of wedges, the head **126** can be articulated from side to side by rotating this dial **130**. The motion of the articulating head **126** through rotation of the dial **130** is illustrated in one embodiment in the top view of the installation tool **102** in FIG. 3(b) at arrow **300** showing a range of motion or articulation in one embodiment.

[0106] Turning now to FIG. 4, in some embodiments, turning the dial **130** can turn a hub **132** or connector inside or adjacent the handle **122** that is connected to a pair of guidelines **134A** and **134B**. These guidelines **134A** and **134B**, together with pull-rod **138**, may extend through an elongated, rigid sleeve, such as a cylindrical tube **136**, for connection on either side of a swivel mount of the articulating head **126**. It is envisioned that the guidelines can be flexible or rigid, that the cylindrical tube **136** can be rigid or semi-rigid, and that the pull-rod **138** can be rigid or semi-rigid. By semi-rigid, it is meant that the pull-rod **138** can be flexible or partially flexible at least in the plane of articulation along at least part of its length near the distal end of the installation tool **102**, but still axially and rotationally rigid or semi-rigid along its length. Thus, when the installation tool **102** and clamp **100** are held parallel to the ground, the pull-rod **138** can be rotated and retracted by actuation of the thumbwheel **120** and trigger **128**, and the head **126** can be articulated in a plane orthogonal to the gravity vector by manipulation of the dial **130**. The plane of articulation may be adjustable in certain embodiments, or may be set in a desired plane that is not orthogonal to the gravity vector.

[0107] Turning now to FIG. 5, other embodiments of the clamp **200** and installation tool **202** can include a clamp **200** made of multiple pieces, a longer main tube **204**, and a thumb lever **206** on the dial **130** to articulate the head of the tool **102** that is attached to the clamp **200**. In some embodiments, the clamp **200** can be a three-piece clamp. A ratchet release **208** can also be provided on the installation tool **202** that, when pressed, allows the pull rod to extend, which in turn will release the clamp **200** allowing it to reopen. In other words, as the surgeon presses on the trigger **210**, causing the pull-rod to retract and the clamp **200** to close, a ratchet mechanism catches the trigger **210** in the pressed-in position. Thus, the pull-rod will remain retracted and clamp **200** will not reopen even if the surgeon releases pressure on the trigger **210**.

[0108] Turning now to FIG. 6, and referring generally to FIGS. 6A-6D, one piece of a three-piece clamp can be a rigid member **212** having a male clasp end **214**. As will be described further below with reference to FIG. 9, this rigid member **212** serves as one of the elongated members of the clamp **200** for forming the partition that divides the stomach. It can be made of plastic, metal, or any other rigid material. An example material is hardened titanium. FIG. 6(c) demonstrates an exemplary contour of male clasp end **214**, while FIG. 6(d) demonstrates an exemplary contour rigid member **212**. It should be readily understood that the exemplary contour of rigid member **212** renders it concave on an inner surface to be disposed toward an outer surface of an organ to be clamped, and convex on an outer surface for engagement with a spring component. However, other shapes may be used as desired.

[0109] Turning next to FIG. 7, and referring generally to FIGS. 7A-7D, another piece of the three-piece clamp can be a rigid member **216** having a female clasp end **218** that includes a hinged loop **220**. As will be described further below with reference to FIG. 9, this rigid member **216** serves as one of the elongated members of the clamp for forming the partition that divides the stomach. It can be made of plastic, metal, or any other rigid material. An example material is hardened titanium. Similarly, the loop **220** can be made of various materials, an example of which is titanium wire.

[0110] Turning next to FIG. 8, and referring generally to FIGS. 8A-8D, a third piece of the three-piece clamp can be a spring member **222** having a slotted bight portion **224**. As will be further described below with reference to FIG. 9, the spring member engages with the rigid members to

form the clamp and provides the bight portion that permits formation of a passage between the two partitioned regions of the clamped stomach. It can be made of plastic, metal, or any other springy material. An example material is spring tempered titanium.

[0111] Turning now to FIG. 9, and referring generally to FIGS. 9A-9D, the three-piece clamp can be assembled by engaging the rigid members **212** and **216** to the spring member **222**. For example, the rigid members can be welded or coupled to arms of spring member at various locations **226**. In one embodiment, the rigid members **212** and **216** can be attached to interior surfaces of the arms of spring member **222**, with the loop **220** arranged to hinge towards and engage the male clasp end **214** of the distal end of rigid member **212**. Thus, the rigid members **212** and **216** are employed to form a partition, while the spring member **222** forms a passage between the partitioned regions of an organ or body as shown in FIG. 10. These rigid members **212** and **216** may be of non-uniform thickness to accommodate gradual closing of the clamp from the proximal end towards the distal end in such a manner that a non-uniform thickness of an organ, such as walls of a stomach, can be clamped without injury. Alternatively or additionally, sleeves of padding material can be slid over the arms of the clamp, and the padding material can be of non-uniform thickness as desired. It is envisioned that rigid members **212** and **216** and padding material of varying lengths, contours, and thicknesses may be provided to accommodate needs of different patients as desired.

[0112] Turning now to FIG. 10, some embodiments of the surgical clamp installation tool can be used to install the clamp **100** within an abdominal cavity in order to perform bariatric surgery. In particular, the clamp can be positioned, closed, and latched to partition the stomach into a small vertical portion or pouch **500** and an excluded section **502**. The vertical pouch **500** receives food at **504**, but the food is not able to enter the excluded section **502**. Using the installation tool **102** (or **202**) to engage with the bight portion **106** of the clamp **100**, the clamp **100** may be installed in a substantially vertical position on the stomach in one embodiment. That is, if the human patient having the clamp **100** installed were to stand upright, the longitudinal axis of the clamp **100** would be substantially parallel to the gravity vector. Thus, a passage forming section formed in the bottom of the stomach by the clamp allows gastric juices to flow at **506** from the excluded section **502** into the vertical pouch **500**.

[0113] Turning to FIG. 11, a method for clamping an internal organ can include inserting a surgical clamp through an opening into a body of a living organism at block **150**. Then the two elongated members of the surgical clamp are positioned on opposite sides of an internal organ of the living organism at block **152**. At block **154**, closing and latching the surgical clamp to partition a cavity inside the internal organ includes clamping the exterior of the internal organ with the two elongated members.

[0114] As mentioned above, the internal organ can be a human stomach. In this case, closing and latching the clamp can include installing the clamp in a substantially vertical or angled position with a passage forming section of the clamp located towards a bottom of the stomach. This positioning can create a small, vertical stomach pouch and thereby limit the intake of food into an excluded section or portion of the stomach, but still allow gastric juices from the excluded portion of the stomach to flow into the vertical stomach pouch. This partitioning can alter the production of hormones, enzymes and chemicals that affect metabolism, energy levels, hunger, digestion, and absorption of nutrients that are affected by exclusion of gastric fundus and body of the stomach by the partitioning. Sheathing the elongated members of the clamp in silicone padding material along a majority of their length is intended to reduce trauma and/or necrosis of the stomach or other internal organ and enable successful reversal of the surgery. Thus, the method can further include reversing the surgery by removing the clamp.

[0115] Inserting the surgical clamp can include performing natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery (NOTES). Alternatively, or additionally, it can include performing a combination of NOTES and an assistant trocar placed into an abdominal cavity. This combination can include two or more of a conventional, laparoscopic, NOTES, and one port technique. The NOTES technique

can include at least one of transgastric, transvaginal, transrectal, transcolonic, or combinations thereof. The one port technique is used for the introduction of several instruments, and encompasses a one port abdominal (including umbilical), perineal, retroperitoneal approaches, or combinations thereof.

[0116] Turning to FIG. **12**, a method for clamping an internal organ can include engaging a surgical clamp to a head of a surgical clamp installation tool at block **160**. At block **162**, the surgical clamp installation tool can be employed to close the clamp and insert the clamp through an opening in a body cavity of a living organism. Then the tool can be employed at block **164** to reopen the clamp and to position elongated members of the clamp on opposite sides of an internal organ within the body cavity. Next, at block **166**, the tool can be employed to close the clamp upon the internal organ and thereby partition a cavity inside the internal organ. The limbs, arms, or elongated members of the clamp close in such a fashion as causing a gradual diminishing space between the two limbs, as the space opening extends proximally, accounting for the different thickness of the stomach. The clamp closes in a fashion that exerts enough pressure to maintain the opposite walls closed to each other without creating damage/trauma/ischemia to the stomach or other organ walls themselves. Then at block **168**, the clamp can be latched to fix it in position to partition the internal organ and the cavity inside the internal organ. Also, at block **170**, the clamp can be disengaged from the head of the surgical clamp installation tool, and the tool can be retracted from the body cavity at block **172**. It is envisioned that the clamp may be configured to latch automatically when the clamp is fully closed. Alternatively, the tool may first be disengaged and removed, and the clamp subsequently latched using an additional tool. Moreover, additional steps may be employed to secure the clamp in place, such as using sutures.

[0117] As already described above, padding material can be employed on surfaces of the elongated members of the surgical clamp to reduce damage to the internal organ that would prevent reversal of the surgical procedure. In other embodiments, the thickness or surface contour of the elongated members or arms of the surgical clamp may be provided to align with the particular organ or body being clamped so as to provide the desired pressure or force at each location of the organ or body being clamped. Additionally, engaging the surgical clamp to the head of the surgical clamp installation tool may include passing a T-bar adjacent the end of a pull rod of the installation tool through a slotted aperture formed in a bight portion of the clamp, and rotating the T-bar using a lever or dial. Also, employing the surgical clamp installation tool to close and reopen the clamp may include operating a lever or trigger on a handle of the installation tool to pull and release the pull rod. Further, employing the surgical clamp installation tool to position the elongated members of the surgical clamp may include manipulating a dial on a handle of the installation tool to articulate the head from side to side in a desired plane(s).

[0118] Turning now to FIG. **13**, another embodiment of a surgical clamp **600** and surgical installation tool **602** is similar in structure and function to those embodiments described above. One notable difference from the embodiments previously described is that the articulating head **604** of the surgical installation tool **602** is keyed with a curvature or radius configured to hold the clamp **600** securely in place while permitting the clamp **600** to remain in an open position. This configuration permits a surgeon holding the installation tool **602** in one hand to hold the clamp **600** securely in the articulating head **604** of the tool **602** while pressing the distal ends of the clamp **600** together with the other end for entry to a trocar. Once the distal ends of the clamp **600** have entered the trocar, the trocar then holds the ends shut, and permitting the surgeon free use of the other hand. Upon entry to the abdominal cavity, the clamp naturally springs open for engagement with a bodily organ, such as the stomach, and the surgeon can articulate the head from side to side while it is held securely in the head **604** while still in the open position. Once in position, the surgeon can close the clamp using sutures and/or by applying pressure externally or internally using other surgical tools. Thus, in this particular embodiment, the installation tool **602** may not be employed to close the clamp on an internal organ of the patient, but may be employed to hold, insert, and articulate the

clamp into position.

[0119] Referring now to FIG. 14, clamp **600** can have a three piece design similar to that described above. In other words, it can have a spring member **606** that is comprised predominantly of spring steel, and that is engaged with lower and upper rigid members **608** and **610**. These rigid members **608** and **610** can be comprised primarily of titanium, and they can have a concavity that increases their rigidity. In addition, suture holes **612A-612E** can be provided in upper rigid member **610**, as well as in an upper portion of spring member **606**. A surgeon can employ these suture holes **612** to secure the clamp **600** in place on a stomach or other bodily organ. It is envisioned that additional or alternative suture holes **612** can be provided, such as in lower rigid member **608** and lower portion of spring member **606**, and that positions of the suture holes **612** can be different from those shown. However, as will be more fully described below with reference to FIGS. 19-27, the placement of suture holes in the upper rigid member **608** and upper portion of spring member **606** can permit suturing of the clamp **600** in place prior to application of a silicone sleeve (see FIGS. 19-27) that slides onto the clamp via the un-sutured lower rigid member **608** and lower portion of spring member **606**. Yet, once the sleeve is installed, it should be understood that additional suture holes **612** provided in lower rigid member **608** and/or lower portion of spring member **606** may prove useful in a subsequent application of additional sutures.

[0120] Turning now to FIGS. 15(a)-15(f) and referring generally thereto, it should be appreciated that a double row of suture holes **612A-612H** can be provided in spring member **606** and upper rigid member **610**, a distal portion of which can exhibit a male clasp feature **614** positioned to engage a female clasp feature, such as a wire loop **616**, of lower rigid member **608**. Suture holes **612D** and **612E** can be positioned on spring member **606** at a location that lies between a position at which upper rigid member **610** is engaged to spring member **606**, and a position at which a slot **618** is formed in a bight portion of spring member **606**. In the case that the distal end of upper rigid member **610** exhibits a male clasp feature **614**, such as a planular curvature away from a plane in which the upper rigid member **610** predominantly lies, a complimentary female clasp feature can be exhibited by a distal end of lower rigid member **608**, such as the aforementioned rectangular wire loop **616** engaged by a hinge formation **620** provided in the distal end of lower rigid member **608**. It should be readily understood that the same functionality can be achieved if upper rigid member **610** exhibits the female clasp feature, and lower rigid member **608** exhibits male clasp feature **614**. Thus, the positions of the clasp features can be reversed in other embodiments.

