spacer block **78** and a 17.5 mm thick spacer block **80**. This is used for trialling the gap between bone resections. It is not size specific.

Not shown in FIGS. **3** and **4** is a Patella instrumentation container. This includes a patella cutting guide, a patella calliper, a patella drill, a patella cementing clamp, patella trials and a patella drill guide which is not size specific.

During surgery the surgeon can minimise the unused instruments required to be disposed of or decontaminated by using the size specific containers for tibial preparation, tibial insert trials and femoral finishing and trialling. The surgeon may have determined the correct size with x-ray templates and/or will have confirmed the patient's size with the femoral sizing and rotation device **70** and the tibial sizing device **72** in the primary cut container **30**. The remaining containers of size specific instruments can be left unused and there is no need to either sterilise them before they can be used in another procedure or to dispose of them without use.

This allows the number of instruments required to be decontaminated or disposed to be minimised compared to the previous system in which a single container contained size specific instruments of many different sizes.

For example, size specific instrumentation might be typically be provided in sizes of 2, 2.5, 3, 4 and 5 for the P.F.C. sigma system. If only a single size of instrument is used, one of the size specific tibial preparation instrumentation container, four of the size specific tibial trial container and four of the femoral finishing and trialling container will be unopened and can be reused without requiring decontamination. Needless decontamination or disposal of thirty-six instruments which have not been used can be avoided. Of course, it will be understood that when more sizes are provided even more instruments can avoid needless decontamination or disposal.

The number of containers required for the all the instrumentation remains manageable so that the identification of the correct instrument can be made easily in the operating room. It also has the benefit of avoiding complicated stock control. For example, if all the instruments were individually packaged, the stock control required in the hospital would be more complicated than the present invention.

In this embodiment the instruments are sterilised within the containers and packaging and delivered ready for use in the operating room.

In an alternative embodiment, the instruments may be processed through a hospital decontamination process of washing followed by sterilisation and delivery to the theatre. In this embodiment, the container is designed to allow the instruments to be washed and sterilised while in place in the container.

It will be appreciated that the present invention can easily be adapted depending on the number of different sizes used in a particular surgical procedure.

In an alternative embodiment the size specific instrumentation may be provided together with the measuring instruments for the trial implants. However, it is presently preferred to include the measuring instruments in a non-size specific container to avoid duplication of instruments.

In another alternative embodiment the size specific containers may be split further, for example into separate containers for the left femoral trial and the right femoral trial. However, this is presently less preferred as it increases the packaging costs and the complexity of the system.

Although the embodiments described above relate to a knee replacement system, it will be appreciated that the present invention can be applied to any other surgical procedure, and in particular other orthopaedic surgical procedures, in which size specific instrumentation is used.

The invention claimed is:

1. A system comprising at least:

a first container containing at least a first surgical instrument of a first type that is size specific and a second surgical instrument of a second type that is size specific, wherein both the first and second instruments are of a first size;

a second container containing at least a third surgical instrument of the first type and a fourth surgical instrument of the second type, wherein both the third and fourth instruments are of a second size which is different from the first size; and

a third container containing at least a fifth surgical instrument of a third type which is size independent;

wherein:

the first, second, third, fourth and fifth surgical instruments are sterilized within their respective containers;

the first container contains no instruments of the second size;

the second container contains no instruments of the first size;

the third container contains no instruments that are size specific; and

each container contains only surgical instruments.

2. A system according to claim **1**, wherein the fifth surgical instrument is for determining the required size of the first surgical instrument and/or the second surgical instrument.

3. A system according to claim **1** for use in knee surgery, wherein the first and third instruments are a trial femoral implant and the second and fourth instruments are for performing femoral finishing resections suitable for the first or third trial femoral implant, respectively.

4. A system according to claim **3**, wherein the first and second containers each contain:

a notch guide;

a femoral finishing cutting block;

a left trial femoral implant; and

a right trial femoral implant.

5. A system according to claim **1** for use in knee surgery, wherein the first surgical instrument is a tibial trial instrument of a first thickness and a first size, the second surgical instrument is a tibial trial instrument of a second thickness and the first size, the third surgical instrument is a tibial trial instrument of the first thickness and a second size, and the fourth surgical instrument is a tibial trial instrument of the second thickness and the second size.

6. A system according to claim **1** for use in knee surgery, wherein the first and second containers contain instruments for femoral finishing and trial and the third container contains at least one of primary cuts instrumentation, core instrumentation, patella instrumentation, resection gap trialling and ligament tensing instrumentation.

7. A system according to claim **6**, further comprising fourth and fifth containers containing instruments for tibial preparation and tibial trial.

8. A system according to claim **1**, wherein the containers are double bagged and the surgical instruments are sterilised within the containers.

9. A system according to claim **1**, wherein the containers are disposable.

10. A system according to claim **1**, wherein the containers are reusable.

11. A system according to claim **1**, wherein the first and second containers each comprise a housing defining locations for the at least first and second surgical instruments and the at least third and fourth surgical instruments, respectively.

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