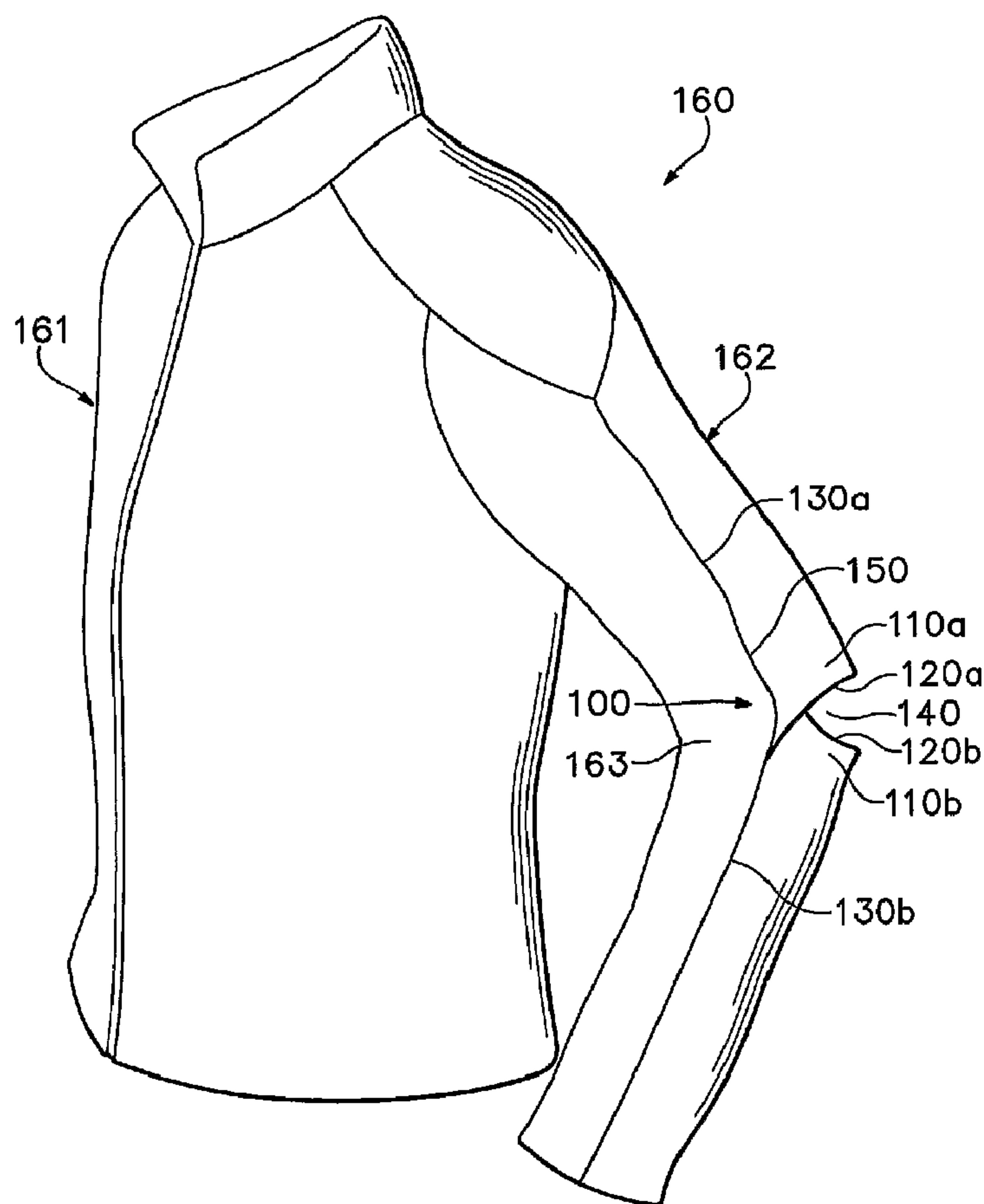




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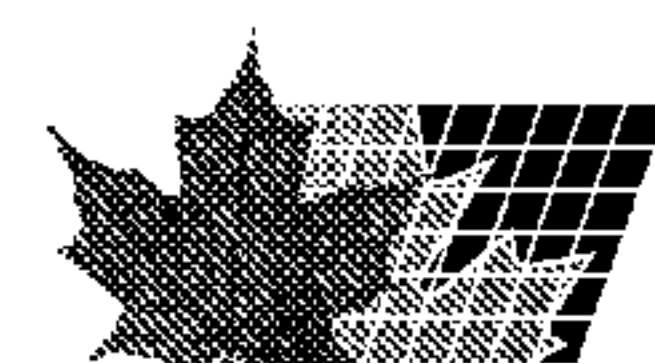
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(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

An element for an article of apparel, a container, or a variety of other products is disclosed. The element is formed from at least one section of a two-dimensional material, and the element includes a first edge and a second edge (120a, 120b) that each exhibit a



(57) **Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):**

concave configuration. Portions of the material adjacent the first edge (120a) and the second edge (120b) are arranged to overlap each other such that: (a) a portion of the first edge (120a) overlaps a portion of the second edge (120b) and (b) another portion of the second edge (120b) overlaps another portion of the first edge (120a). The element may be utilized as a joint or a pocket in the article of apparel, and the element may form a pocket in the container.

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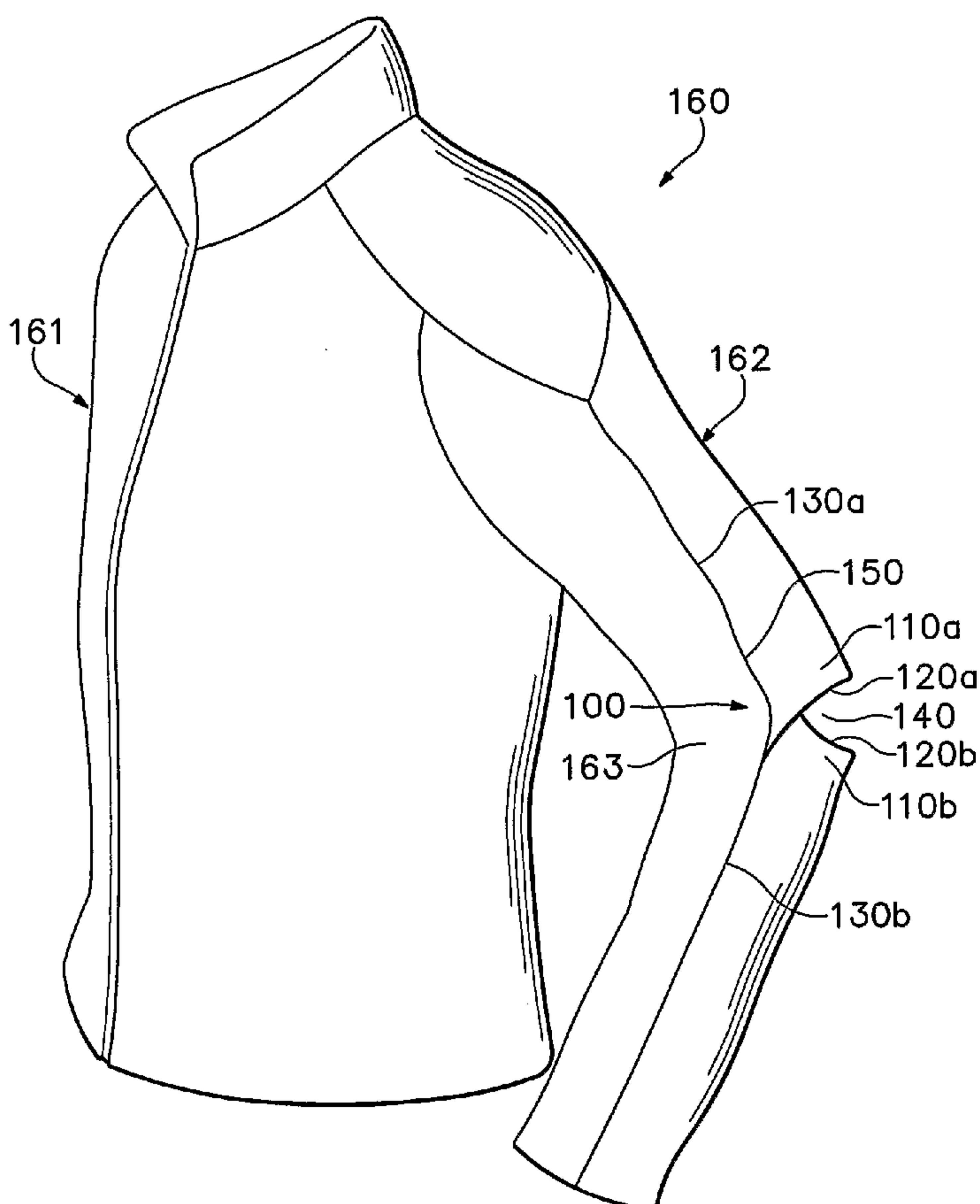
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(54) Title: OVERLAPPING ELEMENT



(57) **Abstract:** An element for an article of apparel, a container, or a variety of other products is disclosed. The element is formed from at least one section of a two-dimensional material, and the element includes a first edge and a second edge (120a, 120b) that each exhibit a concave configuration. Portions of the material adjacent the first edge (120a) and the second edge (120b) are arranged to overlap each other such that: (a) a portion of the first edge (120a) overlaps a portion of the second edge (120b) and (b) another portion of the second edge (120b) overlaps another portion of the first edge (120a). The element may be utilized as a joint or a pocket in the article of apparel, and the element may form a pocket in the container.

