



(22) Date de dépôt/Filing Date: 2005/07/26

(41) Mise à la disp. pub./Open to Public Insp.: 2007/01/26

(51) Cl.Int./Int.Cl. *F04B 47/12* (2006.01),
F04B 53/02 (2006.01), *F16J 15/32* (2006.01),
F16J 15/56 (2006.01)

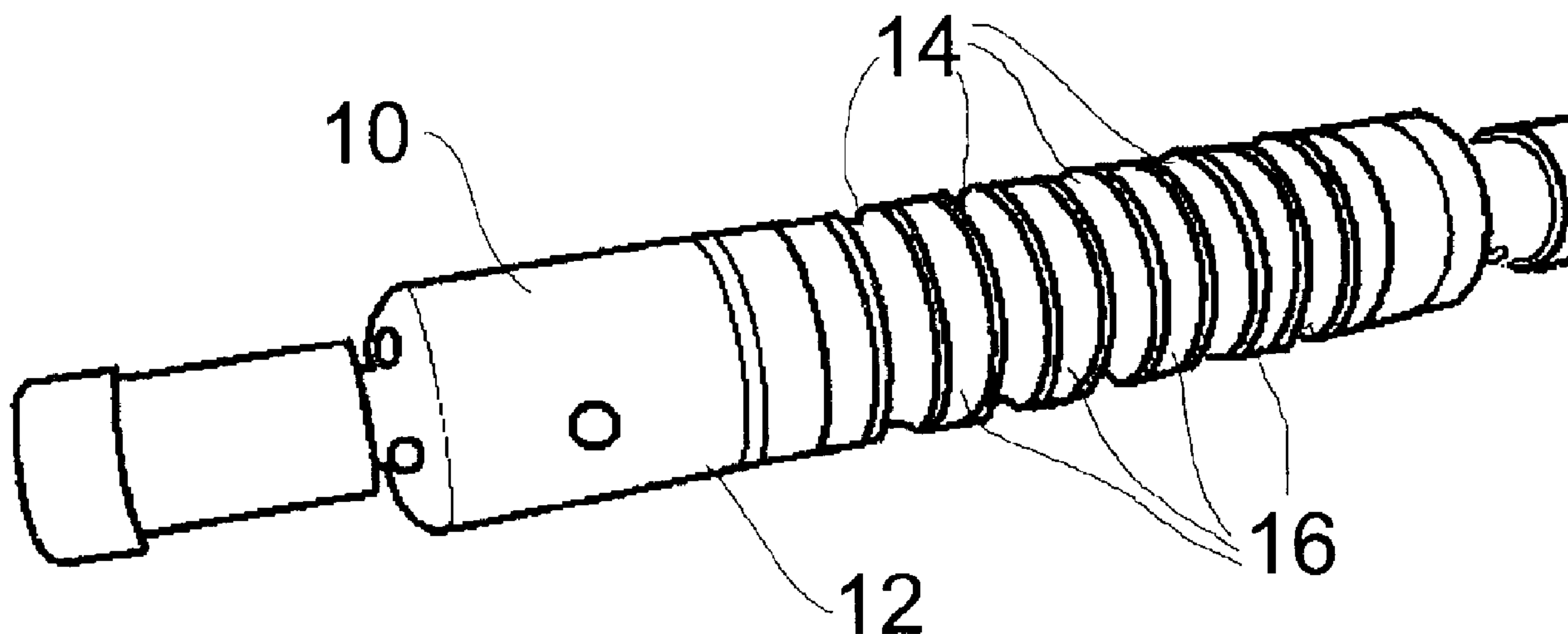
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(54) Titre : PISTON PLONGEUR A JOINTS D'ETANCHEITE ANNULAIRES EXTERIEURS ET METHODE
D'INSTALLATION DE JOINTS D'ETANCHEITE ANNULAIRES SUR LA SURFACE EXTERIEURE D'UN PISTON
PLONGEUR

(54) Title: PLUNGER WITH ANNULAR EXTERIOR SEALS AND METHOD OF INSTALLING ANNULAR SEALS ON AN
EXTERIOR SURFACE OF A PLUNGER



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A method of installing annular seals on a plunger. A first step involves positioning an annular seal on a seal installation tool adapted to hold the annular seal in an expanded state. A second step involves positioning the annular seal so that the annular seal overlies a body of a plunger. A third step involves transferring the annular seal from the seal installation tool to a seal groove in the body of the plunger.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of installing annular seals on a plunger. A first step involves positioning an annular seal on a seal installation tool adapted to hold the annular seal in an expanded state. A second step involves positioning the annular seal so that the annular seal overlies a
5 body of a plunger. A third step involves transferring the annular seal from the seal installation tool to a seal groove in the body of the plunger.

