

56a,b is formed with a cylindrical through-hole 66a,b sized to allow each handle 56a,b to fit snugly on a respective post 64a,b as shown in Fig. 2, and rotate about the post 64a,b and relative to the base member 22.

Figs. 2 and 3 also show that each handle 56a,b is formed with an arcuate gripping surface 68a,b that is formed on each handle 56a,b such that when the handles 56a,b are rotated toward each other, the gripping surfaces 68a,b will independently, but cooperatively, contact the cylindrical surface 70 of the patient interface 16 which is rigidly attached to the laser unit 12 (see Fig. 1). With this arrangement, neither of the handles 56a,b will apply an effective force on the patient interface 16 (or laser unit 12) until they are both in contact with the patient interface 16. Once both handles 56a,b are in contact with the patient interface 16, however, the handles 56a,b will symmetrically apply equal and opposite forces against the patient interface 16 (and laser unit 12). As intended for the present invention, this cooperation of structure is provided to avoid the application of uneven or unequal forces against the laser unit 12 during an engagement of the suction ring 20 with the laser unit 12.

Fig. 4 shows that a latching mechanism can be included that has a hook-shaped latch member 72a formed near the end of a cantilever 74a that is formed on handle 56a and a complementary hook-shaped latch member 72b formed on handle 56b. To latch the handles 56a,b, the handles 56a,b are closed causing the end of the cantilever 74a to elastically displace slightly in the direction of arrow 76 until the latch member 72a passes the latch member 72b at which point the end of cantilever 74a relaxes and presses