WO 2005/112677 A3

WO 2005/112677 A3



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OVERLAPPING ELEMENT

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

- [01] The present invention relates to an overlapping element that is formed from a generally two-dimensional material and may be incorporated into a variety of structures, including an article of apparel. The invention concerns, more particularly, an element having at least two edges that overlap each other to form, for example, a flexible joint or a pocket in the article of apparel.

Description of Background Art

- [02] Various conventional articles of apparel include areas that are intended to bend or otherwise flex with movement of the human body. With regard to a shirt, for example, arm regions are often intended to accommodate bending of the elbow and movement of the shoulder. Similarly, the leg regions of a pair of pants are also intended to accommodate movement of legs, which includes ambulatory motions and bending of the knees. Despite the fact that conventional articles of apparel are intended to bend or otherwise flex with movement of the human body, some conventional articles of apparel restrict movement.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

- [03] The present invention is an element that may be incorporated into an article of apparel, for example, to enhance flexibility in specific areas. In one aspect of the invention, the element is formed from at least one two-dimensional material, and the element includes a first edge and a second edge that each exhibit a concave configuration. Portions of the material adjacent the first edge and the second edge are arranged to overlap each other such that a portion of the first edge overlaps a portion of the second edge, and another portion of the second edge overlaps another portion of the first edge.

69275-252

[04] In one aspect of the invention, the first edge and second edge are edges of a single section of the material. For example, the first edge and the second edge may be opposite edges of the single section of the material. In
5 order to provide the overlapping configuration, the single section of the material is folded to locate the first edge and the second edge adjacent to each other. In addition to the first edge and the second edge, the material may include a pair of side edges that extend between the first edge and
10 the second edge, and a portion of each side edge that is adjacent the first edge is joined with a portion of each side edge that is adjacent the second edge. In another aspect of the invention, the first edge and the second edge are formed in two different sections of the material that
15 each include a pair of side edges.

[05] The element may form a portion of an article of apparel. In some embodiments, the element is a flexible joint in the article of apparel, such as a joint in an elbow region or a knee region. The element may also be a pocket
20 or a hand-receiving portion of the apparel. In addition to apparel, the element may form an opening, such as a pocket, in a container for receiving and securing objects.

[05a] According to one aspect of the present invention, there is provided an element for use in an article of
25 apparel formed from at least one two-dimensional material, the element comprising a first edge and a second edge that each exhibits a concave configuration, portions of the material adjacent the first edge and the second edge being arranged to overlap each other such that a portion of the
30 first edge overlaps a portion of the second edge, and another portion of the second edge overlaps another portion

69275-252

of the first edge, and wherein non-overlapping portions of the first edge and second edge form an aperture, and an insert section extending across the aperture formed by the non-overlapping portions of the first edge and the second
5 edge.

[05b] According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided an article of apparel incorporating an element formed from at least one two-dimensional material, the element comprising: a first edge
10 with a concave configuration, the first edge having a pair of end areas that include a first exposed end area and an opposite first overlapped end area; and a second edge with a concave configuration, the second edge having a pair of end areas that include a second exposed end area and an opposite
15 second overlapped end area, portions of the material adjacent the first edge and the second edge being arranged to overlap each other such that the first exposed end area of the first edge overlaps the second overlapped end area of the second edge, and the second exposed end area of the
20 second edge overlaps the first overlapped end area of the first edge; non-overlapping portions of the first edge and the second edge define an aperture; and an insert section extending across the aperture formed by the non-overlapping portions of the first edge and the second edge

25 [05c] According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided an article of apparel incorporating a flexible joint, the flexible joint comprising: a first textile section having a first edge with a concave configuration, the first edge having a first
30 exposed area and an opposite first overlapped area; a second textile section having a second edge with a concave

69275-252

configuration, the second edge having a second exposed area and an opposite second overlapped area; and an insert section extending across an opening formed between the first edge and the second edge, the insert section being joined to
5 at least one of the first textile section and the second textile section, the first textile section and the second textile section being arranged to overlap each other such that the first exposed area of the first edge overlaps the second overlapped area of the second edge, and the second
10 exposed area of the second edge overlaps the first overlapped area of the first edge.

[06] The advantages and features of novelty characterizing the present invention are pointed out with particularity in the appended claims. To gain an improved
15 understanding of the advantages and features of novelty, however, reference may be made to the following descriptive matter and accompanying drawings that describe and illustrate various embodiments and concepts related to the invention.

20 DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[07] The foregoing Summary of the Invention, as well as the following Detailed Description of the Invention, will be better understood when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

25 Figure 1 is a plan view of a first overlapping element in accordance with the present invention.

- [09] Figure 2 is a first cross-sectional view of the first overlapping element, as defined by section line 2-2 in Figure 1.
- [10] Figure 3 is an exploded plan view of the first overlapping element.
- [11] Figure 4 is a perspective view of a first article of apparel that incorporates the first overlapping element.
- [12] Figure 5 is a back elevational view of the first article of apparel.
- [13] Figure 6 is a plan view of a second overlapping element in accordance with the present invention.
- [14] Figure 7 is a first cross-sectional view of the second overlapping element, as defined by section line 7-7 in Figure 6.
- [15] Figure 8 is an exploded plan view of the second overlapping element.
- [16] Figure 9 is a perspective view of a second article of apparel that incorporates the second overlapping element.
- [17] Figure 10 is a back elevational view of the second article of apparel.
- [18] Figure 11 is a plan view of a third overlapping element in accordance with the present invention.
- [19] Figure 12 is an exploded plan view of the third overlapping element.
- [20] Figure 13 is a perspective view of the third overlapping element.
- [21] Figure 14 is a front elevational view of a third article of apparel that incorporates the third overlapping element.
- [22] Figure 15 is a side elevational view of a container that incorporates the third overlapping element.

- [23] Figure 16 is a perspective view of a fourth overlapping element in accordance with the present invention.
- [24] Figure 17 is a first cross-sectional view of the fourth overlapping element, as defined by section line 17-17 in Figure 16.
- [25] Figure 18 is a plan view of the fourth overlapping element.
- [26] Figure 19 is a plan view of a material section that forms the fourth overlapping element.
- [27] Figure 20 is a plan view of a portion of a fourth article of apparel that incorporates the fourth overlapping element.
- [28] Figure 21 is a perspective view of the fourth article of apparel and a hand received by the fourth article of apparel and the fourth overlapping element.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

- [29] The following discussion and accompanying figures disclose various overlapping elements that may be incorporated into an article of apparel. In general, the overlapping elements have at least two edges that overlap each other to form, for example, a flexible joint or a pocket in the article of apparel. In addition to an article of apparel, the overlapping elements may be incorporated into other products, such as a container (i.e., a backpack, hand bag, or duffel bag). Accordingly, the overlapping elements may be incorporated into a variety of products.
- [30] The overlapping elements are formed from a flexible and generally two-dimensional material. As utilized with respect to the present invention, the term "two-dimensional material" is intended to encompass generally flat materials exhibiting a length and a width that are substantially greater than a thickness. Accordingly, suitable materials for the overlapping elements include various textiles and polymer sheets, for example. Textiles are generally manufactured from fibers, filaments, or yarns that are, for example, either (a) produced directly from webs of fibers by bonding, fusing, or interlocking to construct non-woven fabrics and felts or (b) formed through a mechanical manipulation

of yarn to produce a woven fabric. The textiles may incorporate fibers that are arranged to impart one-directional stretch or multi-directional stretch. The polymer sheets may be extruded, rolled, or otherwise formed from a polymer material to exhibit a generally flat aspect. In addition to textiles and polymer sheets, other two-dimensional materials may be incorporated into the overlapping elements.

First Overlapping Element Configuration

- [31] A first overlapping element 100 is depicted in Figures 1-3 and includes a first section 110a and a second section 110b that are each formed from a two-dimensional material or two different two-dimensional materials. First section 110a includes a concave edge 120a and a pair of side edges 130a. At least a portion of concave edge 120a exhibits a concave configuration that effectively forms a depression in first section 110a. As depicted in the figures, concave edge 120a has a generally curved shape, but may also have an angular shape within the scope of the present invention. Concave edge 120a may, therefore, form a triangular or rectangular depression, for example, in first section 110a. Accordingly, the specific shape of concave edge 120a may vary significantly to encompass a variety of generally concave configurations, whether curved or angular. Concave edge 120a includes an end area 121a, another end area 122a that is positioned opposite end area 121a, and a central area 123a that is positioned between end areas 121a and 122a. End areas 121a and 122a are each located adjacent one of side edges 130a, but may also be spaced inward from side edges 130a. Side edges 130a extend away from concave edge 120a to effectively form sides of first section 110a.
- [32] Second section 110b exhibits a configuration that is substantially similar to first section 110a. Accordingly, second section 110b includes a concave edge 120b and a pair of side edges 130b. At least a portion of concave edge 120b exhibits a concave configuration that effectively forms a depression in second section 110b. The specific shape of concave edge 120b may be the same as concave edge 120a, or the shape may be different. Concave edge 120b includes an end area 121b, another end area 122b that is positioned opposite end area 121b, and a central area 123b that is positioned between end areas 121b

and 122b. End areas 121b and 122b are each located adjacent one of side edges 130b, but may also be spaced inward from side edges 130b. Side edges 130b extend away from concave edge 120b to effectively form sides of second section 110b.