[0121] Turning now to FIG. 16, another additional feature of clamp **600** can be a detent **622** that is formed in hinge formation **620**, and that engages wire loop **616** of the female clasp feature. This detent **622** can be positioned on the hinge formation **620** at a location that is most distal when the clamp **600** is held in a closed position, and it can be sized and shaped to hold the wire loop **616** in a lowered position at which the loop **616** lies in a plane parallel to a plane in which lower rigid member **608** predominantly lies. A similar or identical detent (not shown) can be provided on an opposite side of hinge formation **620**, and it can be similarly distally positioned to assist in holding the wire loop **616** in the aforementioned lowered position. This lowered position allows the clamp **600** to be inserted through a trocar and guided to enclose a bodily organ, such as a stomach, at which point the aforementioned silicone sleeve (see FIGS. 19-27) can be partially applied. Then, before the silicone sleeve is fully engaged to the clamp **600**, wire loop **616** can be forced out of detent **622** into a raised position at which it engages the male clasp feature **614** of the clamp **600**.

[0122] Before raising the wire loop **616**, it is envisioned that the clamp **600** can be pressed into a closed position by use of two or more graspers inserted into the abdominal cavity through additional trocars (i.e., multiport technique). Then, a suture tag pre-applied to wire loop **616** can be used to force wire loop **616** out of detent **622** into the raised position, resulting in the wire loop **616** engaging the male clasp feature **614** and holding the clamp **600** in the closed position without assistance from the two or more graspers. Alternatively or additionally, it is envisioned that closing and latching of the clamp **600** can be achieved by utilizing any suitable endoscopic surgical tools

and techniques as will be readily apparent to one skilled in the art from the present disclosure.

[0123] Turning now to FIGS. **17(a)**-**17(f)** and referring generally thereto, an endoscopic surgical installation tool for engaging and manipulating the clamp can be similar to those described above. For example, the installation tool can have a handle **650**, trigger **652**, pull rod, T-bar **654**, cylindrical tube **656**, dial **658** (e.g., with thumb lever), hub, guidelines, and articulating head **604** that are identical or similar to those described above. However, as previously described, a curvature or incline imparted to the head **604** by wedges of the head **604** can be keyed to a bight portion of the previously described clamp so as to hold the clamp in a fully open or predominantly open position when T-bar **654** has been fully retracted by actuation of trigger **652**. Additionally, a latch release **660** can be provided that can extend from both sides of handle **650** for ergonomic, ambidextrous operation.

[0124] Turning now to FIG. **18**, the latch release **660** can have a hinged plate with a retention spring that forces the latch release **660** upwards to engage a latch **662** provided at a proximal end of pull rod **664**. In use, a surgeon can engage the T-bar to the clamp **600** by rotating the clamp **600** and/or installation tool in a common longitudinal axis until the T-bar fits through the notch in the bight portion of the clamp **600**, and then rotating the clamp **600** and/or installation tool an integer multiple of ninety degrees until a length direction of the T-Bar is perpendicular to a length direction of the notch. Then, actuation of trigger **652** can retract pull rod until opposing latch surfaces (e.g., edges, extensions, faces, flanges, gouges, hooks, inclines, ledges, lips, notches, overhangs, projections, protrusions, ribs, ridges, skirts, serrations, slits, slots, teeth, wedges, and combinations thereof) of the latch **662** and release **660** can catch and hold the pull rod **664** in a fully retracted or predominantly retracted position.

[0125] Once the latch **662** is engaged, the clamp **600** is ready to be inserted into an inflated abdominal cavity through a trocar as described above, and a seal provided between cylindrical tube **656** and clevis **668** can prevent out gassing from the abdominal cavity through the head **604** and/or cylindrical tube **656**. Alternatively, the seal can be provided anywhere inside cylindrical tube **656**. In some embodiments, the seal is achieved by using a circular silicone die having a slit and a hole in the middle, with the pull rod **664** threaded through the hole.

[0126] Once the clamp **600** is in position within the abdominal cavity to enclose and partition the stomach or other organ, pressing down on latch release **660** can permit automatic extension of pull rod **664** by action of a torsion spring provided to trigger screw **666** to force de-actuation of trigger **652**. The T-bar can then be disengaged from the clamp by rotating the installation tool along its longitudinal axis an integer multiple of ninety degrees and removing it from the trocar. Thus, it should be apparent that, in some embodiments, the pull rod may not be configured to rotate as in alternative embodiments described above, but only to retract and to extend.

[0127] Turning now to FIG. **19**, a silicone sleeve **700** can be configured to engage clamp **600**. In some embodiments, silicone sleeve **700** can be formed to cover primarily an upper arm and both ends of clamp **600**. This silicone sleeve **700** can be used as padding to protect surrounding organs from irritation or damage. Thickness of the silicone can be varied for different applications, such as partitioning an organ, stomach, or vessel.

[0128] Turning now to FIGS. **20-27** and referring generally thereto, the silicone sleeve **700** can have tubular section **702** at a proximal end that slides onto the lower arm of clamp and can be manipulated into position to encapsulate the previously described bight portion of the clamp. The clamp can then be closed and latched as described above. Presuming that the upper arm of the clamp has already been sutured to the organ, stomach, or vessel, a distal end of the sleeve **700** can then be engaged to encapsulate the distal end of the clamp. For this purpose, the distal end of the sleeve **700** can be configured as a latch cap **704** that is form fitted to the closed latch features (see FIG. **25**). A padding strip **706** situated between the tubular section **702** and latch cap **704** can be sized to a length of the clamp so as to be stretched taught across the upper arm of the clamp once the sleeve **700** is installed. A slot engaging feature **708** formed inside of tubular section **702** can be

provided to engage with the previously described slot in the bight portion of the clamp by plugging the slot, and thus hold the tubular section of the sleeve **700** in place on the bight portion of the clamp.

[0129] Turning now to FIG. **28**, a method of performing surgery can begin at step **750** by engaging the previously described clamp to the previously described surgical installation tool in one or more of the previously described manners. Thereafter, the clamp can be inserted through a trocar at step **752**, and positioned to enclose an organ (e.g., stomach, vessel, etc.) at step **754**. Next, at step **756**, an upper arm of the clamp can be sutured to the organ through suture holes supplied in the clamp as previously described, and the installation tool can be disengaged and removed from the trocar at step **758**. Thereafter, the previously described silicone sleeve can be slid over a lower arm of the clamp at step **760** as previously described, and the clamp can be closed and latched at step **762**. Finally, at step **764**, a latch cap of the silicone sleeve can be fit over the latch of the clamp, and additional sutures can be applied if desired. It should be understood that the sequence of the aforementioned steps can vary in additional or alternative embodiments, and that additional or alternative steps can be employed as will be readily apparent to one skilled in the art.

[0130] FIGS. **29-40** and the accompanying description disclose various embodiments of a surgical clamp overmolded in a polymer material. The surgical clamp is, in one implementation, a laparoscopically implanted device which, when closed and latched or secured, partitions a patient's stomach into two sections, such as two vertical sections or other divisions. The clamp may be installed using standard surgical tools (e.g., clamps, scissors, etc.) and/or, in some embodiments, an installation tool, such as one of the installation tools discussed herein. When the clamp is installed, in one installation, the lesser curvature segment of the stomach forms the Magenstrasse, and the greater curvature segment, including the fundus, is generally excluded from nutritional contact. In one implementation, the clamp includes, at a proximal end, an aperture with an enlarged radius (generally referred to hereafter as the bight portion or passage-forming section), by which gastric juices created by the fundus and the body can empty into the atrum. By excluding the fundus, the clamp may alter or reduce hormones such as, for example, ghrelin, leading to the patient's loss of hunger. Additionally, the clamp acts as a restrictive procedure by reducing the size of the Magenstrasse by creating a small lumen for a vertical passageway of the nutrients along the lesser curvature.

[0131] FIG. **29** illustrates an embodiment, wherein the fully or partially overmolded surgical clamp is of a one-piece design. The one-piece clamp **2900** includes first and second substrate members (shown in FIGS. **30(a)**, **30(b)**, **31(a)** and **31(b)**) overmolded in a polymer or elastomer material to form a first elongated portion **2902**, a second elongated portion **2904**, a bight portion **2906**, a fastener portion **2908**, and an engagement portion **2914**. As mentioned above, the first and second elongated portions **2902** and **2904** serve as a partition-forming section of the clamp **2900**. Referring briefly to both FIGS. **29** and **10**, when the clamp **2900** is installed within an abdominal cavity, the first and second elongated portions **2902** and **2904** are engaged to partition the stomach into a small, vertical pouch **500** and an excluded section **502**. The bight portion **2906** comprises a passage-forming section located towards the proximal end of the clamp **2900**. The passage-forming section allows gastric juices to flow **506** from the excluded section **502** into the vertical pouch **500**.

[0132] In accordance with the present disclosure, the term overmolded is intended to describe a product wherein underlying substrate material(s) are substantially fully or partially encapsulated, covered, or coated with one or more layers of one or more overlying materials. For example, in accordance with the embodiment illustrated in FIG. **29**, the first and second substrate members comprise the underlying substrate materials, and the overlying polymer or elastomer material comprises the overmolded material, or overmolding. In some embodiments, the overmolding may be of a non-uniform thickness or durometer, or positioned in certain areas, to produce various portions or features (such as a fastener portion, flexible hinge, etc.) and/or to accommodate gradual closing of the clamp from the proximal end towards the distal end in such a manner that a non-

uniform thickness of an organ, such as walls of a stomach, can be appropriately clamped without injury. In some embodiments, the overmolded polymer material may comprise silicone such as, for example, an unrestricted implant-grade silicone. In some embodiments, the substrate material may comprise the same material as the overmolding. Additionally, in some embodiments, the substrate material(s) and overmolding material(s) may comprise different or varying materials and/or durometers.

[0133] As shown in FIG. 29, the first and second elongated portions **2902** and **2904** are joined by the bight portion **2906** at the proximal end of the clamp **2900**. The bight portion **2906** includes a flexible hinge **2918** formed, in one implementation, from the polymer overmold, wherein the flexible hinge **2918** permits expansion and movement of the bight portion **2906** to accommodate any irregularities in the stomach wall or fluctuations of the passage-forming section when the clamp **2900** is installed. The flexible hinge **2918** also allows the clamp **2900** to accommodate variations in stomach thicknesses without compromising the pressure applied by the clamp **2900**, particularly in the partition-forming section. In some embodiments, the flexible hinge **2918** includes one or more attachment features such as, for example, a slotted aperture **2920**. The attachment feature may allow the clamp **2900** to be engaged with an installation tool (for example, such as the installation tool shown in FIG. 33) in accordance with the foregoing disclosure. In still other embodiments, the flexible hinge **2918** may be provided at a desired durometer or elasticity that may be the same as or different from that of the polymer or silicone overmolded portions provided in other areas of the clamp **2900**, such as the first and second elongated portions **2902** and **2904**.

[0134] When installing the surgical clamp **2900**, the clamp **2900** is placed into position as explained in greater detail below, and the fastener portion **2908** and engagement portion **2914** are used to retain the clamp **2900** in a substantially closed position. In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 29, the fastener portion **2908** comprises a strap formed from the overmolded polymer or other material and located towards the distal end of the second elongated portion **2904**. The strap may include one or more primary openings **2910** for receiving the engagement portion **2914**, and a secondary opening **2912** used for adjusting or manipulating the fastener portion **2908** and/or the second elongated portion **2904**. For example, a surgeon may use a tool (not shown) to engage the secondary opening **2912** to position the strap such that the engagement portion **2914** engages one of the primary openings **2910**. In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 29, the engagement portion **2914** comprises a protrusion, such as a hook or tab, for engaging openings of the fastener portion **2908**.

[0135] In some embodiments, the clamp **2900** may be adjusted by disengaging the engagement portion **2914** from one of the primary openings **2910**, and engaging the engagement portion **2914** with another one of the primary openings **2910** to either increase or decrease the spacing between the first and second elongated portions **2902** and **2904**. In some embodiments, the fastener portion **2908** may be sutured to the first elongated portion **2902** using suture pass-through holes **2916**, such as those located along an outside surface of the first elongated portion **2902**. Additionally, in some embodiments, once positioned on the stomach, the suture pass-through holes **2916** may be used to suture the clamp **2900** to the stomach walls to avoid displacement. It should be understood that, in some embodiments, sutures may be placed through the overmolding, as described in greater detail below.

[0136] Referring now to FIGS. 30(a) and 30(b), the surgical clamp **2900** of FIG. 29 is shown from respective side and perspective views, wherein the polymer material is illustrated semitransparent to show the underlying first substrate member **3001** and second substrate member **3002**. As shown in FIGS. 30(a) and 30(b), the first and second substrate members **3001** and **3002** may, in some embodiments, comprise the respective first and second elongated portions **2902** and **2904**, as well as at least a part of the bight portion **2906**. Additionally, in some embodiments, the first substrate member **3001** may also comprise at least a portion of the engagement feature **2914**.