TITLE OF THE INVENTION:

Plunger with annular exterior seals and method of installing annular seals on an exterior surface of a plunger

5 FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a plunger with annular exterior seals and a method of installing annular seals on an exterior surface of a plunger.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

10 Gas lift plungers have a number of annular exterior seals. A joint is positioned at each seal location to allow the disassembly of the plunger, in order to facilitate installation of the annular seals. Each joint is a potential failure point for the plunger.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 According to one aspect of the present invention there is provided a plunger, which has a cylindrical body. All or at least a portion of the body is in one piece with more than one circumferential exterior seal groove. Replaceable annular seals are positioned in selected ones of the seal grooves.

20 According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided a method of installing annular seals on a plunger. A first step involves positioning an annular seal on a seal installation tool adapted to hold the annular seal in an expanded state. A second step involves positioning the annular seal so that the annular seal overlies a body of a plunger. A third step involves transferring the annular seal from the seal installation tool to a seal groove
25 in the body of the plunger.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

These and other features of the invention will become more apparent from the
30 following description in which reference is made to the appended drawings, the drawings are for the purpose of illustration only and are not intended to in any way limit the scope of the invention to the particular embodiment or embodiments shown, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a plunger constructed in accordance with the teachings of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of an elastomer seal being expanded by a truncated conical seal expanding member.

5 **FIG. 3** is a side elevation view of the elastomer seal being transferred from the seal expanding member onto a seal installation tool.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the elastomer seal mounted on the seal installation tool.

FIG. 5 is a side elevation view of the seal installation tool overlying a plunger body.

10 **FIG. 6** is a side elevation view of the elastomer seal being transferred from the seal installation tool onto the plunger body.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The preferred embodiment, a plunger generally identified by reference numeral 10,
15 will now be described with reference to **FIG. 1**.

Plunger 10 has a cylindrical body 12. Body 12 is machined in one piece with numerous circumferential exterior seal grooves 14. Replaceable annular seals 16 made from elastomer are positioned in seal grooves 14. As depicted, annular seals 16 are positioned in
20 every other seal groove 14. Plunger 10 has the distinct advantage of having no joints. It will be appreciated that it not essential that there be no joints. Benefits could be gained by simply reducing the number of joints. This is done by placing more than one of seal grooves 14 on each portion of more than one portion of body 12.

25 It would not be possible to make plunger 10, unless some method were developed for installing annular seals 16 onto a one piece body 12.

Referring to **FIG. 2** through **6**, there will now be described a preferred method of installing annular seals 16. Referring to **FIG. 4**, annular seal 16 is positioned on a seal
30 installation tool 20. Seal installation tool 20 is adapted to hold annular seal 16 in an expanded state. Seal installation tool 20 can take a number of forms. The form selected for illustration is a sleeve-form body 22 with an exterior surface 24 on which is positioned a seal

seat 26. Referring to **FIG. 5**, body 22 is positioned so that annular seal 16 overlies body 12 of plunger 10. Referring to **FIG. 6**, annular seal 16 is then transferred from seal installation tool 20 to one of seal grooves 14 on body 12 of plunger 10.

5 It will be appreciated that body 22 of seal installation tool 20 need not be in the form of a sleeve. It will also be appreciated that body 22 need not overlie plunger 10, as long as annular seal 16 does. It will also be appreciated that seal seat 26 can be discontinuous, as annular seal 16 could be just as effectively held in an expanded condition by a plurality of fingers arranged in a ring.