- [33] Overlapping element 100 is formed such that first section 110a and second section 110b overlap each other. More particularly, a portion of first section 110a overlaps a portion of second section 110b, and another portion of second section 110b overlaps another portion of first section 110a. Referring to Figures 1-3, for example, portions of the two-dimensional material adjacent concave edge 120a and concave edge 120b are arranged to contact and overlap each other such that a portion of concave edge 120a (i.e., end area 121a) overlaps a portion of concave edge 120b (i.e., end area 121b), and another portion of concave edge 120b (i.e., end area 122b) overlaps another portion of concave edge 120a (i.e., end area 122a). That is, end area 121a overlaps end area 121b, and end area 122b overlaps end area 122a. Each of sections 110a and 110b include, therefore, an exposed area and an overlapped area. Accordingly, first section 110a and second section 110b overlap each other in the areas of concave edges 120a and 120b.
- [34] When first section 110a and second section 110b are placed in the mutually overlapping configuration discussed above, central areas 123a and 123b may form an aperture 140 between each of first section 110a and second section 110b. The dimensions of aperture 140 (i.e., the size of the opening formed by first section 110a and second section 110b) primarily depend upon the relative locations of central areas 123a and 123b, and the dimensions of aperture 140 may be varied significantly depending upon the specific purpose of or application for overlapping element 100. In some embodiments, central areas 123a and 123b may contact each other such that aperture 140 is relatively small or absent.
- [35] First section 110a and second section 110b are joined to each other by a plurality of stitches 150 that extend along portions of side edges 130a and 130b. More particularly, one of stitches 150 joins one of side edges 130a with one of side edges 130b, and another of stitches 150 joins another of side edges 130a with another of side edges 130b. Accordingly, stitches 150 extend along portions of side edges 130a and 130b to join first

section 110a and second section 110b to each other and to secure the positions of concave edges 120a and 120b relative to each other. In lieu of stitches 150, first section 110a and second section 110b may be joined together through an adhesive bond or a heat bond, for example. In addition, stitches 150, the adhesive bond, or the heat bond may extend inward to join interior portions of first section 110a and second section 110b. In some embodiments, stitches 150 may extend along concave edge 120a to join portions of concave edge 120a with second section 110b, and stitches 150 may extend along concave edge 120b to join portions of concave edge 120b with first section 110a. Accordingly, a variety of procedures may be employed to join first section 110a and second section 110b.

[36] A structure having the general configuration of overlapping element 100 may be incorporated into a variety of products, including various articles of apparel and containers. With reference to Figures 4 and 5, one manner in which overlapping element 100 may be employed in an article of apparel 160, particularly a shirt, is disclosed. Apparel 160 includes a torso region 161 and a pair of sleeves 162. Each of sleeves 162 includes an elbow region 163. In general, elbow regions 163 correspond with the locations of elbows and are intended to bend or otherwise flex with the elbows. Accordingly, each of elbow regions 163 includes an overlapping element 100 that provides a flexible joint in elbow regions 163. In other words, one purpose for incorporating overlapping element 100 into an article of apparel is to provide a flexible joint.

[37] Overlapping element 100 may form only the flexible joints in elbow regions 163, or overlapping element 100 may form relatively large portions of each sleeve 162. As depicted in Figures 4 and 5, first section 110a extends from a shoulder area of apparel 160 to elbow region 163, and second section 110b extends from a wrist area of apparel 160 to elbow region 163. Accordingly, overlapping element 100 may form a relatively significant portion of each sleeve 162, in addition to forming a flexible joint in each of sleeves 162.

Second Overlapping Element Configuration

- [38] A second overlapping element 200 is depicted in Figures 6-8 and has a similar general configuration as overlapping element 100. Accordingly, overlapping element 200 includes a first section 210a and a second section 210b that are each formed from a two-dimensional material placed in a mutually overlapping configuration. As with overlapping element 100, an aperture 240 is formed between first section 210a and second section 210b (i.e., between concave edges 220a and 220b). In contrast with overlapping element 100, however, overlapping element 200 also includes an insert section 210c that extends across aperture 240.
- [39] First section 210a includes a concave edge 220a and a pair of side edges 230a. At least a portion of concave edge 220a exhibits a concave configuration that effectively forms a depression in first section 210a. Concave edge 220a includes an end area 221a, another end area 222a that is positioned opposite end area 221a, and a central area 223a that is positioned between end areas 221a and 222a. Side edges 230a extend away from concave edge 220a to effectively form sides of first section 210a. Second section 210b exhibits a configuration that is substantially similar to first section 210a. Accordingly, second section 210b includes a concave edge 220b and a pair of side edges 230b. Concave edge 220b includes an end area 221b, another end area 222b that is positioned opposite end area 221b, and a central area 223b that is positioned between end areas 221b and 222b. Side edges 230b extend away from concave edge 220b to effectively form sides of second section 210b.
- [40] As with overlapping element 100, overlapping element 200 is formed such that first section 210a and second section 210b overlap each other. Referring to Figures 6-8, a portion of first section 210a overlaps a portion of second section 210b, and another portion of second section 210b overlaps another portion of first section 210a. More particularly, end area 221a overlaps end area 221b, and end area 222b overlaps end area 222a. Accordingly, first section 210a and second section 210b overlap each other in the areas of concave edges 220a and 220b.

- [41] When first section 210a and second section 210b are placed in the mutually overlapping configuration discussed above, central areas 223a and 223b form aperture 240 between each of first section 210a and second section 210b. Insert section 210c extends across aperture 240 and is secured to each of first section 210a and second section 210b. Insert section 210c has a generally circular shape, but may have any other practical shape within the scope of the present invention. In general, however, insert section 210c will be shaped to extend over aperture 240. In some embodiments, insert section 210c may be positioned behind first section 210a and second section 210b such that only a portion of insert section 210c is visible through aperture 240. In other embodiments, insert section 210c may be placed in front of first section 210a and second section 210b or between first section 210a and second section 210b.
- [42] First section 210a and second section 210b are joined to each other by a plurality of stitches 250 that extend along portions of side edges 230a and 230b. More particularly, one of stitches 250 joins one of side edges 230a with one of side edges 230b, and another of stitches 250 joins another of side edges 230a with another of side edges 230b. Accordingly, stitches 250 extend along portions of side edges 230a and 230b to join first section 210a and second section 210b to each other and to secure the positions of concave edges 220a and 220b relative to each other. In lieu of stitches 250, first section 210a and second section 210b may be joined together through an adhesive bond or a heat bond, for example. As depicted in the figures, insert section 210c has a generally circular shape and extends to side edges 230a and 230b, and stitches 250 join insert section 210c to overlapping element 200. In some embodiments, however, a plurality of stitches may extend around insert section 210c to join insert section 210c to each of first section 210a and second section 210b.
- [43] With reference to Figures 9 and 10, one manner in which overlapping element 200 may be employed in an article of apparel 260, particularly a shirt, is disclosed. Apparel 260 has the general configuration of apparel 160 and includes a torso region 261 and a pair of sleeves 262. Each of sleeves 262 includes an elbow region 263, and each of elbow regions 263 include an overlapping element 200 that provides a flexible joint in elbow regions 263. Aperture 140 in overlapping element 100 formed an opening in apparel 160.

In contrast with apparel 160, insert section 210c extends across aperture 240 to cover the opening. Accordingly, insert section 210c effectively covers the opening formed by aperture 140.

Third Overlapping Element Configuration

- [44] A third overlapping element 300 that is suitable for forming a pocket in either apparel or a container is depicted in Figures 11-13. Overlapping element 300 includes a first section 310a and a second section 310b that are each formed from a two-dimensional material placed in a mutually overlapping configuration. First section 310a includes a concave edge 320a and a pair of side edges 330a. At least a portion of concave edge 320a exhibits a concave configuration that effectively forms a depression in first section 310a. Concave edge 320a includes an end area 321a, another end area 322a that is positioned opposite end area 321a, and a central area 323a that is positioned between end areas 321a and 322a. Side edges 330a extend away from concave edge 320a to effectively form sides of first section 310a. Second section 310b exhibits a configuration that is substantially similar to first section 310a. Accordingly, second section 310b includes a concave edge 320b and a pair of side edges 330b. Concave edge 320b includes an end area 321b, another end area 322b that is positioned opposite end area 321b, and a central area 323b that is positioned between end areas 321b and 322b. Side edges 330b extend away from concave edge 320b to effectively form sides of second section 310b.
- [45] As with overlapping elements 100 and 200, overlapping element 300 is formed such that first section 310a and second section 310b overlap each other. Referring to Figures 11-13, a portion of first section 310a overlaps a portion of second section 310b, and another portion of second section 310b overlaps another portion of first section 310a. More particularly, end area 321a overlaps end area 321b, and end area 322b overlaps end area 322a. Accordingly, first section 310a and second section 310b overlap each other in the areas of concave edges 320a and 320b.