[0137] FIGS. **31(a)** and **31(b)** illustrate the respective first and second substrate members **3001** and **3002** comprising the one-piece clamp **2900** illustrated in FIGS. **29**, **30(a)** and **30(b)**. In some embodiments, the first and second substrate members **3001** and **3002** each comprise a 3 mm-thick titanium substrate. As shown in FIG. **31(a)**, the first substrate member **3001** may include a tab or a hook **3102** comprising at least a portion of the engagement feature **2914**, a first section **3104** comprising a part of the first elongated portion **2902**, and a second section **3106** comprising a part of the bight portion **2906**. As shown in FIG. **31(b)**, the second substrate member **3002** may include a first section **3108** comprising a part of the second elongated portion **2904** and a second section **3110** comprising a part of the bight portion **2906**. It should be understood that the dimensions and materials comprising the substrate members provided herein are merely examples. It is envisioned that the substrate members may be of various thicknesses and lengths, and may be comprised of various biocompatible materials such as titanium or biocompatible polymer resins such as polyether ketone (PEKK) or polyether ether ketone (PEEK).

[0138] In accordance with the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **29**, **30(a)**, **30(b)**, **31(a)** and **31(b)**, the polymer overmolded portion of the clamp **2900** is a 1.5 mm-thick layer of polymer material (e.g., silicone) encapsulating the first and second substrate members **3001** and **3002**. The flexible hinge **2918** and fastener portion **2908** are formed from the polymer material, and are approximately 6 mm thick to provide a substantially consistent thickness along the surgical clamp **2900**. However, as previously discussed, in some embodiments, the polymer material comprising or overmolding one or more portions of the clamp **2900** may have a non-uniform thickness or application. It should be appreciated that the foregoing dimensions are merely examples and are not intended to limit or define any aspects of the clamp or portions thereof.

[0139] FIG. **32** illustrates another embodiment of a one-piece surgical clamp **3200** comprised of first and second substrate members overmolded in a polymer material. The clamp **3200** includes a first elongated portion **3202**, second elongated portion **3204**, bight portion **3206** with flexible hinge **3208** and attachment feature **3210**, a fastener portion **3212** and an engagement feature **3214**. The clamp **3200** illustrated in FIG. **32** is similar to the clamp **2900** illustrated in FIG. **29**, except, for example, that the fastener portion **3212** of the clamp **3200** omits the secondary opening **2912**.

[0140] Referring now to FIG. **33**, another example embodiment of an installation tool **3300** is illustrated. The installation tool **3300** is similar to those discussed above, and may be used in a similar manner to engage and install certain embodiments of the surgical clamps illustrated in FIGS. **29-32**. Using the installation tool **3300**, the clamp may be engaged (via the attachment feature of the bight portion), placed in the abdominal cavity (e.g., via a trocar) and positioned with the first and second elongated portions on opposite sides of the stomach, where the clamp is latched, closed, fastened, secured, or otherwise installed to at least partially partition a cavity inside the stomach as described above.

[0141] FIGS. **34(a)**, **34(b)** and **34(c)** illustrate various views of yet another embodiment of a one-piece surgical clamp **3400** comprised of first and second substrate members **3401** and **3402** overmolded in a polymer material **3403**. The clamp **3400** includes a first elongated portion **3404**, second elongated portion **3406**, bight portion **3408** with flexible hinge **3410**, a fastener portion **3412** and engagement features **3414** and **3416**. The clamp **3400** illustrated in FIGS. **34(a)**, **34(b)** and **34(c)** is similar to the clamp **3200** illustrated in FIG. **32**. The fastener portion **3412** of the clamp **3400** includes, for example, rounded primary openings **3418**, and the bight portion **3412** omits an attachment feature. Additionally, the clamp **3400** incorporates first and second engagement features **3414** and **3416**, wherein the first and second engagement features **3414** and **3416** include a raised member and a retaining loop, respectively, formed from the polymer overmolding **3403**. In some embodiments, the raised member may also be formed, at least partially, from the first substrate member.

[0142] In accordance with the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **34(a)**, **34(b)** and **34(c)**, the clamp **3400** may be inserted to an abdominal cavity through a trocar, positioned with the first and second

elongated portions **3404** and **3406** on opposite sides of the stomach, and closed and secured by engaging one of the primary openings **3418** with the raised member of the first engagement feature **3414**, and securing the fastener portion **3412** under the retaining loop of the second engagement feature **3416**. In accordance with the present embodiment, the inserting, positioning, closing and securing steps may be performed using surgical tools (e.g., clamps, forceps, scissors, etc.). However, it should be appreciated that the bight portion **3408** of the clamp **3400** may be modified to include an attachment feature, such as that provided in clamp **2900** or **3200**, to allow for the clamp **3400** to be engaged and installed using a surgical clamp installation tool, such as that provided in FIG. **33**.

[0143] FIG. **35** illustrates another embodiment of a one-piece surgical clamp **3500** comprised of first and second substrate members overmolded in a polymer material. The clamp **3500** includes a first elongated portion **3502**, second elongated portion **3504**, bight portion **3506** with flexible hinge **3508**, a fastener portion **3510** and engagement features **3512**, **3514** and **3516**. The clamp **3500** is similar to the clamp **3400** illustrated in FIGS. **34(a)**, **34(b)** and **34(c)**. The clamp **3500** incorporates an additional engagement member **3516** comprising a retaining loop formed from the polymer overmolding for receiving the fastener portion **3510**. The clamp **3500** is installed in a manner similar to the clamp **3400** and may be modified to include an attachment feature, such as that provided in clamp **2900** or **3200**, to allow for the clamp **3500** to be engaged and installed using a surgical clamp installation tool, such as that provided in FIG. **33**. It should be appreciated that the various embodiments discussed herein may be modified to include different numbers and combinations of engagement features and fastener portion openings without departing from the scope of the present disclosure as set forth in the claims below.

[0144] Referring now to FIG. **36**, a method for clamping an internal organ can include inserting a surgical clamp through an opening (e.g., using a trocar) into a body of a living organism at block **3610**. Then the first and second elongated portions of the surgical clamp are positioned on opposite sides of an internal organ of the living organism at block **3620**. At block **3630**, closing and securing the surgical clamp to partition a cavity inside the internal organ includes clamping the exterior of the internal organ with the two elongated portions.

[0145] As mentioned above, the internal organ can be a human stomach. In this case, closing and securing the clamp can include installing the clamp in a substantially vertical or angled position with a passage-forming section of the clamp located towards a bottom of the stomach. This positioning can create a small, vertical stomach pouch and thereby limit the intake of food into an excluded section or portion of the stomach, but still allow certain gastric juices from the excluded portion of the stomach to flow into the vertical stomach pouch. This partitioning can alter the production of hormones, enzymes and chemicals that affect metabolism, energy levels, hunger, digestion, and absorption of nutrients that are affected by exclusion of gastric fundus and body of the stomach by the partitioning. The polymer overmolding of the clamp reduces trauma and/or necrosis of the stomach or other internal organ, thereby enabling successful reversal of the surgery. Thus, the above method can further include reversing the surgery by removing the clamp.

[0146] Inserting the surgical clamp can include performing natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery (NOTES). Alternatively, or additionally, it can include performing a combination of NOTES and an assistant trocar placed into an abdominal cavity. This combination can include two or more of a conventional, laparoscopic, NOTES, and one port technique. The NOTES technique can include at least one of transgastric, transvaginal, transrectal, transcolonic, or combinations thereof. The one port technique is used for the introduction of several instruments, and encompasses a one port abdominal (including umbilical), perineal, retroperitoneal approaches, or combinations thereof.

[0147] Referring now to FIG. **37**, a method for clamping an internal organ can include engaging a surgical clamp, such as a bariatric clamp, to a head of a surgical clamp installation tool at block **3710**. At block **3720**, the surgical clamp installation tool can be employed to close the clamp and

insert the clamp through an opening in a body cavity of a living organism. Then the tool can be employed at block **3730** to reopen the clamp and to position the first and second elongated portions of the clamp on opposite sides of an internal organ within the body cavity.

[0148] Next, at block **3740**, the tool can be employed to close the clamp upon the internal organ and thereby partition a cavity inside the internal organ. The limbs, arms, or elongated portions of the clamp close in such a fashion as causing a gradual diminishing space between the two elongated portions, as the space opening extends proximally, accounting for the different thickness of the stomach. The clamp closes in a fashion that exerts enough pressure to maintain the opposite walls closed to each other without creating any undue damage/trauma/ischemia to the stomach or other organ walls themselves. Then at block **3750**, the clamp can be latched or otherwise secured to fix it in position to partition the internal organ and the cavity inside the internal organ. Also, at block **3760**, the clamp can be disengaged from the head of the surgical clamp installation tool, and the tool can be retracted from the body cavity at block **3770**. In some embodiments, the clamp may be latched or secured prior to or after disengaging and removing the surgical clamp installation tool. In such embodiments, the securing of the clamp may be performed using surgical tools alone or in combination with the installation tool. Alternatively, the tool may first be disengaged and removed, and the clamp subsequently latched using the additional surgical tools. Moreover, additional steps may be employed, either before or after the clamp is secured, to secure and position the clamp in place, such as using sutures.

[0149] As described above, the polymer overmolding of the surgical clamp reduces damage to the internal organ that would prevent or significantly decrease the likelihood of reversal of the surgical procedure. In some embodiments, the thickness or surface contour of the elongated portions of the surgical clamp may be provided to align with the particular organ or body being clamped so as to provide the desired pressure or force at each location of the organ or body being clamped.

Additionally, engaging the surgical clamp to the head of the surgical clamp installation tool may include passing a T-bar adjacent the end of a pull rod of the installation tool through a slotted aperture formed in a bight portion of the clamp, and rotating the T-bar using a lever or dial. Also, employing the surgical clamp installation tool to close and reopen the clamp may include operating a lever or trigger on a handle of the installation tool to pull and release the pull rod. Further, employing the surgical clamp installation tool to position the elongated portions of the surgical clamp may include manipulating a dial on a handle of the installation tool to articulate the head from side to side in a desired plane(s).

[0150] FIGS. **38**, **39(a)**, **39(b)** and **39(c)** illustrate an embodiment of the present disclosure, wherein the polymer overmolded surgical clamp is of a two-piece design. FIG. **38** illustrates a perspective view of the two-piece clamp **3800**, and FIGS. **39(a)**, **39(b)** and **39(c)** illustrate various views of the clamp **3800**, wherein the polymer overmold is illustrated semitransparent to show the underlying first substrate member **3901** and second substrate member **3902**. FIG. **39(a)** illustrates a profile view of the clamp **3800**; FIG. **39(b)** illustrates a top-down view of the clamp **3800**; and FIG. **39(c)** illustrates a cross-sectional view of the clamp **3800** taken along line A-A of FIG. **39(b)**.

[0151] The two-piece clamp **3800** includes first and second substrate members **3901** and **3902** (shown in FIGS. **39(a)**, **39(b)** and **39(c)**) overmolded in a polymer material to form a first elongated member **3802** and a separate, second elongated member **3804**. The first elongated member **3802** includes a first bight portion **3806** located towards a proximal end of the clamp **3800**, and a first elongated portion **3808** located towards a distal end of the clamp **3800**. The second elongated member **3804** includes a second bight portion **3810** located towards the proximal end of the clamp **3800** and a second elongated portion **3812** located towards the distal end of the clamp **3800**. When the clamp is installed, the first and second bight portions **3806** and **3810** comprise a passage-forming section at the proximal end of the clamp **3800**, and the first and second elongated portions **3808** and **3812** comprise a partition-forming section at the distal end of the clamp **3800**. Referring briefly to both FIGS. **38** and **10**, when the clamp **3800** is installed within an abdominal cavity, the

first and second elongated portions **3808** and **3812** are engaged to partition the stomach into a small, vertical pouch **500** and excluded section **502**, and the first and second bight portions **3806** and **3810** are engaged to form a passage that allows gastric juices to flow **506** from the excluded section **502** into the vertical pouch **500**.

[0152] As shown in FIGS. **38**, **39(a)**, **39(b)** and **39(c)**, the first elongated member **3802** includes first and second fastening portions **3814** and **3816** formed at least partially from the polymer overmold at opposite ends of the first elongated member **3802**. The second elongated member **3804** includes first and second receiving portions **3818** and **3820** formed from the polymer overmold at opposite ends of the second elongated member **3804**, and retention features **3822**, **3824**, **3826** and **3828** formed at an outer surface of the second elongated member **3804**. It should be understood that, in some embodiments, the first and second receiving portions **3818** and **3820** may be formed from the polymer overmold, or a combination of the second substrate material and polymer overmold. Similarly, in some embodiments, the retention features **3822**, **3824**, **3826** and **3828** may be formed from the polymer overmold, or a combination of the second substrate material and polymer overmold, as shown in FIG. **39(c)**.

[0153] When installing the clamp **3800**, the first and second elongated members **3802** and **3804** are inserted into the abdominal cavity (for example, using a trocar) and positioned on opposite sides of the stomach. Then, the first and second fastening portions **3814** and **3816** are each fed through respective first and second receiving portions **3818** and **3820**. A spacing between the bight portions **3806** and **3810** defines the passage formed at the bottom of the stomach and affects the pressure applied to the internal organ, whereas a spacing between the elongated portions **3808** and **3812** affects the pressure applied to the stomach by the partition-forming section of the clamp **3800**. The spacing between the first and second bight portions **3806** and **3810** may be independently controlled primarily by adjusting the length of the first fastening portion **3814** fed through the first receiving portion **3818**. Similarly, the spacing between the first and second elongated portions **3808** and **3812** may be independently controlled primarily by adjusting the length of the second fastening portion **3816** fed through the second receiving portion **3820**. Once the desired spacing is achieved, the clamp **3800** is closed, latched or otherwise secured by engaging the first and second fastening portions **3814** and **3816** with the outer surface of the second elongated member **3804** using the retention features **3822**, **3824**, **3826** and **3828**. The clamp **3800** may be adjusted or uninstalled by reversing the installation procedure. Additionally, in some embodiments, installation, removal, and/or adjustment of the clamp **3800** may be performed using standard surgical tools (e.g., forceps, clamps, scissors, etc.).