10 Referring to **FIG. 2**, a seal expanding member 30 has been developed for use in expanding annular seal 16. Seal expanding member 30 has a truncated conical body 32. It will be appreciated that body 32 need not be truncated, but only the lower portion of body 32 is needed to perform the expanding operation. An upper portion of body 32, does not serve a
15 useful function if its outer diameter is smaller than the inner diameter of annular seal 16. It will be appreciated that the conical form is merely a convenient form of inclined plane shape to accomplish the desired objective. Other forms of inclined plane could be used to expand annular seal 16 onto seal seat 26. Referring to **FIG. 3**, once annular seal 16 is expanded it is transferred from seal expanding member 30 to seal seat 26 of seal installation tool 20 in
20 preparation for installation, as described above.

In this patent document, the word "comprising" is used in its non-limiting sense to mean that items following the word are included, but items not specifically mentioned are not excluded. A reference to an element by the indefinite article "a" does not exclude the
25 possibility that more than one of the element is present, unless the context clearly requires that there be one and only one of the elements.

It will be apparent to one skilled in the art that modifications may be made to the illustrated embodiment without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as
30 hereinafter defined in the Claims.

What is Claimed is:

1. A plunger, comprising:
5 a cylindrical body, at least a portion of the body being in one piece with more than
one circumferential exterior seal groove; and
 replacable annular seals position in selected ones of the seal grooves.
2. The plunger as defined in Claim 1, wherein the entire body is one piece.
- 10 3. A method of installing annular seals on a plunger, comprising the steps of:
 positioning an annular seal on a seal installation tool adapted to hold the annular seal
in an expanded state;
 positioning the annular seal so that the annular seal overlies a body of a plunger; and
15 transferring the annular seal from the seal installation tool to a seal groove in the
body of the plunger.
4. The method as defined in Claim 3, the seal installation tool having a body with an exterior
surface on which is positioned a seal seat; an inclined plane being used to expand the annular
20 seal onto the seal seat.
5. The method as defined in Claim 4, the inclined plane being a generally conical seal
expanding member.

