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(54) Title: SKIN PIERCING DEVICES FOR MEDICAL USE**(57) Abstract**

A needle assembly (31) for medical or veterinary use, which has a needle (37) and a retractable sleeve (33) associated with the needle (37), so as to reduce the risks of accidental puncture by the needle (37) and of contamination of the exposed needle (37), and so as also to limit the penetration depth of the needle (37). The present invention also seeks to provide a skin piercing device which incorporates a skin piercing element and a desensitizing element, and which, when placed against a portion of skin to be pierced, provides desensitization of the skin so as to render a subsequent introduction into the skin of the piercing element less painful.