[0154] In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **38**, **39(a)**, **39(b)** and **39(c)**, retention features **3822** and **3828** comprise retention loops, and retention features **3824** and **3826** comprise raised members. The first fastening portion **3814** is fed through the first receiving portion **3818** and under the retaining loop **3822**. The first fastening portion **3814** includes one or more openings **3830** operable to receive the raised member **3824**. Once the first fastening portion **3814** is fed through the retaining loop **3822**, it is secured via a friction fit using the raised member **3824** and one of the openings **3830**. Similarly, the second fastening portion **3816** is fed through the second receiving portion **3820** and under the retaining loop **3828**. The second fastening portion **3816** includes one or more openings **3832** operable to receive the raised member **3826**. Once the second fastening portion **3816** is fed through the retaining loop **3828**, it is secured via a friction fit using the raised member **3826** and one of the openings **3832**. In some embodiments, the first and second fastening portions **3814** and **3816** may be further secured by suturing the fastening portions **3814** and **3816** to the second elongated member **3804** using suturing holes (not shown) formed within the second substrate member and polymer overmolding.

[0155] As briefly discussed above, the spacings at the passage-forming and partition-forming sections of the clamp may be adjusted independent of each other. Thus, the two-piece surgical clamp **3800** permits customized installation and adjustment of the surgical clamp **3800** by

permitting one end of the clamp (i.e., the passage-forming section or the partition-forming section) to be adjusted without having to adjust the other end. This allows a surgeon or other medical personnel to control the clamping pressure at each end of the device regardless of differences in thickness of the stomach from one end of the clamp **3800** to the other.

[0156] FIG. **40** illustrates another example embodiment of a two-piece surgical clamp **4000**. The two-piece clamp **4000** includes first and second substrate members overmolded in a polymer material to form a first elongated member **4002** and a separate, second elongated member **4004**. The first elongated member **4002** includes a first bight portion **4006** located towards a proximal end of the clamp **4000**, and a first elongated portion **4008** located towards a distal end of the clamp **4000**. The second elongated member **4004** includes a second bight portion **4010** located towards the proximal end of the clamp **4000** and a second elongated portion **4012** located towards the distal end of the clamp **4000**. When the clamp is installed, the first and second bight portions **4006** and **4010** comprise a passage-forming section at the proximal end of the clamp **4000**, and the first and second elongated portions **4008** and **4012** comprise a partition-forming section at the distal end of the clamp **4000**. The spacing between the bight portions **4006** and **4010** defines the passage formed at the bottom of the stomach and affects the pressure applied to the internal organ, whereas the spacing between the elongated portions **4008** and **4012** affects the pressure applied to the stomach by the partition-forming section of the clamp **4000**.

[0157] The first elongated member **4002** includes first and second fastening portions **4014** and **4016** formed from the polymer overmold at opposite ends of the first elongated member **4002**. The second elongated member **4004** includes first and second receiving portions **4018** and **4020** formed from the polymer overmold at opposite ends of the second elongated member **4004**. The embodiment illustrated in FIG. **40** is similar to that shown in FIGS. **38**, **39(a)**, **39(b)** and **39(c)**, except that the retention feature of the embodiment illustrated in FIG. **40** is embodied as a ratchet-type feature, wherein each of the first and second fastening portions **4014** and **4016** each include a plurality of “teeth” **4022** designed to engage the respective receiving portions **4018** and **4020** of the second elongated member **4004**.

[0158] When installing the clamp **4000**, the first and second elongated members **4002** and **4004** are inserted into the abdominal cavity (for example, using a trocar) and positioned on opposite sides of the stomach. The first and second fastening portions **4014** and **4016** are then fed through respective first and second receiving portions **4018** and **4020**. The teeth **4022** on each of the fastening portions **4014** and **4016** are designed to flex to permit the feeding of respective fastening portion **4014** or **4016** through the respective receiving portion **4018** or **4020**, and to engage the respective receiving portion **4018** or **4020** to retain the second elongated member **4004**, thereby securing the clamp **4000** in a closed position. In some embodiments, the first and second elongated members **4002** and **4004** may be further secured by suturing the first and second elongated members **4002** and **4004** to the stomach using suturing holes (not shown) formed within the elongated members.

[0159] The spacing between the first and second bight portions **4006** and **4010** may be independently controlled primarily by adjusting the length of the first fastening portion **4014** fed through the first receiving portion **4018**. Similarly, the spacing between the first and second elongated portions **4008** and **4012** may be independently controlled primarily by adjusting the length of the second fastening portion **4016** fed through the second receiving portion **4020**. The clamp **4000** may be readjusted or uninstalled by disengaging the teeth **4022** of the fastening portions **4014** and **4016** from the respective receiving portions **4018** and **4020**, and adjusting or removing the fastening portions **4014** and **4016** from the receiving portions **4018** and **4020**. In some embodiments, once the clamp **4000** is installed, excess length of the first and second fastening portions **4014** and **4016** may be removed, for example, using scissors or other cutting instruments. In some embodiments, installation, removal, and/or adjustment of the clamp **4000** may be performed using standard surgical tools (e.g., forceps, clamps, scissors, etc.).

[0160] Like the clamp **3800** of FIG. **38**, the two-piece clamp **4000** of FIG. **40** allows for

independent adjustment of the spacings at the passage-forming and partition-forming sections of the clamp **4000**. Thus, the two-piece surgical clamp **4000** permits customized installation and adjustment of the surgical clamp **4000** by permitting one end of the clamp (i.e., the passage-forming section or the partition-forming section) to be adjusted without having to adjust the other end. This allows a surgeon or other medical personnel to control the clamping pressure at each end of the device regardless of differences in thickness of the stomach from one end of the clamp **4000** to the other.

[0161] Embodiments of the polymer overmolded two-piece surgical clamp may be installed as described above with respect to the flow-chart illustrated in FIG. **36**. Additionally, the polymer overmolding of the two-piece surgical clamp reduces or prevents damage to the internal organ that would prevent or complicate reversal of the surgical procedure. In some embodiments, the thickness or surface contour of the elongated portions of the surgical clamp may be provided to align with the particular organ or body being clamped so as to provide a desired pressure or force at each location of the organ or body being clamped. It should be appreciated that, in some embodiments, the first and second elongated members may be formed entirely from the polymer or elastomer material or resin and do not include an underlying substrate member.

[0162] It should be understood that one or more of the various fastening portions and retention features of the two-piece overmolded surgical clamp, such as the ratchet-like feature of the clamp **4000**, the raised members and retention loops of the clamp **3800**, or various combinations thereof may, in some embodiments, be incorporated in the one-piece overmolded surgical clamp.

Additionally, in some embodiments, one or more of the engagement features of the one-piece overmolded surgical clamp may be incorporated in the two-piece overmolded surgical clamp. Furthermore, it should be appreciated that, in some embodiments, the one-piece surgical clamp may be a single, integrated unit or, in other embodiments, may be a modular unit formed of multiple pieces or parts combined to form the one-piece surgical (bariatric) clamp. It should also be appreciated that, in some embodiments, each of the pieces comprising the two-piece surgical clamp may include a single, integrated piece or, in other embodiments, may be a modular piece formed of multiple parts combined to form a piece of the two-piece surgical (bariatric) clamp.

[0163] FIGS. **41-48** and the accompanying description disclose various embodiments of a bariatric clamp (or surgical clamp) overmolded in a polymer material or are otherwise provided in support of such disclosure. The bariatric clamp is, in one implementation, a laparoscopically implanted device which, when closed and latched or secured, partitions a patient's stomach into two sections, such as two vertical sections or other divisions. The clamp may be installed using standard surgical tools (e.g., clamps, scissors, etc.) as further described below. When the clamp is installed, in one installation, the lesser curvature segment of the stomach forms the Magenstrasse, and the greater curvature segment, including the fundus, is generally excluded from nutritional contact. In one implementation, the clamp includes, at a proximal end, an aperture with an enlarged radius (generally referred to as the bight portion or passage-forming section), by which gastric juices created by the fundus and the body can empty into the atrum. By excluding the fundus, the clamp may alter or reduce hormones such as, for example, ghrelin, leading to the patient's loss of hunger. Additionally, the clamp acts as a restrictive procedure by reducing the size of the Magenstrasse by creating a small lumen for a vertical passageway of the nutrients along the lesser curvature.

[0164] FIGS. **41(a)-41(e)** illustrate various views of an embodiment of an overmolded bariatric clamp **4100**. The clamp **4100** includes first and second substrate members **4101** and **4103** (shown dashed in FIGS. **41(a)** and **41(e)** and similar to those shown in FIGS. **30(a)**, **30(b)**, **31(a)** and **31(b)**) overmolded in a polymer or elastomer material to form a first elongated portion **4102**, a second elongated portion **4104**, a bight portion **4106**, a fastener portion **4108**, and an engagement portion **4114**. As discussed above, the first and second elongated portions **4102** and **4104** serve as a partition-forming section of the bariatric clamp **4100**. Referring briefly to both FIGS. **41(a)** and **10**, when the clamp **4100** is installed within an abdominal cavity, the first and second elongated

portions **4102** and **4104** are engaged to partition the stomach into a small, vertical pouch **500** and an excluded section **502**. The bight portion **4106** comprises a passage-forming section located towards the proximal end of the clamp **4100**. The passage-forming section allows gastric juices to flow **506** from the excluded section **502** into the vertical pouch **500**.

[0165] As shown in FIGS. **41(a)**-**41(e)**, the first and second elongated portions **4102** and **4104** are joined by the bight portion **4106**, which is disposed generally at the proximal end of the clamp **4100**. The bight portion **4106** includes a flexible hinge **4118** formed, in one implementation, from the polymer overmold. The flexible hinge **4118** allows the clamp **4100** to be positioned in a variety of positions ranging from a substantially closed position illustrated in FIGS. **41(b)** and **41(c)**, to a substantially expanded (or fully opened) position as shown in FIG. **41(e)**. It should be appreciated that the flexible hinge **4118** allows the clamp **4100** to flex, twist, contort, expand, stretch, or flex in virtually any desired angle or position. For example, referring briefly to FIGS. **50(a)**-**50(d)**, the clamp **4100** is shown in a closed position in FIG. **50(a)**, opened such that an angle α at the bight portion is less than 90° in FIG. **50(b)**, opened such that the angle α at the bight portion is approximately 180° in FIG. **50(c)**, and opened such that the angle α at the bight portion is greater than 180° in FIG. **50(d)**.

[0166] Referring briefly to FIGS. **51(a)**-**51(c)**, the clamp **4100** is shown in various contorted positions. As shown in FIGS. **51(a)**-**51(c)**, the flexible hinge **4118** allows the clamp **4100** to twist, bend, and flex in virtually any desired angle or direction such that the first and second elongated portions **4102** and **4104** may be displaced from each other at an angle (for example, angle α) when viewing the clamp **4100** from an overview position, such as that provided in FIG. **51(a)**. In some embodiments, the flexible hinge **4118** is stretchable and may twist to provide the first elongated member at a desired position in any of three orthogonal planes relative to the second elongated member. In some embodiments, the flexibility provided by the hinge **4118** may be beneficial when positioning the first and second elongated portions on the stomach during installation. For example, the flexible hinge **4118** allows the clamp **4100** to be installed, in one embodiment, into a smaller opening, such as an opening with a trocar, one elongated member at a time and then to properly install and position the bariatric clamp **4100** on the stomach in the limited space of the abdominal cavity.

[0167] When the clamp **4100** is installed, the flexible hinge **4118** permits expansion and movement of the bight portion **4106** to accommodate any irregularities in the stomach wall or fluctuations of the passage-forming section. For example, FIG. **52(a)** illustrates the clamp **4100** in a closed position, wherein the flexible hinge **4118** is in a compressed, non-expanded position or resting state, and FIG. **52(b)** illustrates the clamp **4100** in the closed position wherein the flexible hinge **4118** is stretched or expanded in a tensioned state. As previously mentioned, such stretching or expanding may accommodate irregularities in the stomach wall or fluctuations of the passage-forming section. The stretching or expanding of the flexible hinge **4118** also allows the clamp **4100** to accommodate variations in stomach thicknesses without compromising the pressure applied by the clamp **4100**, particularly in the partition-forming section. In some embodiments, the flexible hinge **4118** may be provided at a desired durometer or elasticity that may be the same as or different from that of the polymer or silicone overmolded portions provided in other areas of the clamp **4100**, such as the first and second elongated portions **4102** and **4104**.

[0168] When installing the bariatric clamp **4100**, the clamp **4100** is placed into position as explained in greater detail below, and the fastener portion **4108** and engagement portion **4114** are used to retain the clamp **4100** in a substantially closed position. FIGS. **41(b)** and **41(c)** illustrate the clamp **4100** in the substantially closed position. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **41(a)**-**41(e)**, the fastener portion **4108** comprises a strap formed from the overmolded polymer, or other material, and located towards the distal end of the second elongated portion **4104**. Because the fastener portion **4108** is formed from the overmolded polymer in some embodiments, it is stretchable and capable of providing appropriate tension to partition the stomach when installed.