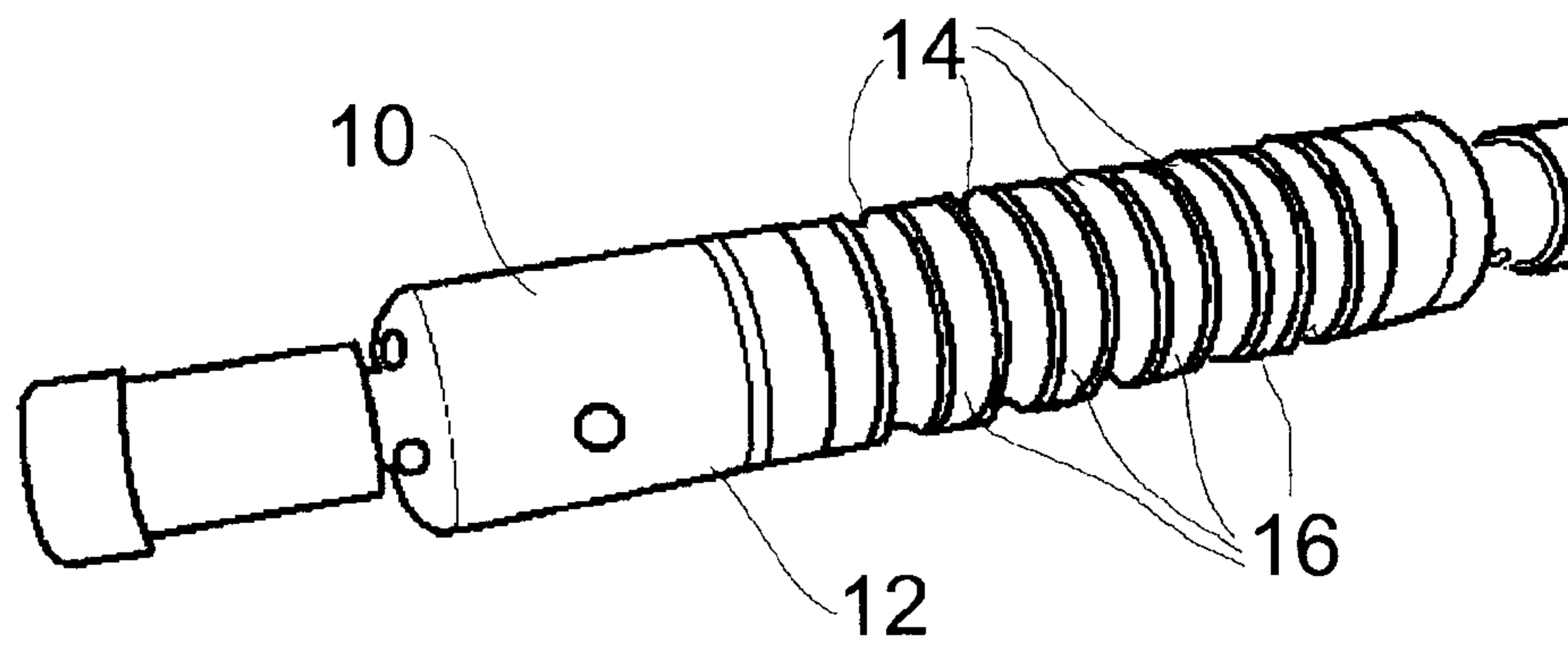


FIG. 1