- [46] In addition to first section 310a and second section 310b, overlapping element 300 includes a backing section 310c with the same overall dimensions of overlapping element 300. First section 310a and second section 310b are joined to each other by a plurality of stitches 350 that extend along portions of side edges 330a and 330b and extend around overlapping element 300. Stitches 350 also join backing section 310c to first section 310a and second section 310b around the periphery of overlapping element 300. Whereas stitches 350 extend around the periphery of overlapping element 300, stitches 350 are not located in the interior of overlapping element 300. Accordingly, backing section 310c is not secured to either first section 310a or second section 310b in the interior of overlapping element 300. A space or open area is formed, therefore, between backing section 310c and both of first section 310a or second section 310b, and access to the space may be gained through an aperture 340, which is formed between central areas 323a and 323b. Aperture 340 forms an access opening, and objects may be placed within overlapping element 300 through aperture 340. Whereas apertures 140 and 240 may be relatively large, aperture 340 may be relatively small to prevent objects from being inadvertently removed from (i.e., falling from) overlapping element 300.
- [47] With reference to Figure 14, one manner in which overlapping element 300 may be employed in an article of apparel 360, particularly a pair of pants, is disclosed. Apparel 360 has a pelvic region 361 and a pair of leg regions 362. Overlapping element 300 is incorporated into pelvic region 361 at a location that corresponds with the location of a conventional pocket. Accordingly, overlapping element 300 may be incorporated into articles of apparel to form a pocket within the apparel.
- [48] Overlapping elements 100 and 200 were disclosed above as being suitable for joints in elbow regions of shirts. In addition, either of overlapping elements 100 and 200 may form joints in knee areas of apparel 360. With reference to Figure 14, a pair of overlapping elements 100 are incorporated into leg regions 362 to enhance the flexibility in portions of leg regions 362 that correspond with the positions of the knees.
- [49] With reference to Figure 15 a container 370 having the configuration of a duffel bag is disclosed. Conventional pockets in duffel bags are formed by zippered openings, for

example. In contrast with the conventional duffel bag, an overlapping element 300 is incorporated into a side of container 370 to form a pocket for receiving objects. Overlapping element 300 may also be incorporated into a variety of other types of containers, such as a backpack or a hand bag, for example.

Fourth Overlapping Element Configuration

- [50] Each of overlapping elements 100, 200, and 300 are formed from at least two sections of material. For example, overlapping element 100 includes first section 110a and second section 110b. Referring to Figures 16-19, an overlapping element 400 is depicted that includes a single section 410 formed from a two-dimensional material. Section 410 includes a pair of opposite concave edges 420a and 420b and a pair of opposite side edges 430. Concave edge 420a has a generally curved shape, but may also have an angular shape within the scope of the present invention. Concave edge 420a may, therefore, form a triangular or rectangular depression, for example, in section 410. Accordingly, the specific shape of concave edge 420a may vary significantly to encompass a variety of generally concave configurations, whether curved or angular. Concave edge 420a includes an end area 421a, another end area 422a that is positioned opposite end area 421a, and a central area 423a that is positioned between end areas 421a and 422a. End areas 421a and 422a are each located adjacent one of side edges 430, but may also be spaced inward from side edges 430. Side edges 430 extend away from concave edge 420a to effectively form sides of section 410, and side edges extend between concave edges 420a and 420b.
- [51] Concave edge 420b exhibits a concave configuration that effectively forms another depression in section 410. The specific shape of concave edge 420b may be the same as concave edge 420a, or the shape may be different. Concave edge 420b includes an end area 421b, another end area 422b that is positioned opposite end area 421b, and a central area 423b that is positioned between end areas 421b and 422b. End areas 421b and 422b are each located adjacent one of side edges 430, but may also be spaced inward from side edges 430.

- [52] Overlapping element 400 is formed such that the areas of section 410 that form concave edges 420a and 420b overlap each other. In order to overlap concave edges 420a and 420b, section 410 is folded back upon itself to form a generally cylindrical structure. More particularly, section 410 is folded back such that portions of the two-dimensional material adjacent concave edge 420a and concave edge 420b are arranged to contact and overlap each other. That is, section 410 is folded back such that a portion of concave edge 420a (i.e., end area 421a) overlaps a portion of concave edge 420b (i.e., end area 421b), and another portion of concave edge 420b (i.e., end area 422b) overlaps another portion of concave edge 420a (i.e., end area 422a). Accordingly, end area 421a overlaps end area 421b, and end area 422b overlaps end area 422a. When the areas of section 410 that form concave edges 420a and 420b overlap each other, central areas 423a and 423b may form an aperture 440 between each of concave edges 420a and 420b.
- [53] In order to secure overlapping element 400 in the generally cylindrical structure, side edges 430 are stitched or otherwise secured to themselves. Each of side edges 430 includes a portion that is adjacent to concave edge 420a and an opposite portion that is adjacent to concave edge 420b. When section 410 is folded back upon itself, the portion that is adjacent to concave edge 420a is positioned next to the portion that is adjacent to concave edge 420b. With regard to each of side edges 430, these portions may then be joined together with a plurality of stitches 450. In lieu of stitches 450, an adhesive bond or a heat bond, for example, may be utilized.
- [54] A structure having the general configuration of overlapping element 400 may be incorporated into a variety of products, including various articles of apparel. An arm portion of an article of apparel 460, particularly a jacket, is disclosed in Figures 20 and 21. Overlapping element 400 is secured to an end of the arm portion such that the hand may extend through the generally cylindrical structure formed by overlapping element 400. More particularly, a first digit of the hand (i.e., the thumb) may extend through aperture 440, the second through fifth digits (i.e., the index, middle, ring, and little fingers) may extend through an end, and the wrist extends through an opposite end that is secured to apparel 460. An advantage of this configuration is that overlapping element 400 provides insulation to the palm of the hand and limits the quantity of external air that

may enter apparel 460 through the arm portion. If a glove is worn in combination with apparel 460 and overlapping element 400, then overlapping element 400 may be utilized to effectively prevent snow or water, for example, from entering apparel 460 through the arm portion.

Conclusion

- [55] The above discussion and accompanying figures disclose various overlapping element configurations that may be incorporated into an article of apparel or a container, for example. In general, the overlapping elements have at least two concave edges that overlap each other to form, for example, a flexible joint or a pocket in the article of apparel. In addition, the overlapping elements may be incorporated into a container (i.e., a backpack, hand bag, or duffel bag) to form a pocket. Accordingly, the overlapping elements may be incorporated into a variety of products.
- [56] The present invention is disclosed above and in the accompanying drawings with reference to a variety of embodiments. The purpose served by the disclosure, however, is to provide an example of the various features and concepts related to the invention, not to limit the scope of the invention. One skilled in the relevant art will recognize that numerous variations and modifications may be made to the embodiments described above without departing from the scope of the present invention, as defined by the appended claims.

69275-252

CLAIMS:

1. An element for use in an article of apparel formed from at least one two-dimensional material, the element comprising a first edge and a second edge that each exhibits
5 a concave configuration, portions of the material adjacent the first edge and the second edge being arranged to overlap each other such that a portion of the first edge overlaps a portion of the second edge, and another portion of the second edge overlaps another portion of the first edge, and
10 wherein non-overlapping portions of the first edge and second edge form an aperture, and an insert section extending across the aperture formed by the non-overlapping portions of the first edge and the second edge.
2. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the first
15 edge and the second edge are edges of a single section of the material.
3. The element recited in claim 2, wherein the first edge and the second edge are opposite edges of the single section of the material.
- 20 4. The element recited in claim 3, wherein the single section of the material is folded to locate the first edge and the second edge in contact with each other.
5. The element recited in claim 3, wherein the single section of the material includes a pair of side edges that
25 extend between the first edge and the second edge, a portion of each side edge that is adjacent the first edge being joined with a portion of each side edge that is adjacent the second edge.

69275-252

6. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the first edge is formed in a first section of the at least one two-dimensional material, and the second edge is formed in a second section of the at least one two-dimensional material, the first section and the second section being separate from each other.

7. The element recited in claim 6, wherein a pair of first side edges extends from the first edge and a pair of second side edges extends from the second edge, the first side edges being joined with the second side edges.

8. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the insert section is circular.

9. The element recited in claim 8, wherein the insert section is joined to the two-dimensional material.

10. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the element forms a portion of an article of apparel.

11. The element recited in claim 10, wherein the portion of the article of apparel is a flexible joint.

12. The element recited in claim 11, wherein the flexible joint is one of an elbow region and a knee region.

13. The element recited in claim 10, wherein the portion of the article of apparel is a pocket.

14. The element recited in claim 10, wherein the portion of the article of apparel is a hand-receiving region.

15. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the element forms an opening in a container.