Also, as shown in FIGS. 53(a)-53(e), the fastener portion **4108** is capable of stretching so that one of the primary openings **4110** may receive the engagement portion **4114**. The fastener portion **4108** may also include a secondary opening **4112** used for adjusting or manipulating the fastener portion **4108**, the second elongated portion **4104** and/or the clamp **4100**. For example, a surgeon may use a tool (not shown) to engage the secondary opening **4112** to position the strap such that the engagement portion **4114** engages one of the primary openings **4110**. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. 41(a)-41(e) and 53(a)-53(e), the engagement portion **4114** comprises a protrusion, such as a hook or tab, for engaging openings of the fastener portion **4108**.

[0169] In some embodiments, the clamp **4100** may be adjusted by disengaging the engagement portion **4114** from one of the primary openings **4110**, and engaging the engagement portion **4114** with another one of the primary openings **4110** to either increase or decrease the spacing between the first and second elongated portions **4102** and **4104**. In some embodiments, the fastener portion **4108** may be secured to the first elongated portion **4102** by suturing the fastener portion **4108** to the polymer overmolding of the first elongated portion **4102**.

[0170] FIGS. 42(a), 42(b), 43(a) and 43(b) illustrate embodiments of an overmolded bariatric clamp similar to that shown in FIGS. 41(a)-41(e) and described above, except that the embodiments illustrated in FIGS. 42(a), 42(b), 43(a) and 43(b) have adjustable lengths. The adjustable length of the bariatric clamp allows for the clamp to be further customized to fit a patient's stomach during installation, or even after the clamp has been installed. For example, when installing the bariatric clamp, a surgeon is able to adjust the clamp as needed during installation to fit the patient's stomach. Additionally, if a bariatric clamp having an adjustable length is installed in a patient, and the length of the clamp is subsequently determined to be improper, the surgeon is able to adjust the length of the clamp to better fit the patient's stomach without having to remove the existing clamp or having to install a new clamp. Accordingly, a bariatric clamp having an adjustable length may prevent unnecessary surgical operations and/or reduce the amount of time required to install or adjust the bariatric clamp.

[0171] One embodiment of a bariatric clamp **4200** having an adjustable length is illustrated in FIGS. 42(a) and 42(b). The clamp **4200** includes first and second adjustable substrate members **4201** and **4203** (shown dashed) overmolded in a polymer or elastomer material to form a first elongated portion **4202**, a second elongated portion **4204**, a bight portion **4206**, a fastener portion **4208**, and an engagement portion **4214**. The first and second elongated portions **4202** and **4204** serve as a partition-forming section of the bariatric clamp **4200**. Referring briefly to FIGS. 42(a), 42(b) and 10, when the clamp **4200** is installed within an abdominal cavity, the first and second elongated portions **4202** and **4204** are engaged to partition the stomach into a small, vertical pouch **500** and an excluded section **502**. The bight portion **4206** comprises a passage-forming section located towards the proximal end of the clamp **4200**. The passage-forming section allows gastric juices to flow **506** from the excluded section **502** into the vertical pouch **500**.

[0172] FIG. 42(a) illustrates the adjustable bariatric clamp **4200** in a retracted position wherein the length of the first elongated portion **4202** and the length of the second elongated portion **4204** are decreased to shorten the overall length of the clamp **4200**. FIG. 42(b) illustrates the adjustable bariatric clamp **4200** in an extended position wherein the first elongated portion **4202** and the second elongated portion **4204** are extended to increase the overall length of the clamp **4200**. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. 42(a) and 42(b), the adjustable length is provided, at least in part, by the first and second adjustable substrate members **4201** and **4203** comprising the first and second elongated portions **4202** and **4204**, respectively, as well as portions of the bight portion **4206**. As discussed herein, the adjustable substrate members **4201** and **4203** are each referred to as a single member, but it should be appreciated that they may each be comprised of two or more pieces as shown, for example, in FIGS. 42(a) and 42(b). It should also be appreciated that, in the embodiments discussed herein, the overmolded material is capable of stretching, expanding, and/or contracting to accommodate the extended and retracted lengths of the first and second elongated

portions **4202** and **4204**.

[0173] In some embodiments, the first adjustable substrate member **4201** may comprise an external member **4201A** and an internal member **4201B**, wherein the first adjustable substrate member **4201** is capable of at least partially disposing, or housing, the internal member **4201B** within the external member **4201A**. For example, the external member **4201A** may be formed so that it has an opening **4205**, or hollow portion, operable to receive the internal member **4201B**. In this embodiment, the length of the first elongated portion **4202** may be adjusted by extending or retracting the internal member **4201B** from or into the external member **4201A**. Therefore, a user can extend the internal member **4201B** from the external member **4201A** as shown in FIG. **42(b)** to increase the length of the first elongated portion **4202**. Conversely, the user can retract, or insert, the internal member **4201B** into the external member **4201A** as shown in FIG. **42(a)** to decrease the length of the first elongated portion **4202**. In some embodiments, the external member **4201A**, internal member **4201B**, or both may include one or more detents (not shown) or other means for retaining a particular length of the first elongated portion **4202**. Additionally (or alternatively), the length of the first elongated portion **4202** may be retained by suturing the first elongated portion **4202** to a portion of the stomach, or to another device or tissue, to prevent unintentionally adjusting the length of the first elongated portion **4202**. In some embodiments, the length of the first elongated portion **4202** may be further increased by fully extending or removing the internal member **4201B** from the external member **4201A**. In other embodiments, the first adjustable substrate member may comprise one or more telescopic substrate members capable of telescopically expanding or retracting to adjust a length of the first elongated portion **4202** in a manner similar to that discussed above.

[0174] Similarly, in some embodiments, the second adjustable substrate member **4203** may comprise an external member **4203A** and an internal member **4203B**, wherein the second adjustable substrate member **4203** is capable of at least partially disposing, or housing, the internal member **4203B** within the external member **4203A**. For example, the external member **4203A** may be formed so that it has an opening **4207**, or hollow portion, operable to receive the internal member **4203B**. In this embodiment, the length of the second elongated portion **4204** may be adjusted by extending or retracting the internal member **4203B** from or into the external member **4203A**. Therefore, a user can extend the internal member **4203B** from the external member **4203A** as shown in FIG. **42(b)** to increase the length of the second elongated portion **4204**. Conversely, the user can retract, or insert, the internal member **4203B** into the external member **4203A** as shown in FIG. **42(a)** to decrease the length of the second elongated portion **4204**. In some embodiments, the external member **4203A**, internal member **4203B**, or both may include one or more detents (not shown) or other means for retaining a particular length of the second elongated portion **4204**. Additionally (or alternatively), the length of the second elongated portion **4204** may be retained by suturing the second elongated portion **4204** to a portion of the stomach, or to another device or tissue, to prevent unintentionally adjusting the length of the second elongated portion **4204**. In some embodiments, the length of the second elongated portion **4204** may be further increased by fully extending or removing the internal member **4203B** from the external member **4203A**. In other embodiments, the second adjustable substrate member may comprise one or more telescopic substrate members capable of telescopically expanding or retracting to adjust a length of the second elongated portion **4204** in a manner similar to that discussed above.

[0175] As shown in FIGS. **42(a)** and **42(b)**, the first and second elongated portions **4202** and **4204** are joined by the bight portion **4206** at the proximal end of the clamp **4200**. The bight portion **4206** includes a flexible hinge **4218** formed, in one implementation, from the polymer overmold. The flexible hinge **4218** allows the clamp **4200** to be positioned in a variety of positions ranging from a substantially closed position (similar to that illustrated in FIGS. **41(b)** and **41(c)**), to a substantially expanded (or fully opened) position (similar to that shown in FIG. **41(e)**). When the clamp **4200** is installed, the flexible hinge **4218** permits expansion and movement of the bight portion **4206** to

accommodate any irregularities in the stomach wall or fluctuations of the passage-forming section. The flexible hinge **4218** also allows the clamp **4200** to accommodate variations in stomach thicknesses without compromising the pressure applied by the clamp **4200**, particularly in the partition-forming section. In some embodiments, the flexible hinge **4218** may be provided at a desired durometer or elasticity that may be the same as or different from that of the polymer or silicone overmolded portions provided in other areas of the clamp **4200**, such as the first and second elongated portions **4202** and **4204**.

[0176] When installing the bariatric clamp **4200**, the clamp **4200** is placed into position as explained in greater detail below, and the fastener portion **4208** and engagement portion **4214** are used to retain the clamp **4200** in a substantially closed position. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **42(a)** and **42(b)**, the fastener portion **4208** comprises a strap formed from the overmolded polymer, or other material, and located towards the distal end of the second elongated portion **4204**. The strap may include one or more primary openings **4210** for receiving the engagement portion **4214**, and a secondary opening **4212** used for adjusting or manipulating the fastener portion **4208**, the second elongated portion **4204** and/or the clamp **4200**. For example, a surgeon may use a tool (not shown) to engage the secondary opening **4212** to position the strap such that the engagement portion **4214** engages one of the primary openings **4210**. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **42(a)** and **42(b)**, the engagement portion **4214** comprises a protrusion, such as a hook or tab, for engaging openings of the fastener portion **4208**.

[0177] In some embodiments, the clamp **4200** may be adjusted by disengaging the engagement portion **4214** from one of the primary openings **4210**, and engaging the engagement portion **4214** with another one of the primary openings **4210** to either increase or decrease the spacing between the first and second elongated portions **4202** and **4204**. In some embodiments, this adjustment of the clamp **4200** may also include adjusting the length of the clamp **4200** in accordance with the foregoing description. In some embodiments, the fastener portion **4208** may be secured to the first elongated portion **4202** by suturing the fastener portion **4208** to the polymer overmolding of the first elongated portion **4202**.

[0178] Another embodiment of a bariatric clamp **4300** having an adjustable length is illustrated in FIGS. **43(a)** and **43(b)**. The clamp **4300** includes first and second substrate members **4301** and **4303** (shown dashed) and first and second bight substrate members **4305** and **4307** (shown dashed) overmolded in a polymer or elastomer material to form a first elongated portion **4302**, a second elongated portion **4304**, a bight portion **4306**, a fastener portion **4308**, and an engagement portion **4314**. The first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304** serve as a partition-forming section of the bariatric clamp **4300**. Referring briefly to FIGS. **43(a)**, **43(b)** and **10**, when the clamp **4300** is installed within an abdominal cavity, the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304** are engaged to partition the stomach into a small, vertical pouch **500** and an excluded section **502**. The bight portion **4306** comprises a passage-forming section located towards the proximal end of the clamp **4300**. The passage-forming section allows gastric juices to flow **506** from the excluded section **502** into the vertical pouch **500**.

[0179] FIG. **43(a)** illustrates the adjustable bariatric clamp **4300** in a retracted position wherein the length of the first elongated portion **4302** and the length of the second elongated portion **4304** are decreased to shorten the overall length of the clamp **4300**. FIG. **43(b)** illustrates the adjustable bariatric clamp **4300** in an extended position wherein the first elongated portion **4302** and the second elongated portion **4304** are extended to increase the overall length of the clamp **4300**. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **43(a)** and **43(b)**, the adjustable length is provided, at least in part, by a first adjustable portion **4302A** formed from the polymer overmold comprising the first elongated portion **4302** and a second adjustable portion **4304A** formed from the polymer overmold comprising the second elongated portion **4304**. The first and second adjustable portions **4302A** and **4304A** are shown in a retracted position in FIG. **43(a)**, and in an extended position in FIG. **43(b)**. It should be appreciated that, in some embodiments, the first and second adjustable portions **4302A**

and **4304A** may be comprised of a material different from the polymer overmolding.

[0180] In some embodiments, the first adjustable portion **4302A** is capable of extending (e.g., stretching, expanding, etc.) to increase the length of the first elongated portion **4302** and retracting (e.g., contracting) to decrease the length of the first elongated portion **4302**. Therefore, a user may adjust the length of the first elongated portion **4302** by adjusting the position or placement of the first elongated portion **4302**, while the first adjustable portion **4302A** extends or retracts accordingly to account for corresponding adjustments of the length of the first elongated portion **4302**. Similarly, in some embodiments, the second adjustable portion **4304A** is capable of extending (e.g., stretching, expanding, etc.) to increase the length of the second elongated portion **4304** and retracting (e.g., contracting) to decrease the length of the second elongated portion **4304**. Therefore, a user may adjust the length of the second elongated portion **4304** by adjusting the position or placement of the second elongated portion **4304**, while the second adjustable portion **4304A** extends or retracts accordingly to account for corresponding adjustments of the length of the second elongated portion **4304**.

[0181] As discussed herein, the first and second adjustable portions **4302A** and **4304A** are capable of stretching, expanding, and/or contracting to accommodate the extended and retracted lengths of the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304**. In some embodiments, the length of the first and/or second elongated portions **4302** and **4304** may be retained by suturing the first and/or second elongated portions **4302** and **4304** to a portion of the stomach, or to another device or tissue, to prevent unintentionally adjusting the length of the first and/or second elongated portions **4302** and **4304**. Although FIGS. **43(a)** and **43(b)** illustrate the first adjustable portion **4302A** disposed at a location adjacent the first bight substrate member **4305** and the first substrate member **4301**, the first adjustable portion **4302A** may be disposed at other locations along the length of the first elongated portion **4302**. Similarly, although FIGS. **43(a)** and **43(b)** illustrate the second adjustable portion **4304A** disposed at a location adjacent the second bight substrate member **4307** and the second substrate member **4303**, the second adjustable portion **4304A** may be disposed at other locations along the length of the second elongated portion **4304**.