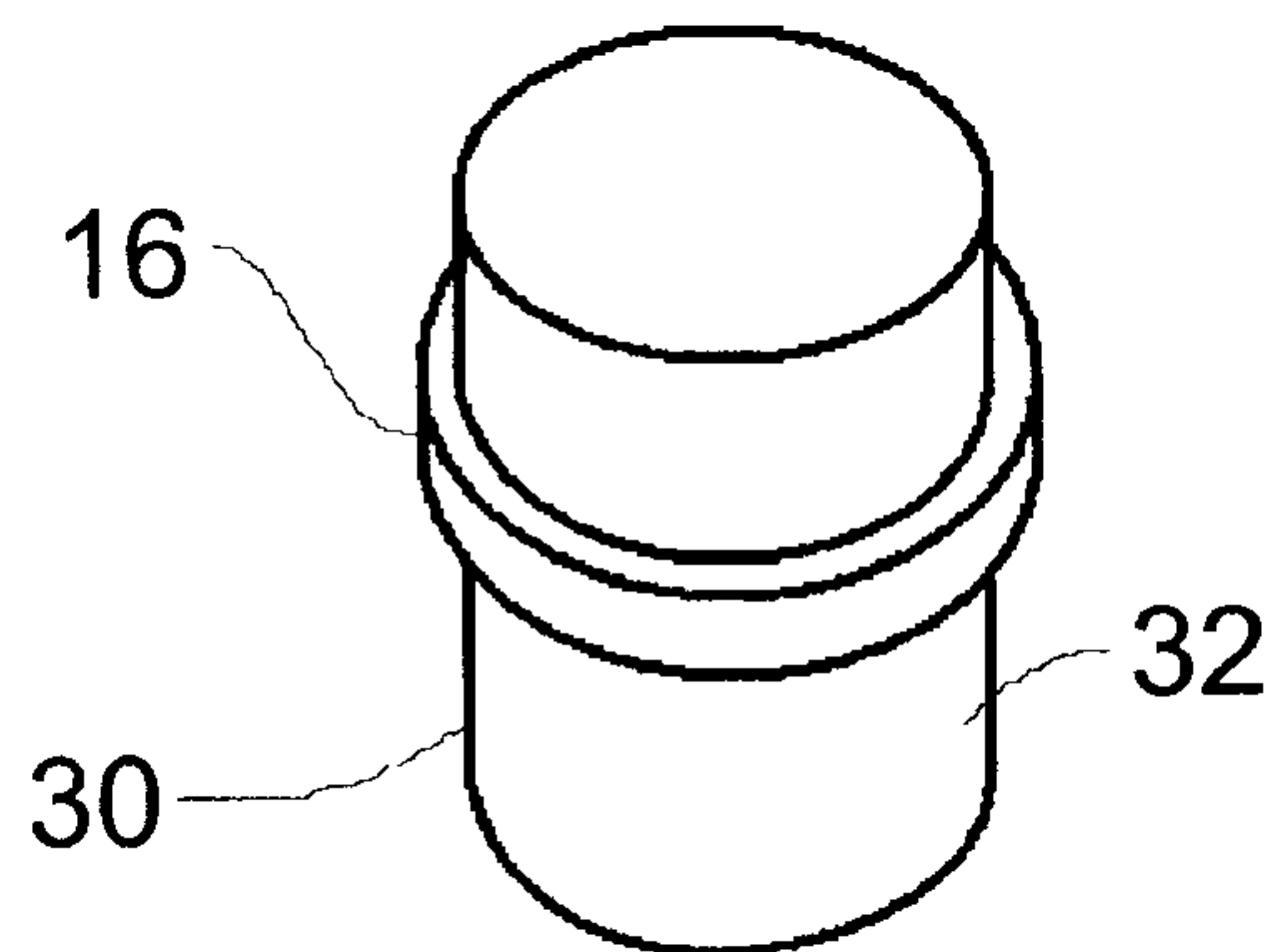


FIG. 2