69275-252

16. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the at least one two-dimensional material is a polymer sheet.

17. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the at least one two-dimensional material is a textile.

5 18. The element recited in claim 17, wherein the textile exhibits one-directional stretch.

19. The element recited in claim 17, wherein the textile exhibits multi-directional stretch.

20. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the
10 concave configuration of the first edge and the second edge are curved indentations in the at least one two-dimensional material that form the first edge and the second edge.

21. The element recited in claim 1, wherein the
15 concave configuration of the first edge and the second edge are angular indentations in the at least one two-dimensional material that form the first edge and the second edge.

22. An article of apparel incorporating an element formed from at least one two-dimensional material, the element comprising:

20 a first edge with a concave configuration, the first edge having a pair of end areas that include a first exposed end area and an opposite first overlapped end area; and

a second edge with a concave configuration, the
25 second edge having a pair of end areas that include a second exposed end area and an opposite second overlapped end area,

69275-252

portions of the material adjacent the first edge and the second edge being arranged to overlap each other such that the first exposed end area of the first edge overlaps the second overlapped end area of the second edge, and the
5 second exposed end area of the second edge overlaps the first overlapped end area of the first edge;

non-overlapping portions of the first edge and the second edge define an aperture; and

an insert section extending across the aperture
10 formed by the non-overlapping portions of the first edge and the second edge.

23. The article of apparel recited in claim 22, wherein the element forms a flexible joint.

24. The article of apparel recited in claim 23,
15 wherein the flexible joint is one of an elbow region and a knee region of the article of apparel.

25. The article of apparel recited in claim 22, wherein the at least one two-dimensional material is a polymer sheet.

20 26. The article of apparel recited in claim 22, wherein the at least one two-dimensional material is a textile.

27. The article of apparel recited in claim 26, wherein the textile exhibits one-directional stretch.

25 28. The article of apparel recited in claim 26, wherein the textile exhibits multi-directional stretch.

69275-252

29. The article of apparel recited in claim 22,
wherein the first edge and the second edge are edges of a
single section of the material.

30. The article of apparel recited in claim 29,
5 wherein the first edge and the second edge are opposite
edges of the single section of material.

31. The article of apparel recited in claim 30,
wherein the single section of material is folded to locate
the first edge and the second edge in contact with each
10 other.

32. The article of apparel recited in claim 30,
wherein the single section of the material includes a pair
of side edges that extend between the first edge and the
second edge, a portion of each side edge that is adjacent
15 the first edge being joined with a portion of each side edge
that is adjacent the second edge.

33. The article of apparel recited in claim 22,
wherein the first edge is formed in a first section of the
at least one two-dimensional material, and the second edge
20 is formed in a second section of the at least one two-
dimensional material, the first section and the second
section being separate from each other.

34. The article of apparel recited in claim 33,
wherein a pair of first side edges extends from the first
25 edge and a pair of second side edges extends from the second
edge, the first side edges being joined with the second side
edges.

35. The article of apparel recited in claim 22,
wherein the insert section is circular.

69275-252

36. The article of apparel recited in claim 35,
wherein the insert section is joined to the two-dimensional
material.

37. The article of apparel recited in claim 22,
5 wherein the concave configuration of the first edge and the
second edge are curved indentations in the at least one two-
dimensional material that form the first edge and the second
edge.

38. The article of apparel recited in claim 22,
10 wherein the concave configuration of the first edge and the
second edge are angular indentations in the at least one
two-dimensional material that form the first edge and the
second edge.

39. An article of apparel incorporating a flexible
15 joint, the flexible joint comprising:

a first textile section having a first edge with a
concave configuration, the first edge having a first exposed
area and an opposite first overlapped area;

a second textile section having a second edge with
20 a concave configuration, the second edge having a second
exposed area and an opposite second overlapped area; and

an insert section extending across an opening
formed between the first edge and the second edge, the
insert section being joined to at least one of the first
25 textile section and the second textile section,

the first textile section and the second textile section
being arranged to overlap each other such that the first
exposed area of the first edge overlaps the second

69275-252

overlapped area of the second edge, and the second exposed area of the second edge overlaps the first overlapped area of the first edge.

40. The article of apparel recited in claim 39,
5 wherein the flexible joint is one of an elbow region and a knee region of the article of apparel.

41. The article of apparel recited in claim 39,
wherein at least one of the first textile section and the second textile section exhibits one-directional stretch.

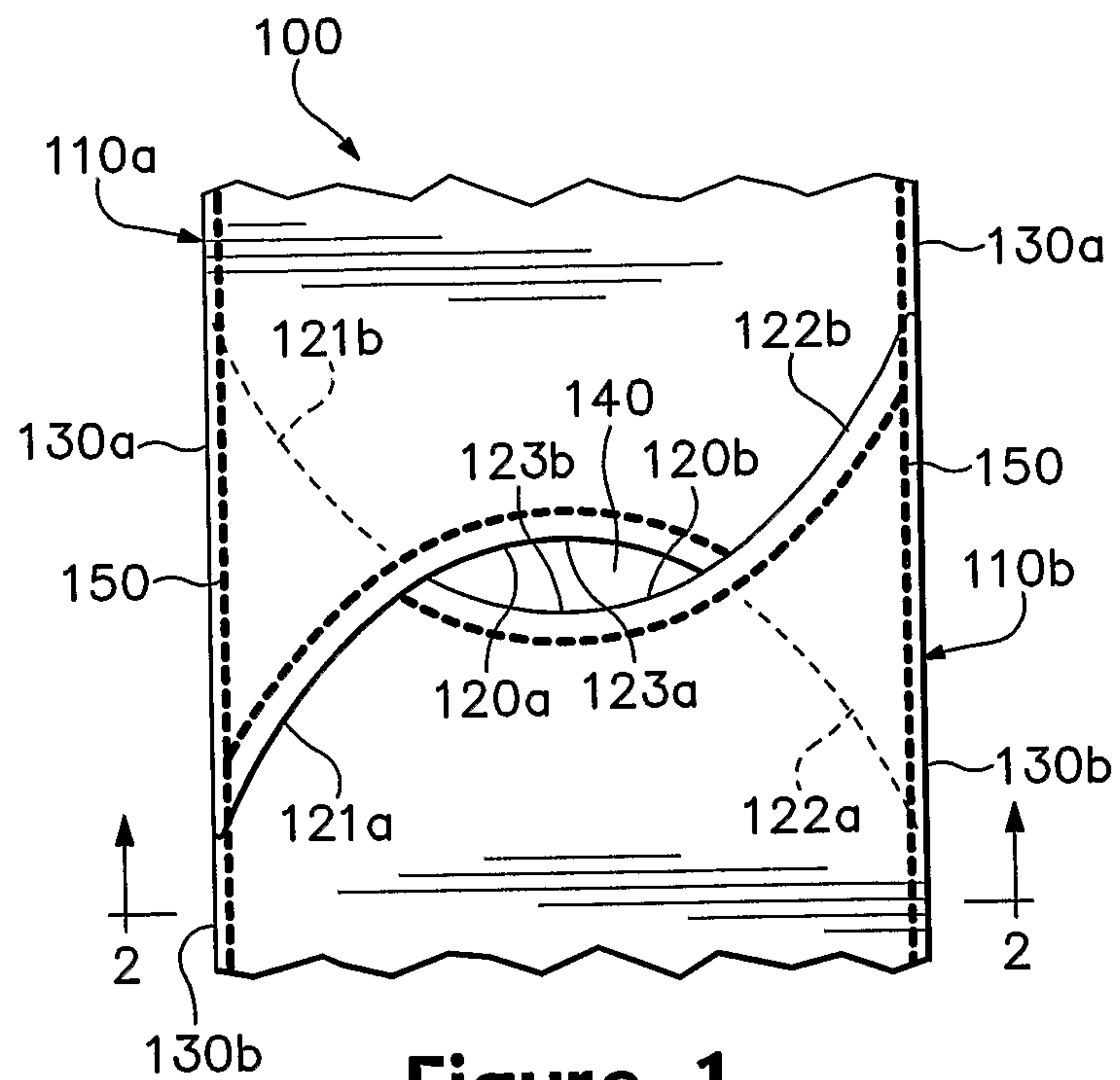
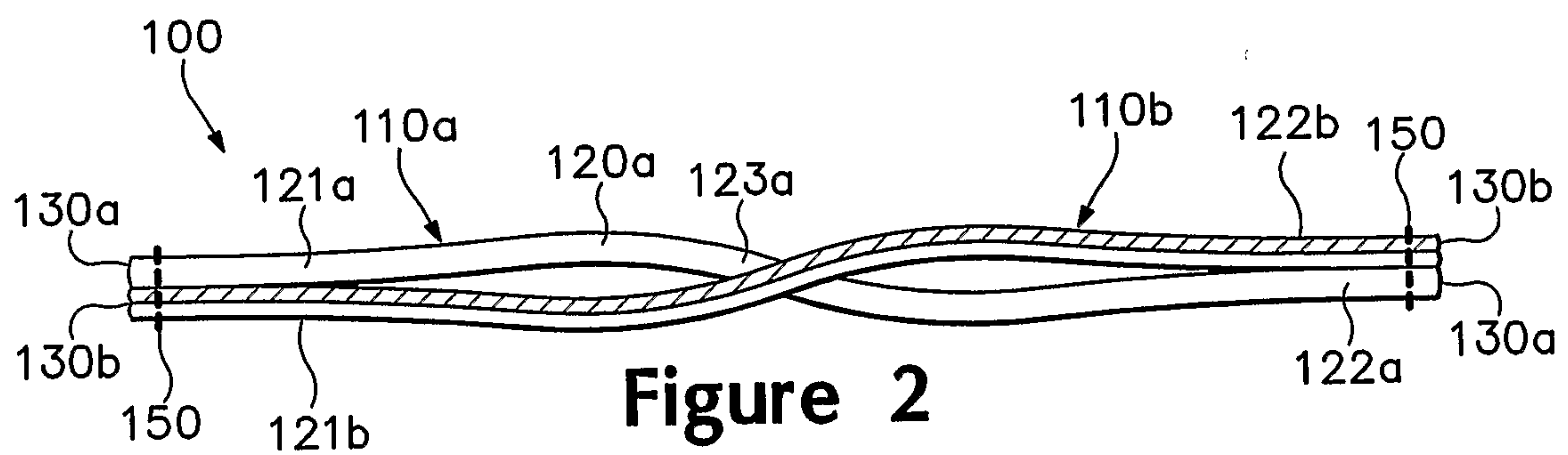
10 42. The article of apparel recited in claim 39,
wherein at least one of the first textile section and the second textile section exhibits multi-directional stretch.