[0182] In some embodiments, the first and second adjustable portions **4302A** and **4304A** are capable of bending, flexing or hinging such that the bight portion **4306** is capable of being disposed at a desired angle relative to the length of the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304**. For example, FIG. **54(a)** illustrates an embodiment wherein the clamp **4300** is installed on a stomach **5400** and the first and second adjustable portions **4302A** and **4304A** are hinged such that the bight portion **4306** is angled in a first direction relative to the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304**. In another example embodiment, FIG. **54(b)** illustrates the clamp **4300** installed on the stomach **5400** and the first and second adjustable portions **4302A** and **4304A** are hinged such that the bight portion **4306** is angled in a second direction relative to the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304**. In some embodiments, the hinging portion of the clamp **4300** as described herein may be provided by hinges or other features incorporated in the clamp **4300** at locations where the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304** join the bight portion **4306**. In some embodiments, the first and second adjustable portions **4302A** and **4304A** may maintain the bight portion **4306** at a fixed angle.

[0183] It should be appreciated that, in some embodiments, the clamp may be positioned at various locations along the stomach as desired. For example, as shown in FIG. **54(a)**, the top portion of the clamp may be positioned at a location at the top of the stomach adjacent the esophagus and the bottom portion of the clamp may be positioned at a location at the bottom of the stomach horizontally off-set relative to the location at which the top portion of the clamp is positioned. This may be achieved by providing a clamp that can bend, flex, adjust, hinge, or curve to achieve the desired positioning (as is the case in FIG. **54(a)**), or it may be achieved by positioning the clamp so that it is angled with respect to a vertical axis extending from the bottom of the stomach towards the top of the stomach. In some embodiments, such positioning may be useful for ensuring that the

vertical food pouch or the portion of the stomach beneath the esophagus has a substantially uniform size from the top of the stomach towards the bottom portion of the stomach.

[0184] As shown in FIGS. **43(a)** and **43(b)**, the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304** are joined by the bight portion **4306** at the proximal end of the clamp **4300**. The bight portion **4306** includes a first bight substrate member **4305**, second bight substrate member **4307**, and a flexible hinge **4318** formed, in one implementation, from the polymer overmold. The first and second bight substrate members **4305** and **4307** are similar (in both functionality and composition) to the first and second substrate members **4301** and **4303** (and other substrate members disclosed herein), and may be formed of various biocompatible materials such as titanium or biocompatible polymer resins such as polyether ketone (PEKK) or polyether ether ketone (PEEK). The flexible hinge **4318** allows the clamp **4300** to be positioned in a variety of positions ranging from a substantially closed position (similar to that illustrated in FIGS. **41(b)** and **41(c)**), to a substantially expanded (or fully opened) position (similar to that shown in FIG. **41(e)**). When the clamp **4300** is installed, the first and second bight substrate members **4305** and **4307** provide structural support to the passage-forming section of the clamp **4300**. Additionally, the flexible hinge **4318** permits expansion and movement of the bight portion **4306** to accommodate any irregularities in the stomach wall or fluctuations of the passage-forming section. The flexible hinge **4318** also allows the clamp **4300** to accommodate variations in stomach thicknesses without compromising the pressure applied by the clamp **4300**, particularly in the partition-forming section. In some embodiments, the flexible hinge **4318** may be provided at a desired durometer or elasticity that may be the same as or different from that of the polymer or silicone overmolded portions provided in other areas of the clamp **4300**, such as the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304**.

[0185] When installing the surgical clamp **4300**, the clamp **4300** is placed into position as explained in greater detail below, and the fastener portion **4308** and engagement portion **4314** are used to retain the clamp **4300** in a substantially closed position. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **43(a)** and **43(b)**, the fastener portion **4308** comprises a strap formed from the overmolded polymer, or other material, and located towards the distal end of the second elongated portion **4304**. The strap may include one or more primary openings **4310** for receiving the engagement portion **4314**, and a secondary opening **4312** used for adjusting or manipulating the fastener portion **4308**, the second elongated portion **4304** and/or the clamp **4300**. For example, a surgeon may use a tool (not shown) to engage the secondary opening **4312** to position the strap such that the engagement portion **4314** engages one of the primary openings **4310**. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **43(a)** and **43(b)**, the engagement portion **4314** comprises a protrusion, such as a hook or tab, for engaging openings of the fastener portion **4308**.

[0186] In some embodiments, the clamp **4300** may be adjusted by disengaging the engagement portion **4314** from one of the primary openings **4310**, and engaging the engagement portion **4314** with another one of the primary openings **4310** to either increase or decrease the spacing between the first and second elongated portions **4302** and **4304**. In some embodiments, this adjustment of the clamp **4300** may also include adjusting the length of the clamp **4300** in accordance with the foregoing description. In some embodiments, the fastener portion **4308** may be secured to the first elongated portion **4302** by suturing the fastener portion **4308** to the polymer overmolding of the first elongated portion **4302**.

[0187] FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)** illustrate yet another embodiment of a bariatric clamp **4400** having an adjustable length. The bariatric clamp **4400** varies from the bariatric clamps discussed above with respect to FIGS. **41(a)-41(e)**, **42(a)**, **42(b)**, **43(a)** and **43(b)** in that the bariatric clamp **4400** in FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)** is comprised of multiple members, rather than a continuous design. However, it should be appreciated that the clamp **4400** operates in a manner similar to those discussed above.

[0188] The bariatric clamp **4400** includes a first substrate member **4401**, second substrate member **4403**, first bight substrate member **4405** and second bight substrate member **4407** (each shown

dashed). The first substrate member **4401** is overmolded in a polymer material to form a first elongated member **4402** having an engagement portion **4414** at a distal end and a first receiving portion **4416** towards a proximal end of the first elongated member **4402**. The second substrate member **4403** is overmolded in a polymer material to form a second elongated member **4404** having a fastener portion **4408** at a distal end and a second receiving portion **4417** at a proximal end of the second elongated member **4404**. The first and second bight substrate members **4405** and **4407** are overmolded in a polymer material to form a bight member **4406** having a flexible hinge **4418**, first retention feature **4420** and second retention feature **4422**. When the clamp **4400** is assembled, the first retention feature **4420** is received by the first receiving portion **4416** to couple the bight member **4406** to the first elongated member **4402**, and the second retention feature **4422** is received by the second receiving portion **4417** to couple the bight member **4406** to the second elongated member **4404**. The bight member **4406** comprises a passage-forming section disposed towards a proximal end of the clamp **4400**, and the first and second elongated members **4402** and **4404** comprise a partition-forming section disposed towards a distal end of the clamp **4400**.

[0189] Referring briefly to FIGS. **44(a)**, **44(b)** and **10**, when the clamp **4400** is installed within an abdominal cavity, the first and second elongated members **4402** and **4404** are engaged to partition the stomach into a small, vertical pouch **500** and excluded section **502**. The bight member **4406** comprises the passage-forming section located towards the proximal end of the clamp **4400** and allows gastric juices to flow **506** from the excluded section **502** into the vertical pouch **500**.

[0190] In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)**, the adjustable length is provided, at least in part, by the positions of the first and second retention features **4420** and **4422** with respect to the receiving portions **4416** and **4417** of the first and second elongated members, respectively. For example, FIG. **44(a)** illustrates the adjustable bariatric clamp **4400** in a retracted position wherein the first and second retention features **4420** and **4422** are positioned so that the overall length of the clamp **4400** is decreased. FIG. **44(b)** illustrates the adjustable bariatric clamp **4400** in an extended position wherein the first and second retention features **4420** and **4422** are positioned so that the overall length of the clamp **4400** is increased.

[0191] In some embodiments such as, for example, that illustrated in FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)**, the first retention feature **4420** and the second retention feature **4422** each comprise a ratchet feature having a plurality of teeth **4424** formed from the polymer overmold material, and the receiving portions **4416** and **4417** each comprise a loop-type shape formed from the polymer overmold material. The teeth **4424** are capable of flexing to fit within the opening of the loop when the retention feature **4420/4422** is inserted into the receiving portion **4416/4417**. This allows the retention feature **4420/4422** to slide through the opening of the receiving portion **4416/4417** to couple the bight member **4406** to the respective first or second elongated member **4402** or **4404**. Once a tooth **4424** of the retention feature **4422/4424** has passed through the receiving portion **4416/4417**, the tooth **4424** is capable of engaging the receiving portion **4416/4417** to prevent the retention feature **4422/4424** from unintentionally disengaging from the receiving portion **4416/4417**. However, if a user wishes to remove at least a portion of the retention feature **4420/4422** from the receiving portion **4416/4417** (for example, to lengthen or disassemble the clamp **4400**), the user may flex, or stretch, the receiving portion **4416/4417** and/or compress the tooth **4424** to withdraw the retention feature **4420/4422** from the respective receiving portion **4416/4417**.

[0192] As mentioned above, the adjustable length of the clamp **4400** is provided, at least in part, by the positions of the first and second retention features **4420** and **4422** with respect to the receiving portions **4416** and **4417** of the first and second elongated members, respectively. To decrease the length of the clamp **4400**, the user may insert the first and/or second retention features **4420** and **4422** into the respective receiving portions **4416** and **4417** as discussed above. If a user wishes to further decrease the length of the clamp **4400**, the user can further insert the first and/or second retention features **4420** and **4422** into the respective receiving portions **4416** and **4417** so that

additional teeth **4424** have passed through the receiving portions **4416** and **4417**. For example, FIG. **44(a)** shows the clamp **4400** in its most retracted, or shortest, position. In this embodiment, all teeth **4424** of the first and second retention features **4420** and **4422** have passed through their respective receiving portions **4416** and **4417**. To increase the length of the clamp **4400**, the user may remove a portion of the first and/or second retention features **4420** and **4422** from their respective receiving portions **4416** and **4417** as discussed above. If the user wishes to further increase the length of the clamp **4400**, the user can further remove a portion of the first and/or second retention features **4420** and **4422** from the respective receiving portions **4416** and **4417** so that additional teeth **4424** have passed back through the receiving portions **4416** and **4417**. For example, FIG. **44(b)** illustrates the clamp **4400** in its most extended, or longest, assembled position. In this embodiment, all teeth **4424** have been withdrawn from the receiving portions **4416** and **4417** except for the last tooth **4424** of each retention feature **4420** and **4422** that maintains the coupling between the bight member **4406** and the first and second elongated members **4402** and **4404**.

[0193] As shown in FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)**, the first and second elongated members **4402** and **4404** are coupled to the bight member **4406** towards the proximal end of the clamp **4400**. As discussed above, the bight member **4406** includes the first and second bight substrate members **4405** and **4407**, the first and second retention features **4420** and **4422**, and a flexible hinge **4418** formed, in one implementation, from the polymer overmold. The first and second bight substrate members **4405** and **4407** are similar (in both functionality and composition) to the first and second substrate members **4401** and **4403** (and other bight substrate members disclosed herein), and may be formed of various biocompatible materials such as titanium or biocompatible polymer resins such as polyether ketone (PEKK) or polyether ether ketone (PEEK). The flexible hinge **4418** allows the assembled clamp **4400** to be positioned in a variety of positions ranging from a substantially closed position (similar to that illustrated in FIGS. **41(b)** and **41(c)**), to a substantially expanded (or fully opened) position (similar to that shown in FIG. **41(e)**). When the clamp **4400** is installed, the first and second bight substrate members **4405** and **4407** provide structural support to the passage-forming section of the clamp **4400**. Additionally, the flexible hinge **4418** permits expansion and movement of the bight member **4406** to accommodate any irregularities in the stomach wall or fluctuations of the passage-forming section. The flexible hinge **4418** also allows the clamp **4400** to accommodate variations in stomach thicknesses without compromising the pressure applied by the clamp **4400**, particularly in the partition-forming section. In some embodiments, the flexible hinge **4418** may be provided at a desired durometer or elasticity that may be the same as or different from that of the polymer or silicone overmolded portions provided in other areas of the clamp **4400**, such as the first and second elongated members **4402** and **4404**.

[0194] When installing the assembled bariatric clamp **4400**, the clamp **4400** is placed into position as explained in greater detail below, and the fastener portion **4408** and engagement portion **4414** are used to retain the clamp **4400** in a substantially closed position. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)**, the fastener portion **4408** comprises a strap formed from the overmolded polymer, or other material, and located towards the distal end of the second elongated member **4404**. The strap may include one or more primary openings **4410** for receiving the engagement portion **4414**, and a secondary opening **4412** used for adjusting or manipulating the fastener portion **4408**, the second elongated member **4404** and/or the clamp **4400**. For example, a surgeon may use a tool (not shown) to engage the secondary opening **4412** to position the strap such that the engagement portion **4414** engages one of the primary openings **4410**. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)**, the engagement portion **4414** comprises a protrusion, such as a hook or tab, for engaging openings of the fastener portion **4408**.