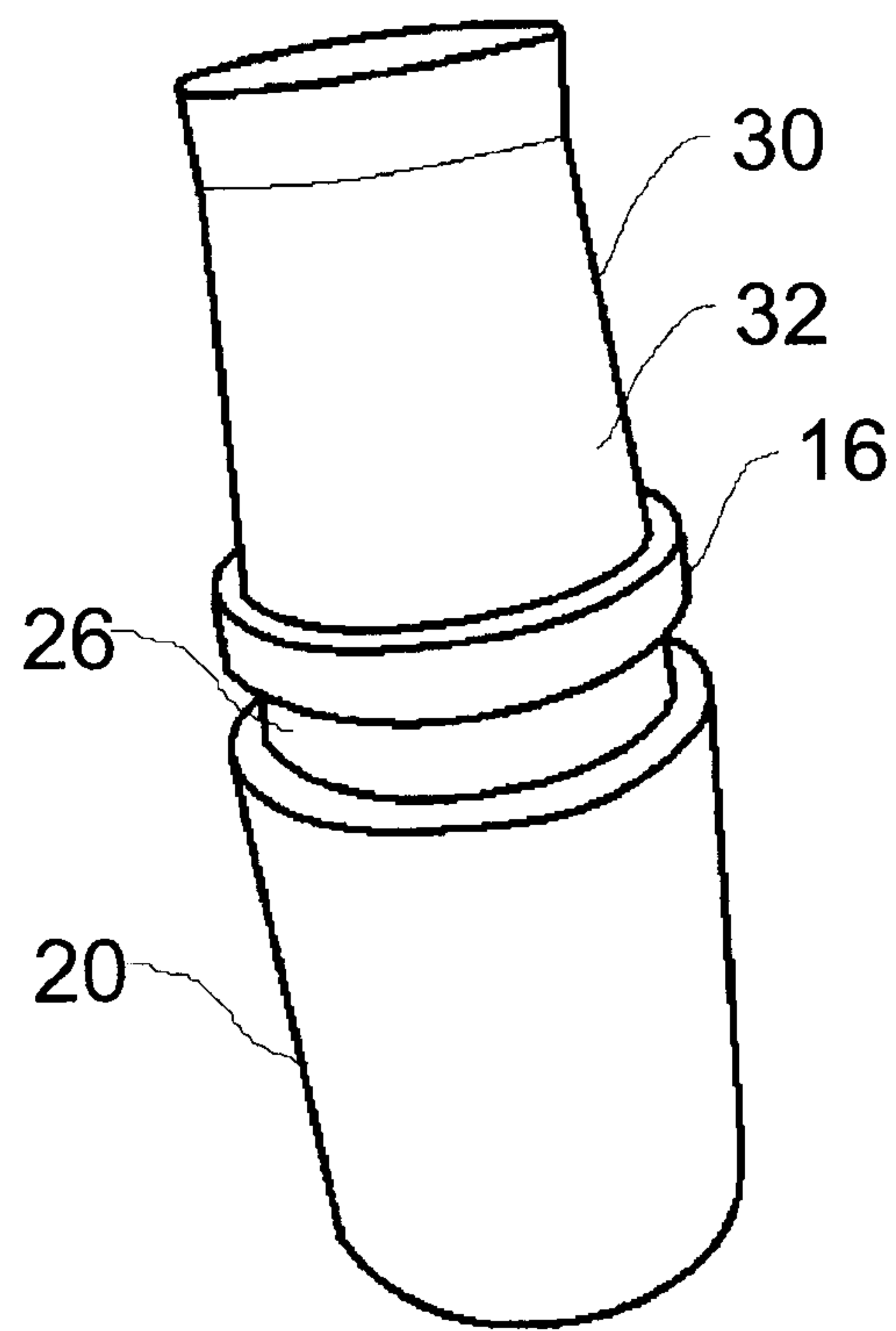


FIG. 3

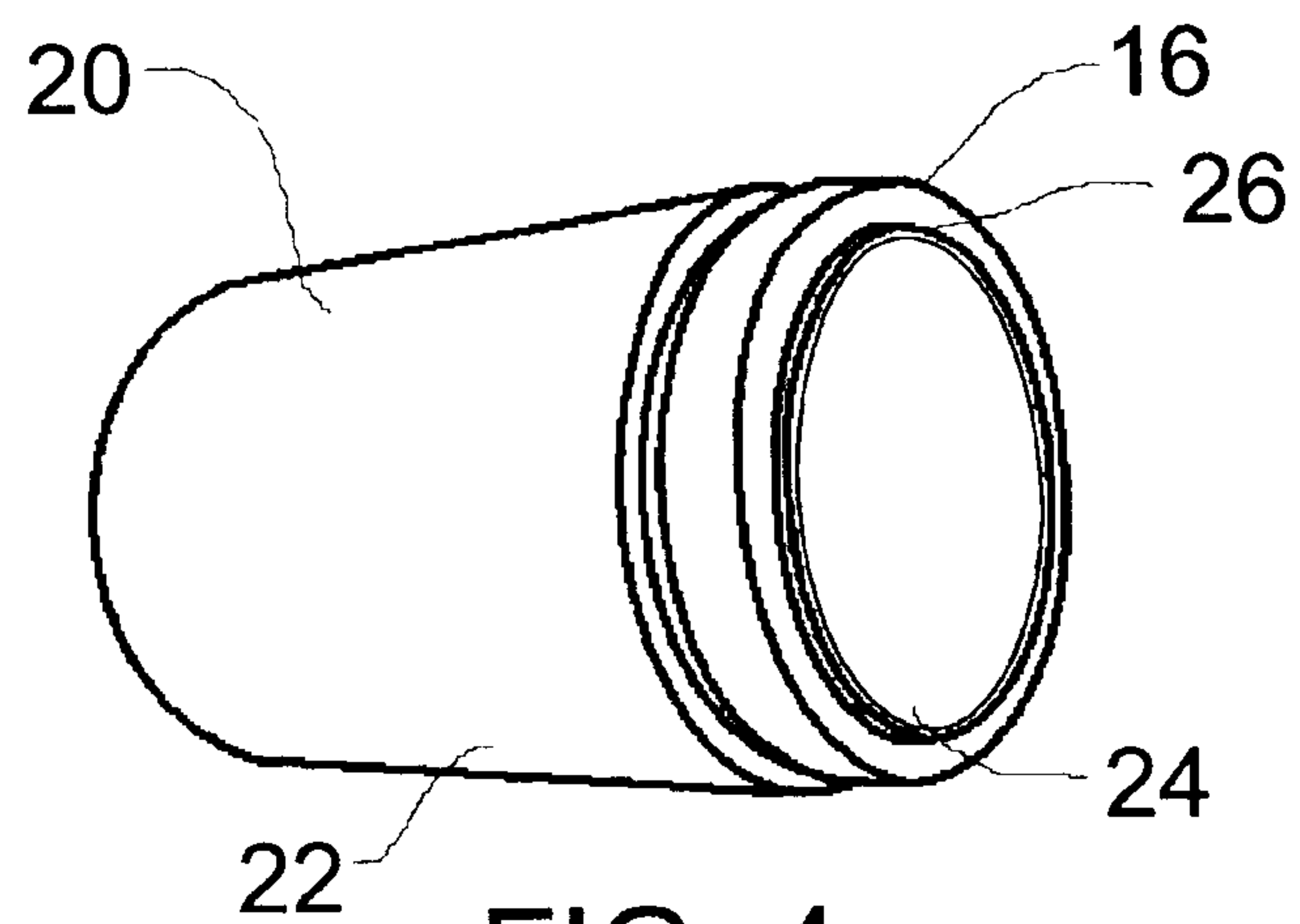