43. The article of apparel recited in claim 39,
wherein a pair of first side edges extends from the first
15 edge and a pair of second side edges extends from the second edge, the first side edges being joined with the second side edges.

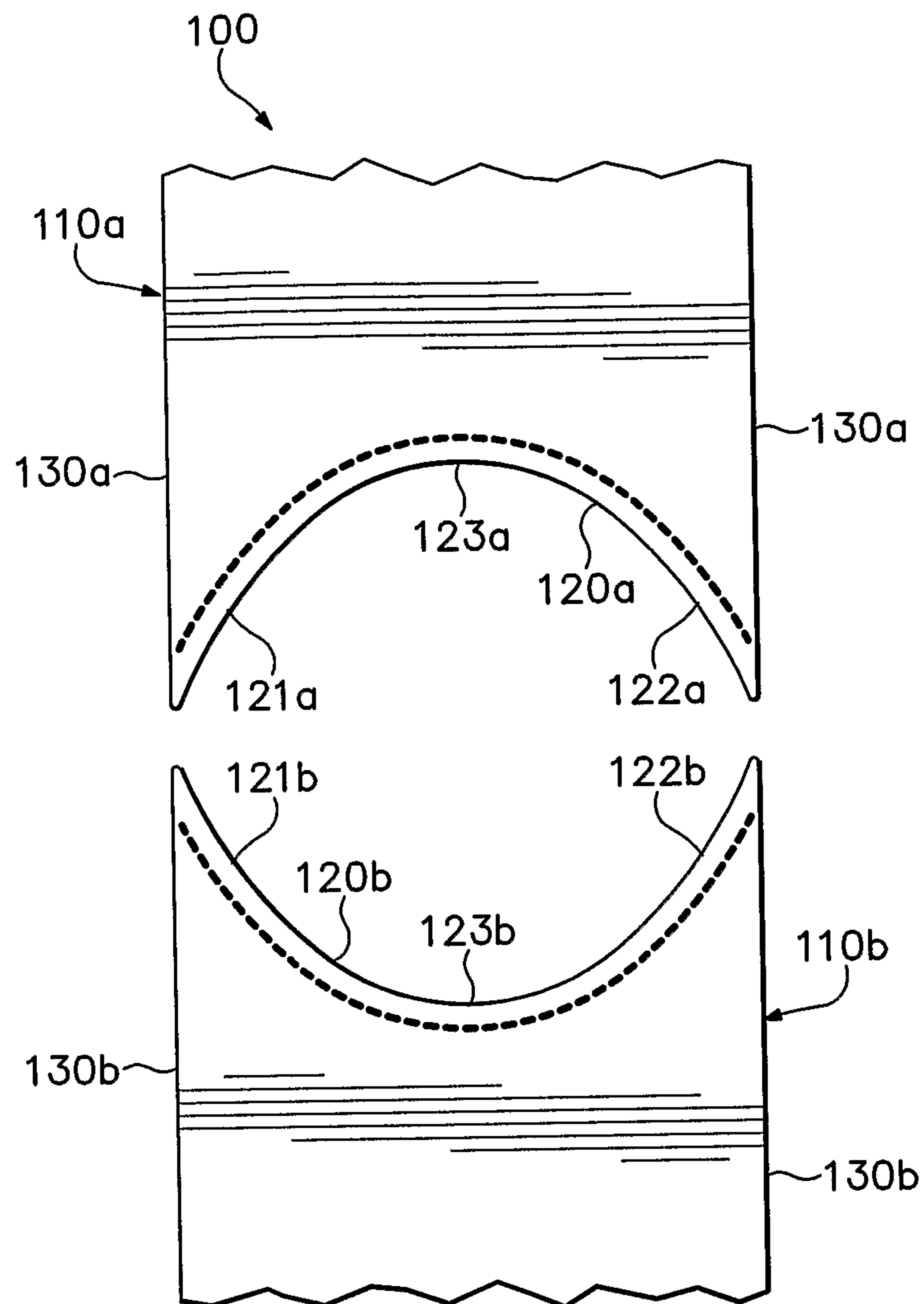
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PATENT AGENTS

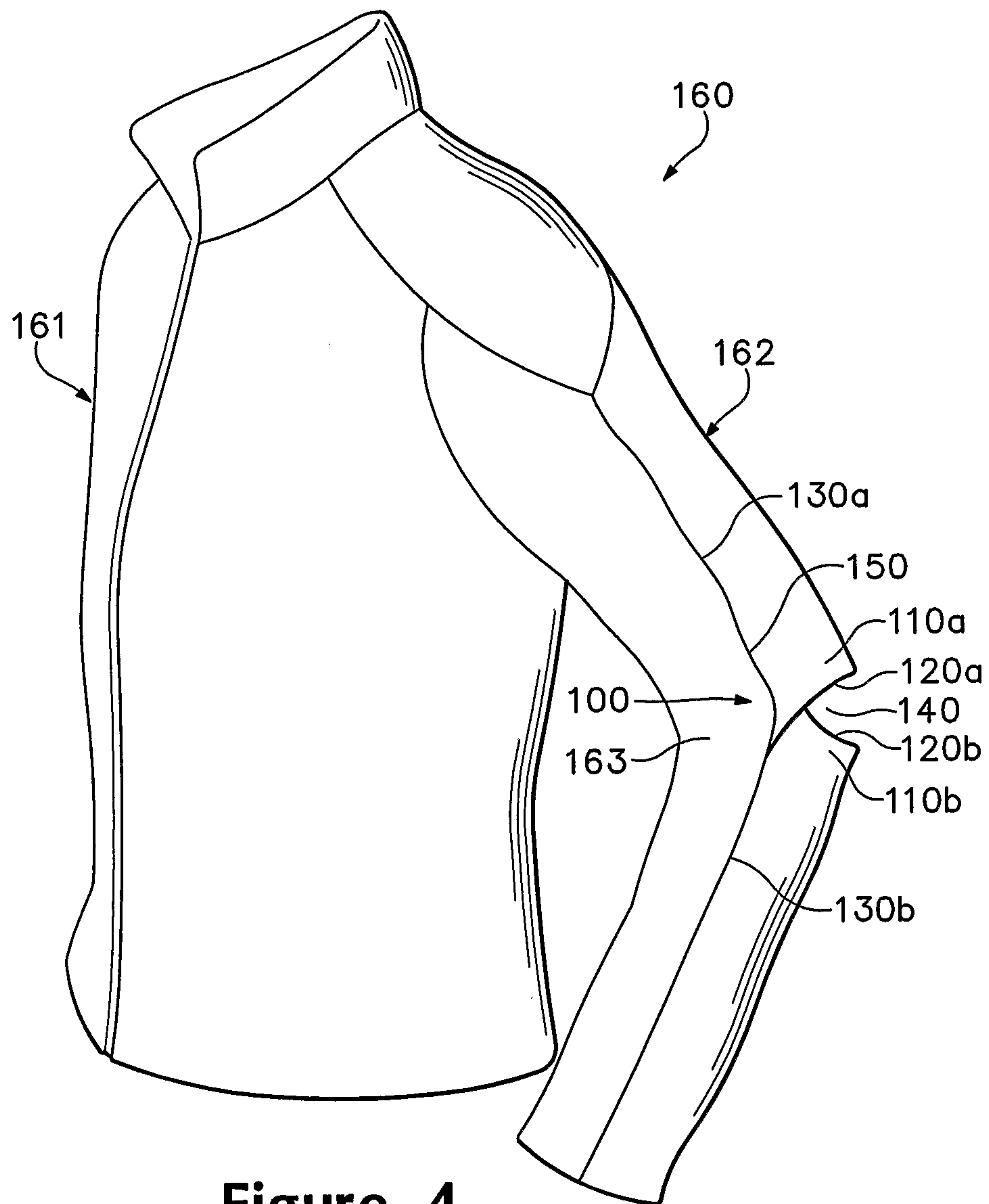
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**Figure 1****Figure 2**

