

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A check valve for use in an IV set, comprising:
 - an upper housing defining an inlet of the check valve;
 - a lower housing defining an outlet of the check valve;
 - a cavity interposed between and defined by the upper and lower housings for fluidly connecting the inlet and the outlet;
 - a flexible valve member mounted in the cavity to selectively permit fluid flow in a first direction, and prevent fluid backflow in a second direction opposite to the first direction; and
 - a filter member mounted in the upper housing upstream of the flexible valve member, the filter member having an elongated portion configured to maximize surface area thereof exposed to the fluid flow and restrict passage of undesirable matter in fluid flowing through the check valve.

2. The check valve of Claim 1, wherein:
 - the upper housing comprises a cylindrical body having an internal surface; and
 - the filter member comprises a T-shaped filter including a cylindrical elongated stem portion and a head portion, the cylindrical elongated stem portion being spaced apart from the internal surface.

3. The check valve of Claim 2, wherein the stem portion is mounted in the upper housing with an interference fit.

4. The check valve of Claim 2, wherein the stem portion comprises a first diameter and the head portion comprises a second diameter, the second diameter being larger than the first diameter.

5. The check valve of Claim 1, wherein the filter member comprises a porous material selected from the group consisting of plastic materials, cork materials, woven and nonwoven materials.

6. The check valve of Claim 1, wherein:
 - the lower housing comprises a support portion disposed in the cavity at a central portion thereof, a central axis of the support portion being aligned with a central longitudinal axis of the check valve; and
 - the valve member is configured to be mounted and supported on the support portion.

7. The check valve of claim 1, wherein:
 - the upper housing comprises an internal surface and an external surface, the internal surface including an upstream internal surface and a downstream internal surface; and
 - the downstream internal surface of the upper housing includes a projection extending into the cavity, the projection being circularly disposed about a central axis of the filter member.

8. The check valve of claim 7, wherein:
 - a sealing surface is defined at a distal end of the projection; and
 - in a closed state, the valve member is configured to contact the sealing surface to limit fluid flow past the sealing surface.

9. The check valve of claim 8, wherein:
 - when an upstream pressure is applied to the valve member, the valve member is configured to deflect away from the sealing surface to fluidly communicate the inlet and the cavity; and
 - when a downstream pressure is applied to the valve member, the valve member is configured to deflect towards the sealing surface to block the fluid communication between the inlet and the cavity, and restrict backflow of the fluid from the outlet to the inlet.

10. The check valve of claim 1, wherein:
 - the upper housing comprises an internal surface and an external surface, the internal surface including an upstream internal surface and a downstream internal surface; and
 - the upstream internal surface comprises at least one stop protruding radially inward from the upstream internal surface to restrict axial displacement of the filter member by the valve member in the upstream direction.

11. The check valve of Claim 1, wherein:
 - the upper housing comprises an internal surface and an external surface, the internal surface including an upstream internal surface and a downstream internal surface; and
 - the downstream internal surface includes a plurality of ribs formed thereon, the plurality of ribs disposed in the cavity and protruding radially inward from the downstream internal surface to center the valve member within the cavity.

12. The check valve of Claim 1, wherein the filter member comprises a hollow central channel extending longitudinally through an axial center thereof.

13. The check valve of Claim 12, wherein the inlet, the hollow central channel, and the outlet are aligned along a central longitudinal axis of the check valve.

14. The check valve of Claim 13, wherein the inlet, the hollow central channel, and the outlet are fluidly communicated to define a flow channel through which the fluid flows through the check valve.

15. A check valve for use in an IV set, comprising:
 - an upper housing comprising an inlet of the check valve;
 - a lower housing axially coupled to the upper housing and comprising an outlet of the check valve;

a cavity cooperatively formed by the upper and lower housings for fluidly connecting the inlet and the outlet;

a flow passage extending between the inlet and outlet and fluidly communicated with the cavity;

a flexible valve member mounted in the cavity to selectively permit fluid flow in a first direction, and prevent fluid backflow in a second direction opposite to the first direction; and

an elongate filter member mounted in the flow passage upstream of the flexible valve member to maximize surface area thereof exposed to the fluid flow, and restrict passage of undesirable matter in fluid flowing towards the flexible valve member.

16. The check valve of claim 15, wherein the filter member is mounted in the upper housing by press-fitting into the flow passage in the upper housing.

17. The check valve of Claim 15, wherein:
the upper housing comprises a cylindrical body having an internal surface; and
the filter member comprises a T- shaped filter including a cylindrical elongated stem portion and a head portion, the cylindrical elongated stem portion being spaced apart from the internal surface.

18. The check valve of Claim 17, wherein the filter member comprises a hollow central channel extending longitudinally through at least a portion of the head portion and the stem portion.

19. The check valve of Claim 18, wherein the inlet, the hollow central channel, and the outlet are co-axially aligned with each other.

20. The check valve of claim 15, wherein:
an internal surface of the upper housing in the cavity includes an axially extending projection disposed circularly about the flow passage in the cavity; and

a sealing surface is defined at a distal end of the circular projection, wherein the valve member is configured to contact the sealing surface to limit fluid flow across the sealing surface.