[0195] In some embodiments, the assembled clamp **4400** may be adjusted by disengaging the engagement portion **4414** from one of the primary openings **4410**, and engaging the engagement portion **4414** with another one of the primary openings **4410** to either increase or decrease the spacing between the first and second elongated members **4402** and **4404**. In some embodiments,

this adjustment of the clamp **4400** may also include adjusting the length of the clamp **4400** in accordance with the foregoing description. In some embodiments, the fastener portion **4408** may be secured to the first elongated member **4402** by suturing the fastener portion **4408** to the polymer overmolding of the first elongated member **4402**.

[0196] FIG. **45** illustrates a flow diagram **4500** illustrating a method for installing a bariatric clamp. For the sake of clarity, the method illustrated in FIG. **45** is generally discussed with reference to the bariatric clamp **4100** illustrated in FIGS. **41(a)-41(e)** and described above, unless otherwise specified. However, it should be appreciated that the disclosed method for installing a bariatric clamp may be applicable to various embodiments of a bariatric clamp including, but not limited to, any of the embodiments discussed above with respect to FIGS. **41-44**. Additionally, when describing the method presented in FIG. **45** (and the method presented in FIG. **47**), it should be understood that references to the “first elongated portion” and “second elongated portion” are not limited to the exact embodiments of a “first elongated portion” and “second elongated portion” as illustrated in any of the figures described above. For example, as used in the context of the methods discussed with reference to FIGS. **45** and **47**, the “first elongated portion” of FIG. **41** may refer to a first half of the bariatric clamp **4100** including the first elongated portion **4102**, the engagement portion **4114**, and the section of the bight portion **4106** located on the same side of the bariatric clamp **4100**. Similarly, the “second elongated portion” may refer to a second half of the bariatric clamp **4100** including the second elongated portion **4104**, the fastener portion **4108**, and the section of the bight portion **4106** located on the same side of the bariatric clamp **4100**. It should also be noted that, in some embodiments, the first elongated portion may include the fastener portion, whereas the second elongated portion includes the engagement portion.

[0197] The method of FIG. **45** first discloses, at block **4502**, creating an opening in the abdominal cavity of a patient to allow access to the patient's stomach. In some embodiments, this may include inserting one or more trocars into the patient's abdomen, wherein the trocars provide an opening through which a surgeon may insert various devices and equipment such as, for example, surgical tools, a camera and the bariatric clamp **4100**. The trocars may comprise various features known in the art. For example, one or more of the trocars may, in some embodiments, include a cutting portion to assist the surgeon (or other personnel) with penetrating the abdominal cavity (or other tissue) of the patient. In some embodiments, other tools (e.g., scissors, needles, dilators, etc.) may be used to create the opening in the abdominal cavity so that the trocar can be inserted into the abdominal cavity. In some embodiments, the abdominal cavity may be inflated by forcing air (e.g., CO₂) into the abdominal cavity. In such embodiments, a hose or tube may be inserted into or connected to one or more of the trocars, and the trocars may include a seal to prevent the air from escaping the abdominal cavity through the trocars. In some embodiments, a camera or endoscope may be placed into the abdominal cavity to allow a surgeon or other personnel to view installation, removal or adjustment of the bariatric clamp **4100**. In such embodiments, the endoscope may be placed into the abdominal cavity through a trocar inserted, for example, at the navel of the patient.

[0198] At block **4504**, the method discloses removing tissue connected to the stomach, particularly at locations where the bariatric clamp **4100** is to be positioned adjacent the stomach. Tissue attached to or adhered to the exterior surface of the stomach is removed to create a tunnel, path or passageway on the exterior surface of the stomach for the first and second elongated portions **4102** and **4104** of the bariatric clamp **4100** to reside on the stomach, such as in a vertical orientation, or primarily vertical orientation, on the anterior and posterior sides of the exterior surfaces of the stomach, to partition the stomach, as described herein, and while providing a passage-forming section to allow some flow or exchange of gastric fluids between the first and second regions. When the bariatric clamp **4100** is in a closed position, some gastric juices are believed likely to be exchanged across both the first and second regions, and primarily through the passage forming section of the bariatric clamp **4100**.

[0199] In some embodiments, the removal of the tissue may be accomplished by resecting the

tissue using surgical equipment such as, for example, clamps, forceps, vacuum hoses, scalpels, an ultrasonic probe, or any combination thereof to create a passageway, tunnel or path for the bariatric clamp **4100** or any other surgical tools (e.g., alignment device, guide member, etc.) used in the installation process. Additionally, this step may include displacing tissue and/or organs (e.g., the liver) located towards a top, bottom, anterior and/or posterior side of the stomach to expose the stomach to provide easier access to the stomach. This may also include exposing one or more locations where the bariatric clamp **4100**, or other surgical equipment or tools, can be positioned onto the stomach with little or no intervening tissue.

[0200] At block **4506**, the method discloses positioning the bariatric clamp **4100** in a substantially expanded or opened position. Referring briefly to FIGS. **46** and **50(a)-50(d)**, the bariatric clamp **4100** of FIGS. **41(a)-41(e)** is illustrated in various opened positions (FIG. **41(e)** also illustrates the bariatric clamp **4100** in a substantially expanded or opened position). As shown in FIG. **46**, the clamp **4100** is placed in an opened position such that the bariatric clamp **4100** is capable of fitting into the opening of the abdominal cavity of the patient in the opened position wherein the first and second elongated portions **4102** and **4104** separately pass through the opening in the abdominal cavity. In some embodiments, this may include fitting the opened bariatric clamp **4100** through a trocar (e.g., a 12 mm trocar) while the bariatric clamp **4100** is in an opened or substantially expanded position. It should be appreciated that the fastener portion **4108** is comprised of the polymer overmolding, and is therefore capable of flexing, as shown in FIG. **46**, to fit within the opening of the abdominal cavity. Similarly, the flexible hinge **4118** is also comprised of the polymer overmolding, and is also capable of flexing to allow the first and second elongated portions to contort or adjust while the bariatric clamp **4100** is inserted into the opening of the abdominal cavity. In some embodiments, positioning the bariatric clamp **4100** in the expanded position may include aligning the first and second elongated portions such that a length/1 of the first elongated portion **4102** is substantially collinear with a length/2 of the second elongated portion **4104**. In some embodiments, positioning the clamp in the expanded position may include assembling the clamp, for example, if the embodiment of the clamp **4400** provided in FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)** is implemented. However, in alternate embodiments, the clamp **4400** in FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)** may be assembled after being inserted into the abdominal cavity.

[0201] At block **4508** of FIG. **45**, the bariatric clamp **4100** is inserted into the abdominal cavity in the substantially expanded or opened position discussed herein. FIG. **47** provides a flow diagram **4700** illustrating one embodiment of a method for inserting the bariatric clamp **4100** into the abdominal cavity in the opened position. The method illustrated in FIG. **47** implements an alignment device (e.g., Gold finger, clamp, forceps, etc.) to position a guide member (e.g., suture, string, thread, twine, wire, etc.), wherein the guide member is used to guide the bariatric clamp **4100** as it is inserted into the abdominal cavity and/or positioned adjacent the stomach. While describing the method of FIG. **47**, reference is made to FIGS. **48(a)** and **48(b)**, which illustrate various views of the patient's stomach **4800**. FIG. **48(a)** illustrates an overview perspective of a first side **4810**, top **4815** and bottom **4817** of the patient's stomach **4800**. FIG. **48(b)** illustrates a profile view of the stomach **4800** as viewed along line A-A in FIG. **48(a)**. The profile view shows the first side **4810**, top **4815** and bottom **4817** of the stomach **4800** and a second side **4820** of the stomach **4800**. In some embodiments, the first side **4810** may be the posterior side of the stomach and the second side **4820** may be the anterior side of the stomach, however in other embodiments, the first side **4810** may be the anterior side of the stomach and the second side **4820** may be the posterior side of the stomach.

[0202] Referring briefly to FIGS. **49(a)** and **49(b)**, an example embodiment of an alignment device, or tool **4900** is shown having an end member **4910** disposed at a distal end of the tool **4900**, and a handle **4920** disposed at a proximal end of the tool **4900**. The end member **4910** is disposed at the end of a shaft portion **4915** of the tool **4900** and, in some embodiments, includes an opening **4912** for receiving and/or retaining a guide member (e.g., suture). As explained in greater detail below,

the tool **4900** may be used to assist with positioning the guide member through a tunnel or path created along a side of the stomach and around the top of the stomach. In some embodiments, the end member **4910** may be articulated in an upward direction with reference to the horizontal shaft portion **4915** as shown in FIG. **49(a)**, and may also be articulated to be positioned in-line with the shaft portion **4915** as shown in FIG. **49(b)**. Articulation of the end member **4910** may be controlled by actuating the handle **4920** as shown in FIGS. **49(a)** and **49(b)**.

[0203] In the method of FIG. **47**, the alignment device is used to position the guide member so that it may be used to guide the bariatric clamp **4100** into the abdominal cavity, and into position as further described below. At block **4702**, a first end of the guide member is attached to a distal end of the alignment device (or the first end of the guide member is grasped using the distal end of the alignment device), and the alignment device is inserted into the abdominal cavity (e.g., through a trocar). At block **4704**, the alignment device is positioned along the first side **4810** of the stomach **4800** by traversing the distal end of the alignment device along the first side **4810** of the stomach towards the top **4815** of the stomach **4800**. Once positioned at the top **4815** of the stomach **4800** (e.g., at location **4805**), the distal end of the alignment device (e.g., the end member **4910** of tool **4900**) is positioned (e.g., articulated, extended, etc.) so that a portion of the guide member is accessible from the second side **4820** of the stomach **4800**, while a portion of the alignment device (e.g., the shaft portion **4915** of tool **4900**) remains positioned along the first side **4810** of the stomach **4800**. At block **4706**, the guide member is then positioned on the second side **4820** of the stomach **4800** (for example, using a clamp or forceps), while the first end of the guide member remains attached to the distal end of the alignment device (e.g., the end member **4910** of tool **4900**).

[0204] At block **4708**, the alignment device is withdrawn from the first side **4810** of the stomach **4800** (and preferably withdrawn from the abdominal cavity) by traversing the first side **4810** of the stomach in a direction towards the bottom **4817** of the stomach **4800** such that a first portion **4825A** of the guide member is positioned or aligned along the first side **4810** of the stomach **4800**, while a second portion **4825B** of the guide member is retained (for example, using a clamp or forceps) on the second side **4820** of the stomach **4800**. FIGS. **48(a)** and **48(b)** illustrate the first portion of the guide member **4825A** and the second portion of the guide member **4825B**, in accordance with the present embodiment. In this embodiment, the first portion of the guide member is aligned such that the position of the first portion of the guide member is relatively consistent with the location at which an elongated portion **4102/4104** of the clamp **4100** will be positioned adjacent the first side **4810** of the stomach **4800**.

[0205] At block **4710**, the first end of the guide member is then disconnected from the alignment device and attached to one of the first or second elongated portions **4102** or **4104** of the bariatric clamp **4100**. In some embodiments, this may be accomplished by attaching the guide member through the secondary opening **4112** and/or around the fastener portion **4108** of the second elongated portion **4104** of the clamp **4100**. In other embodiments, this may be accomplished by attaching the guide member to the engagement portion **4114** of the first elongated portion **4102**. At block **4712**, with the first end of the guide member attached to either the first elongated portion **4102** or the second elongated portion **4104**, and the clamp **4100** positioned in the substantially expanded position, the second portion of the guide member **4825B** is engaged to guide the bariatric clamp **4100** into the abdominal cavity. In some embodiments, this may be accomplished by pulling on the second portion of the guide member with surgical tools (e.g., forceps, clamps, etc.) to extract the first portion of the guide member **4825A** from the first side **4810** of the stomach **4800** while feeding the bariatric clamp **4100** into a trocar while the clamp **4100** remains in the substantially expanded position.

[0206] Referring again to FIG. **45**, the first or second elongated portion **4102/4104** of the clamp **4100** attached to the guide member at block **4710** is then positioned adjacent the first side **4810** of the stomach **4800** at block **4510**, while the clamp **4100** remains in an opened position. In some

embodiments, this may be accomplished by continuing to engage the second portion of the guide member **4825B** until the respective first or second elongated portion **4102** or **4104** is positioned adjacent the first side **4810** of the stomach. At this time, the guide member may be disconnected from the first or second elongated portion **4102** or **4104** and removed from the abdominal cavity. Additionally, other surgical tools (e.g., clamps, forceps, scissors, etc.) may be used to position the first or second elongated portion **4102** or **4104** adjacent the first side **4810** of the stomach **4800**. The remaining elongated portion is then positioned adjacent the second side **4820** of the stomach **4800** at block **4512**. The clamp **4100** should be positioned so that the bight portion **4106** of the clamp **4100** is abutting the bottom **4817** of the stomach **4800**. In some embodiments, surgical tools may be used to engage the remaining elongated portion and to properly position the elongated portion adjacent the second side **4820** of the stomach **4800**. Although the method is described in accordance with a preferred embodiment, it should be understood that, in some embodiments, the clamp **4100** may be installed in a sequence wherein blocks **4510** and **4512** are performed in reversed order.

[0207] At block **4514**, the bariatric clamp **4100** is closed to partition the stomach in accordance with the disclosure provided above with respect to the various embodiments of the bariatric (or surgical) clamps. In some embodiments, this may include stretching the tissue of the stomach along the length of the clamp **4100** to eliminate folds in the stomach tissue. In some embodiments, closing the clamp **4100** may also include securing the clamp **4100** in the closed position. For example, closing and securing the bariatric clamp **4100** of FIG. **41(a)** may include using a tool to engage the fastener portion **4108** (for example, at the secondary opening **4112**) to position the fastener portion **4108** such that the engagement portion **4114** engages one of the primary openings **4110**.