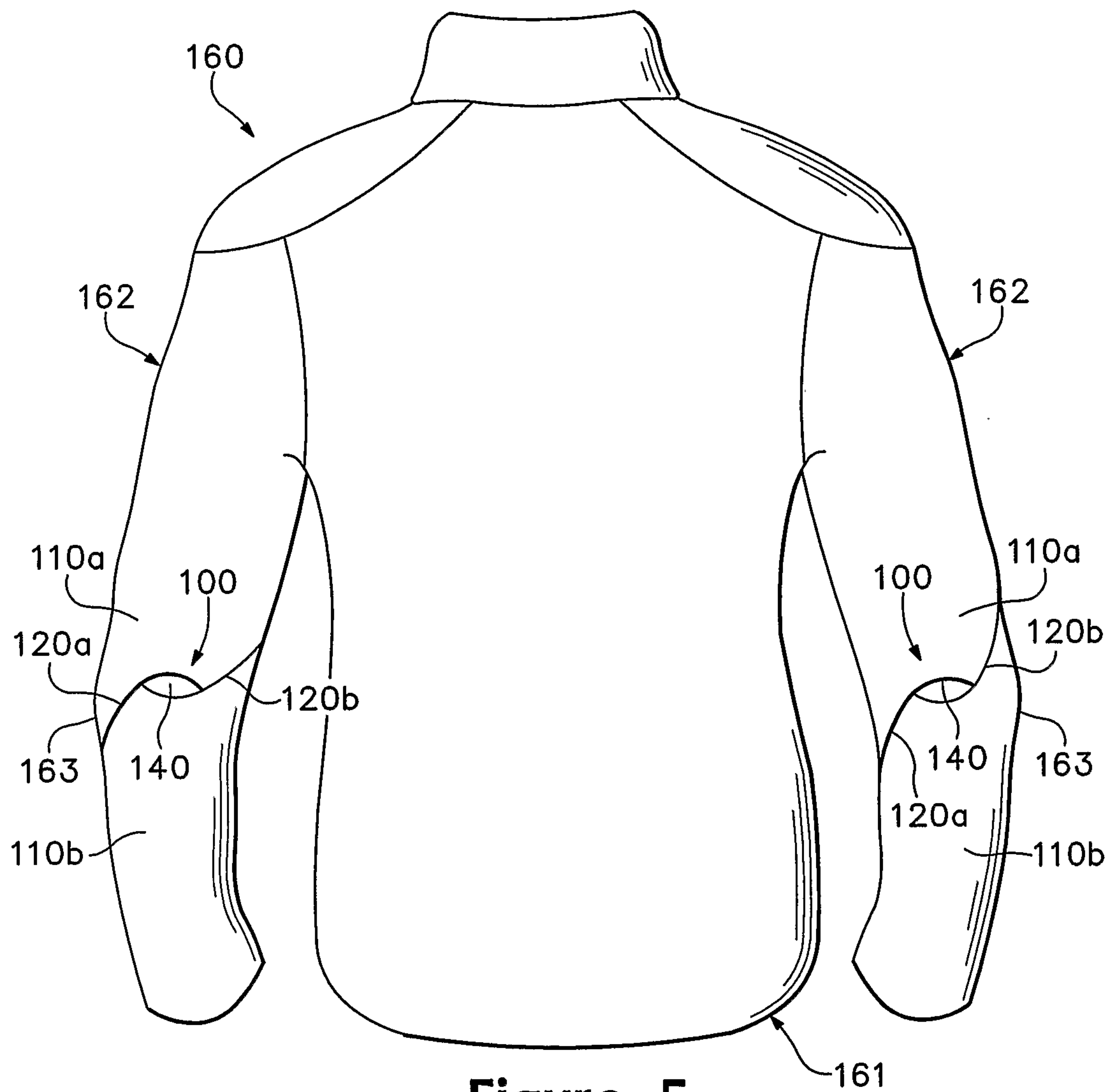
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**Figure 3**

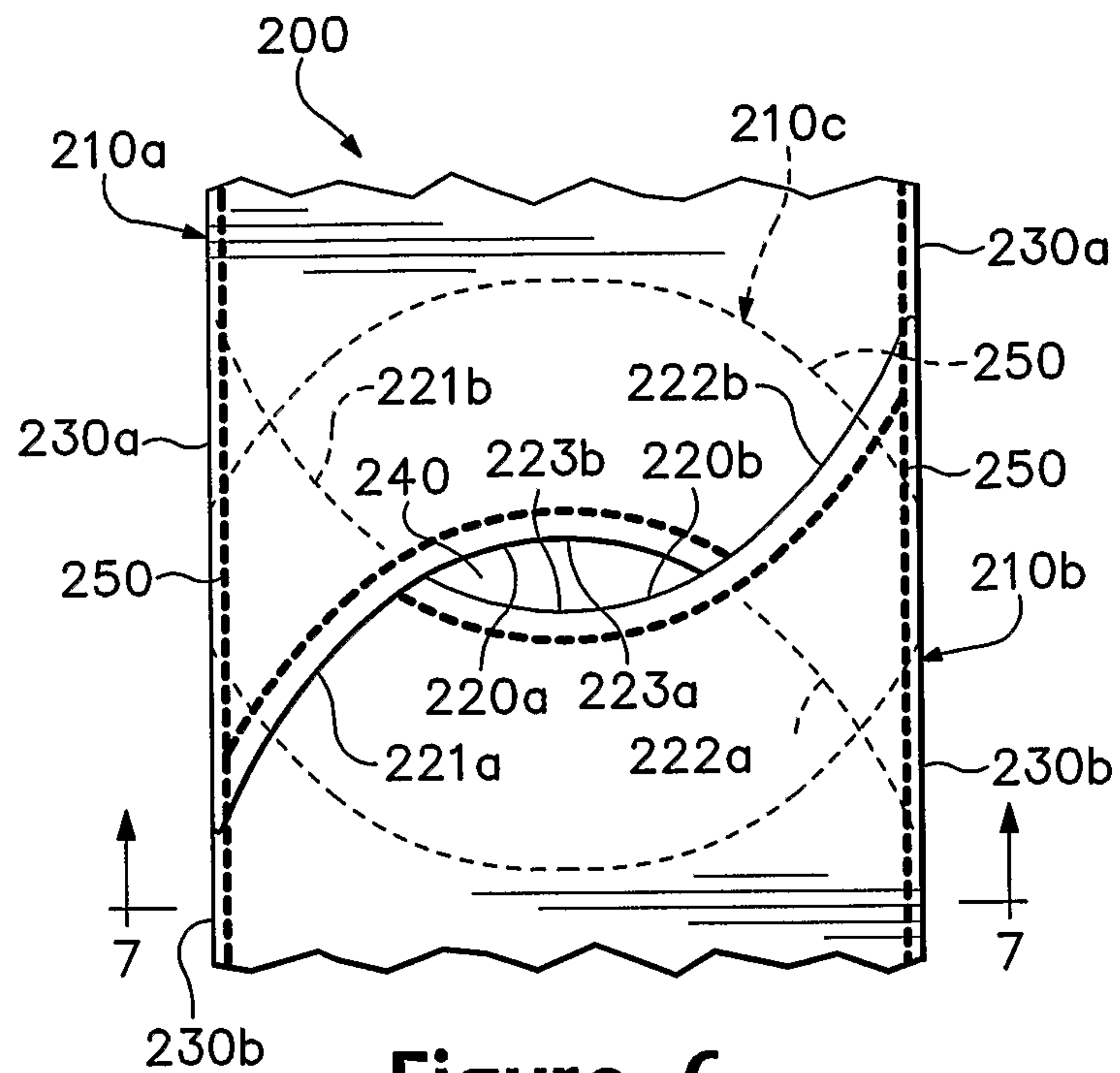
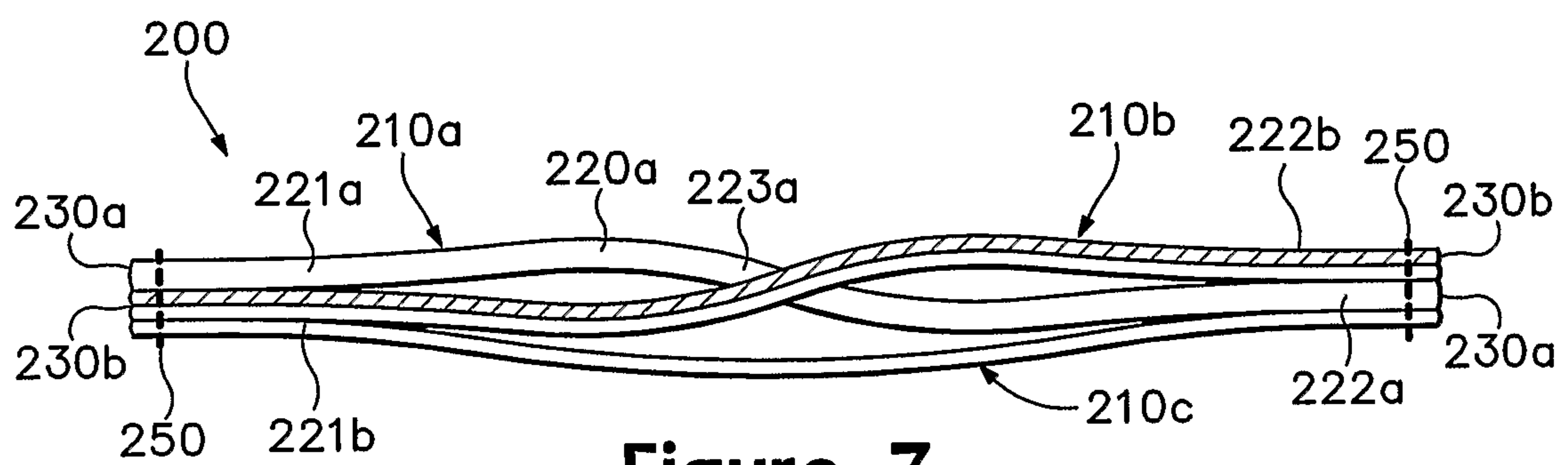
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**Figure 4**