FIG. 4

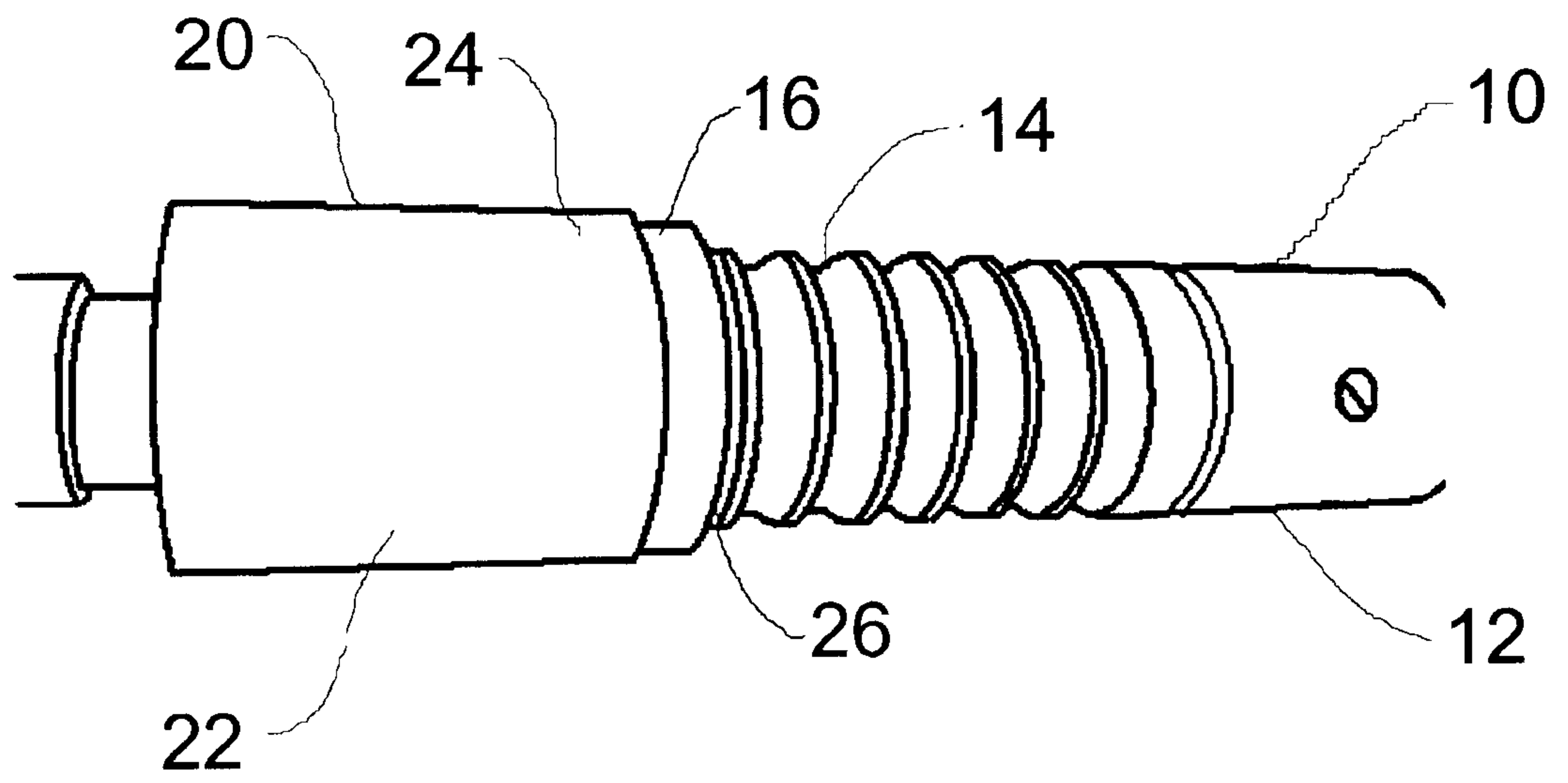