[0208] In some embodiments, closing the bariatric clamp **4100** may also include affixing the first elongated portion **4102** to the side of the stomach adjacent the first elongated portion **4102**, and/or affixing the second elongated portion **4104** to the side of the stomach adjacent the second elongated portion **4104** to prevent unwanted migration or displacement of portions of the clamp **4100**. In some embodiments, this may be accomplished by suturing the first and second elongated portions **4102** and **4104** to their respective sides of the stomach. For example, the first elongated portion **4102** may be sutured to the first side of the stomach (assuming the clamp **4100** is installed such that the first side of the stomach is adjacent the first elongated portion **4102**) by suturing through the overmolded portion of the first elongated portion **4102**. Similarly, the second elongated portion **4104** may be sutured to the second side of the stomach (assuming the clamp **4100** is installed such that the second side of the stomach is adjacent the second elongated portion **4104**) by suturing through the overmolded portion of the second elongated portion **4104**.

[0209] An example of one such embodiment is illustrated in FIG. **55**, which illustrates a clamp **5500**, similar to the clamp **4100** discussed herein, having curved suturing needles **5502** embedded or encapsulated within the polymer overmolding of the bariatric clamp **5500** and used to anchor the first elongated portion **5508** and/or second elongated portion **5510** to the stomach once the clamp **5500** is properly installed and positioned. In some embodiments, the substrate members (e.g., first substrate member **5504**) may be modified to accommodate the placement of the suturing needles **5502**. For example, as shown in FIG. **55**, the first substrate member **5504** and second substrate member **5512** include various recesses **5506** to accommodate placement of the suturing needles. In some embodiments, a clamp modified such as that shown in FIG. **55** may be inserted into the abdominal cavity of the patient having the curved suturing needles **5502** embedded or encapsulated within the polymer overmolding of the bariatric clamp and having sutures **5514** coupled to the curved suturing needles **5502**. In such an embodiment, once the first and/or second elongated portions **5508** and/or **5510** are properly positioned, pressure may be applied to the needles **5502** or elongated portion of the clamp such that the needles **5502** protrude from the polymer overmolding and into the adjacent walls of the stomach to suture the respective first and/or second elongated

portions **5508** and/or **5510** to the stomach. In some embodiments, the suture needles **5502** may be manipulated using the suture(s) **5514** attached to the respective needle **5502**. In some embodiments, instead of applying pressure to the needles **5502** as discussed above, the needles **5502** may be extracted from the polymer overmolding by manipulating the needles **5502** with the attached suture(s) **5514**. Referring briefly to FIG. **46**, the clamp may, in some embodiments, include one or more visual indicators **4602** for defining locations where sutures may be applied to or embedded within the clamp.

[0210] In some embodiments, the bariatric clamp may be attached to and positioned on the exterior surface of the patient's stomach using one or more toggle suture assemblies that are either partially or fully positioned from the exterior of the stomach to the stomach wall or from the exterior wall of the stomach to the interior of the stomach, depending on a desired implementation of a toggle suture. For example, the embodiment of the clamp **5500** illustrated in FIG. **55** may be modified such that the curved needles **5502** in FIG. **55** are replaced by a toggle suture or toggle suture assembly (such as a toggle suture assembly known in the art). In some embodiments, one or more toggle suture assemblies may be temporarily inserted into the clamp **5500** at various locations (e.g., at the recesses **5506**) or, in other embodiments, may be lock molded, machined, or installed at desired locations on the bariatric clamp to assist with installation of the clamp on the patient's stomach. In some embodiments, the toggle suture assemblies can be retroactively installed in a pre-manufactured clamp **5500**. In one embodiment, various toggle suture assemblies are provided adjacent the first and second ends of the bariatric clamp, such as adjacent the flexible hinge and/or the connection point where the bariatric clamp is closed, and along the first and second elongated members and the bight portion, as desired.

[0211] It should be appreciated that the bariatric clamp and/or sutures may be implemented using known or available absorbable materials, such as bio-absorbable materials (e.g., catgut suture), that provide desirable or suitable mechanical or structural properties and integrity for a desired or needed period of time prior to being absorbed or disintegrating to an unacceptable level. Either natural or synthetically absorbable materials may be used. Poly glycol, for example, may be used in certain implementations.

[0212] In some embodiments, the method illustrated in FIG. **45** may further include adjusting a length of the bariatric clamp as discussed above with respect to the clamps illustrated in FIGS. **42(a)**, **42(b)**, **43(a)**, **43(b)**, **44(a)** and **44(b)**. Depending upon the particular embodiment of the clamp, the length of the bariatric clamp may be adjusted in a variety of ways. For example, in the embodiments discussed above with respect to FIGS. **42(a)**, **42(b)**, **43(a)** and **43(b)**, the length of the clamp may be adjusted by adjusting the length of the first elongated portion and/or the second elongated portion. In the embodiments discussed above with respect to FIGS. **44(a)** and **44(b)**, the length of the clamp may be adjusted by adjusting the positions of the first and second retention features with respect to the receiving portions of the first and second elongated members. Regardless of which clamp is used, the length may be adjusted at any point during the clamp installation. However, it is preferable to adjust the length of the clamp prior to securing the clamp to the patient's stomach. Nevertheless, the clamp may also be uninstalled by reversing any of the steps discussed above (e.g., by removing sutures affixing any portions of the clamp to the stomach), so that the clamp may be removed or adjusted, wherein such adjustments may include adjusting the length of the clamp as discussed herein, or adjusting a position of the clamp on the stomach.

[0213] In some embodiments, the method for installing a bariatric clamp may further include ensuring proper installation of the bariatric clamp **4100**. This may include measuring a pressure applied on the stomach by the clamp **4100**. In some embodiments, the pressure may be measured by placing one or more pressure transducers between the clamp **4100** and one of the sides of the stomach. In some embodiments, a pressure in the range of 0-2 or 0-3 inHg may be desired. Additionally, ensuring proper installation may, in some embodiments, include inserting a

radiopaque fluid such as, for example, Barium into the stomach and observing the fluid, for example, via x-ray imaging to determine proper flow between the various regions of the stomach. [0214] Once installation of the clamp is complete, the surgical equipment may be removed, and the internal organs repositioned in their natural positions. Other precautions may be taken including, for example, cleaning or cauterizing any bleeding tissue to prevent clotting.

[0215] A number of additional and alternative embodiments of the surgical clamps, installation tools and methods for installing can have characteristics that are different from those described above. For example, it is envisioned that a surgical clamp not intended for bariatric surgery might not have a passage forming section, and that such a clamp might be smaller or larger, depending on the purpose of the clamp. For example, the clamp can be one-tenth of an inch in length to partition a blood vessel, or twenty-two centimeters in length to partition a stomach. Moreover, the clamp can be configured to partition any internal organ, and can vary in length accordingly between these two example lengths, or be longer or shorter as required. Also, the guide members might have one or more protrusions aligned with the engagement feature and configured for insertion into the slot formed in the bight portion of the clamp. Moreover, it is envisioned that the installation tool can be integrated with an endoscope and/or surgical robot, and that appropriate robotic elements can be included in place of or in addition to those described above. These and other features can be included in various combinations without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

Claims

1. A method of installing a bariatric clamp onto a stomach of a body, the method comprising: providing the bariatric clamp that may be positioned in an open position, a first closed position, and a second closed position; inserting the bariatric clamp into the body through an opening in the body; positioning a first arm of the bariatric clamp on a first side of the stomach and positioning a second arm of the bariatric clamp on a second side of the stomach while the bariatric clamp is in the open position; and closing and securing the bariatric clamp into the first closed position or the second closed position around the stomach to form a first compartment and a second compartment within the stomach with a partition-forming section of the bariatric clamp, and to form a fluid passage within the stomach with a passage-forming section of the bariatric clamp such that, when the bariatric clamp is secured on the stomach in the first closed position or the second closed position, the first compartment of the stomach is in fluid communication with the second compartment of the stomach through the fluid passage of the stomach; wherein the partitioning section of the bariatric clamp generally obstructs flow of a fluid from the second compartment of the stomach to the first compartment of the stomach when the bariatric clamp is installed in the first closed position or the second closed position around the stomach, and wherein the fluid contained within the second compartment of the stomach may flow through the fluid passage into the first compartment of the stomach while the bariatric clamp is installed in the first closed position or the second closed position around the stomach.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising selecting from the first closed position and the second closed position.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the bariatric clamp comprises a closure mechanism configured to secure the clamp in the first closed position or the second closed position.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the closure mechanism comprises an engagement portion and a fastener portion.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the fastener portion includes two or more openings operable to receive and secure at least a portion of the engagement portion, wherein, when the at least a portion of the engagement portion is inserted into a first of the two or more openings of the fastener portion, the bariatric clamp is secured in the first closed position, and wherein, when the at least a

portion of the engagement portion is inserted into a second of the two or more openings of the fastener portion, the bariatric clamp is secured in the second closed position.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising adjusting a spacing between the first arm and the second arm by disengaging the engagement portion from the first opening of the fastener portion, and engaging the engagement portion with the second opening of the fastener portion.

7. The method of claim 5, further comprising adjusting a spacing between the first arm and the second arm by disengaging the engagement portion from the second opening of the fastener portion, and engaging the engagement portion with the first opening of the fastener portion.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein inserting the bariatric clamp includes natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery (NOTES).

9. The method of claim 8, wherein inserting the bariatric clamp is transgastric, transvaginal, transrectal, transcolonic, or combinations thereof.

10. A method of installing a bariatric clamp onto a stomach of a body, the method comprising: providing a bariatric clamp that may be positioned in an open position or in a first closed position, the bariatric clamp including a partition-forming section and a passage-forming section; inserting the bariatric clamp into the body through an opening in the body; positioning a first elongated member of the bariatric clamp on a first side of the stomach, and positioning a second elongated member of the bariatric clamp on a second side of the stomach while the bariatric clamp is in the open position; and closing and securing the bariatric clamp into the first closed position around the stomach to form a first compartment and a second compartment within the stomach with the partition-forming section of the bariatric clamp, and to form a fluid passage within the stomach with the passage-forming section of the bariatric clamp such that, when the bariatric clamp is secured on the stomach in the first closed position, the first compartment of the stomach is in fluid communication with the second compartment of the stomach through the fluid passage of the stomach; wherein the partition-forming section comprises at least a portion of the first elongated member and at least a portion of the second elongated member separated by a first distance; and wherein the passage-forming section comprises a bight portion, the bight portion comprising a flexible hinge elastically stretchable in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the bariatric clamp.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the bight portion of the bariatric clamp further comprises: a first bend section at a distal end of the first elongated member, the first bend section comprising a first member extending in a first direction at least partially away from the longitudinal axis of the bariatric clamp; a second bend section at a distal end of the second elongated member, the second bend section comprising a second member extending in a second direction at least partially away from the longitudinal axis of the bariatric clamp; a third member extending away from the first bend section; and a fourth member extending away from the second bend section, the third member and the fourth member separated by at least a second distance.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein, when the bariatric clamp is in the first closed position, the second distance is greater than the first distance.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the bariatric clamp further includes: an engagement portion disposed adjacent the first elongated member; and a fastener portion disposed adjacent the second elongated member, wherein the fastener portion includes two or more openings operable to receive at least a portion of the engagement portion to selectably retain the bariatric clamp in the first closed position and in a second closed position that is different from the first closed position.

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising adjusting the first distance by disengaging the engagement portion from a first opening of the fastener portion, and engaging the engagement portion with a second opening of the fastener portion to retain the bariatric clamp in the second closed position that is different from the first closed position.

15. The method of claim 10, wherein inserting the bariatric clamp includes natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery (NOTES).

16. The method of claim 10, wherein inserting the bariatric clamp is transgastric, transvaginal, transrectal, transcolonic, or combinations thereof.

17. A method of installing a bariatric clamp onto a stomach of a body, the method comprising: providing a bariatric clamp that may be positioned in an open position or in a first closed position, the bariatric clamp including a partition-forming section and a passage-forming section; inserting the bariatric clamp into the body through an opening; positioning a first elongated member of the bariatric clamp on a first side of the stomach, and positioning a second elongated member of the bariatric clamp on a second side of the stomach while the bariatric clamp is in the open position; and closing and securing the bariatric clamp into the first closed position around the stomach to form a first compartment and a second compartment within the stomach with the partition-forming section of the bariatric clamp, and to form a fluid passage within the stomach with the passage-forming section of the bariatric clamp such that, when the bariatric clamp is secured on the stomach in the first closed position, the first compartment of the stomach is in fluid communication with the second compartment of the stomach through the fluid passage of the stomach; wherein the partition-forming section comprises at least a portion of the first elongated member and at least a portion of the second elongated member separated by a first distance; and wherein the passage-forming section comprises a bight portion, the bight portion comprising a twistable hinge elastically twistable such that the first elongated member is positionable in at least three degrees of freedom with respect to the position of the second elongated member.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the twistable hinge is elastically stretchable.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein inserting the bariatric clamp includes natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery (NOTES).

20. The method of claim 19, wherein inserting the bariatric clamp is transgastric, transvaginal, transrectal, transcolonic, or combinations thereof.
