Weck Closure Systems Wins MDEA Competition for Hem-o-lok

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RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 8, 2000--Weck Closure Systems (WCS), a unit of Teleflex Incorporated (NYSE:TFX), announced today that its innovative Hem-o-lok polymer ligating clip has won the Gold Award in the Surgical Equipment, Instruments and Supplies category of the annual Medical Design Excellence Awards.

The award was presented to WCS, Wednesday June 7, at the Medical Design & Manufacturing East conference at the Jacob K. Javits Center in New York City.

A previous news release from Weck (3/31/00) reported that Weck had been nominated for the Gold Award and was guaranteed of at least a Silver Award.

Weck's Hem-o-lok non-absorbable patented polymer clip, an innovative locking clip that facilitates ligation in a wide range of surgery -- especially laparoscopic surgery -- was introduced in one-size (MLX) for open-surgery only in April 1999. Sales continue to establish new per diem monthly highs, according to Stephen Holmes, President of Weck Closure Systems. Sales have accelerated since the company achieved stronger supplies of its laparoscopic appliers recently. Holmes indicated that the clip is now achieving particularly strong acceptance for laparoscopic donor kidney transplants, for which it has been accepted recently at two major centers. The Hem-o-lok clip was used in late March in a "live-donor" kidney transplant broadcast direct to the floor of the annual meeting of SAGES (the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons) in Atlanta, Georgia. The clip has previously established strong usage for colon and rectal surgery and for radical prostatectomies, as well as for laparoscopic cholecystectomy, and even for particular targets in cardiovascular surgery. It has established usage in a wide range of other procedures as well.

WCS plans to release several Hem-o-lok line extension products in the upcoming year. Weck established the modern ligating clip market with introduction of its Hemoclip metal ligating clip in 1963. Weck now commands over 70% of the dollar market in manually-loaded ligating clips, and is also the leader in ligating clips sold on a unit basis across manual-load and automatic-feed segments. Weck competes against Ethicon Inc. (Johnson & Johnson: JNJ, NYSE) and United States Surgical (Tyco International Limited: TYC, NYSE). Both of those companies had earlier introduced absorbable polymer clips. The Hem-o-lok clip is targeted at achieving more substantial sales through innovative design to customer needs around a non-absorbable material. Approximately 300 hospital accounts have initiated purchasing of the device to date, including several major institutions.

Weck allotted 23 man-years of dedicated work to creation of the clip in the research and design stage of the project.

The Hem-o-lok clip was selected as the winner of the Gold Award by a jury panel selected by Medical Design and Manufacturing. The product was selected over finalist entries from United States Surgical (North Haven, CT), Lifecore Biomedical (Chasku, MN), Ethicon Inc (Somerville, NJ) from Hydroferra LLC (Williamantic, CT); and LSI Solutions (Rochester, NY), all of which won silver awards.

WCS indicated today that the Hem-o-lok clip has won still another top award, which will be announced shortly.

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