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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PERFORMING AN ASSAY

(57) **Abstract:** This invention provides apparatus and methods that enable the direct measurement of an analyte sample in an assay well by forming an independent measuring region. The sample to be measured can be separated into portions, for example, a bound portion and a free portion. To form the independent measuring region, a layer-forming material that can restrict the passage of radiant energy that is measured by a detection device is added to the assay well. The layer-forming material forms a layer that restricts the passage of radiant energy from the region. Thus, a sample portion in one separate region may be measured by a detection device separately and independently of a portion of the sample in a different region. In one example, a second portion in another region can be separately and independently measured by a detection device without the removal of the portions from the assay well.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : G01N 33/543, 33/553, 33/552, 33/534

US CL : 436/518, 526, 527, 545

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 436/518, 526, 527, 545

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched
NONE

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

WEST, EAST, PALM

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 6,027,945 A (SMITH et al.) 22 February 2000, see col. 5, line 1-col. 7, line 34.	1-24
A	US 4,560,484 A (FRIEDLAENDER et al.) 24 December 1985, see col. 2, line 35-col. 3, line 11.	1-24
A	US 5,962,338 A (SUCHOLEIKI) 5 October 1999, col. 2, lines 10-65.	1-24
A,P	US 6,194,562 B1 (SMITH et al.) 27 February 2001, see col. 4, line 61-col. 8, line 14.	1-24



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:		"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"A"	document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"E"	earlier document published on or after the international filing date	"Y"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
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