FIG. 5

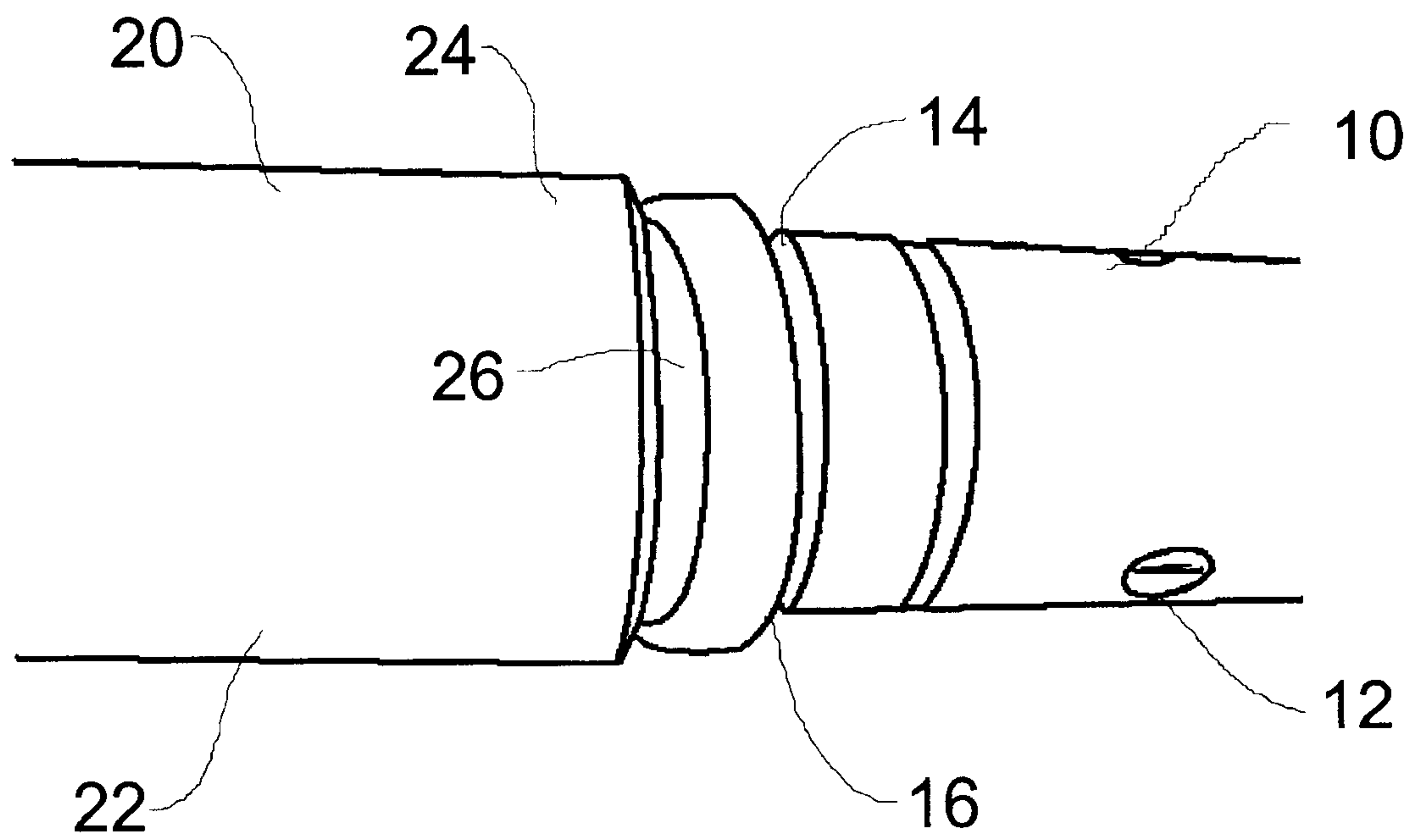


FIG. 6