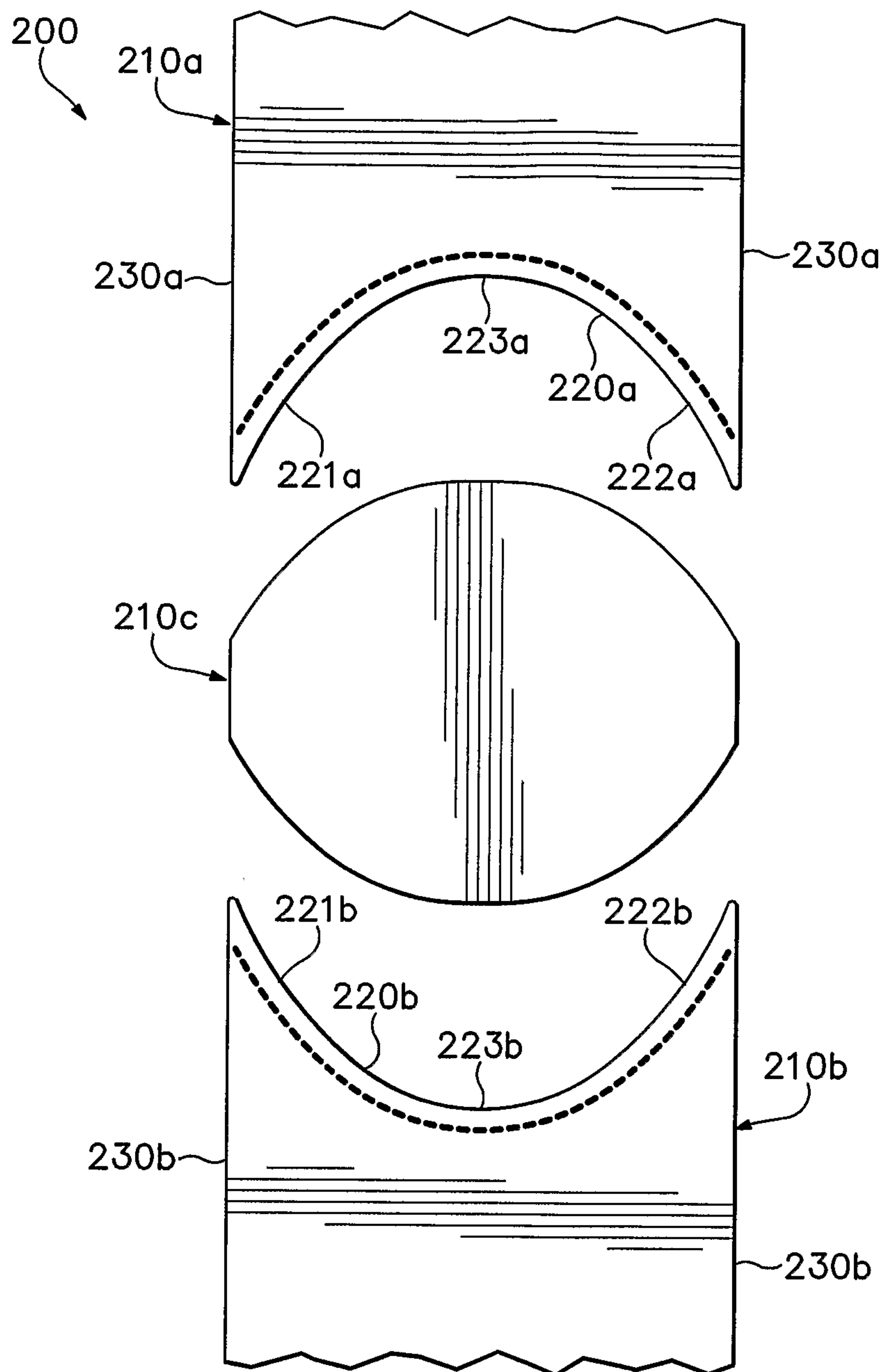
4/16

**Figure 5**

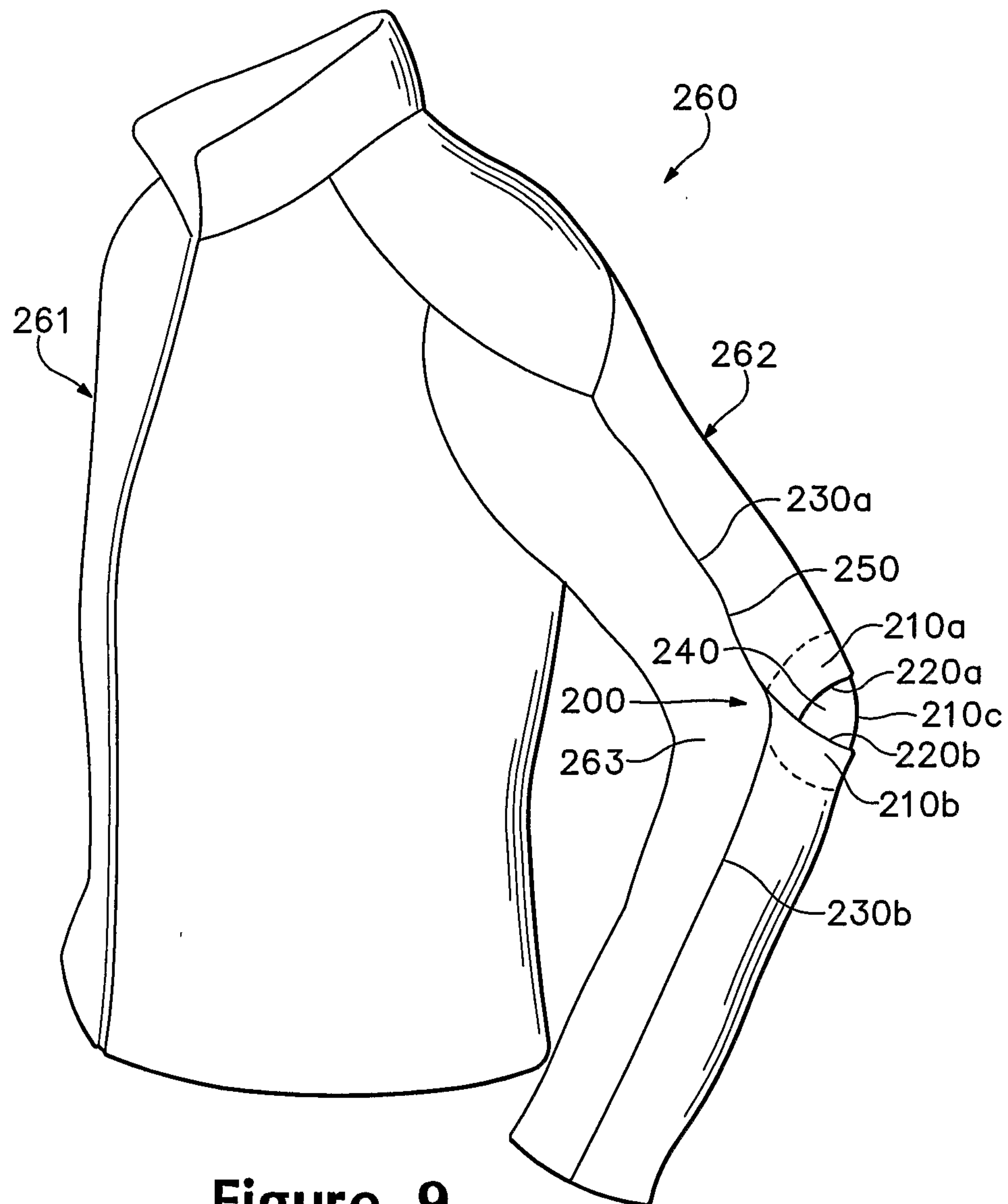
5/16

**Figure 6****Figure 7**

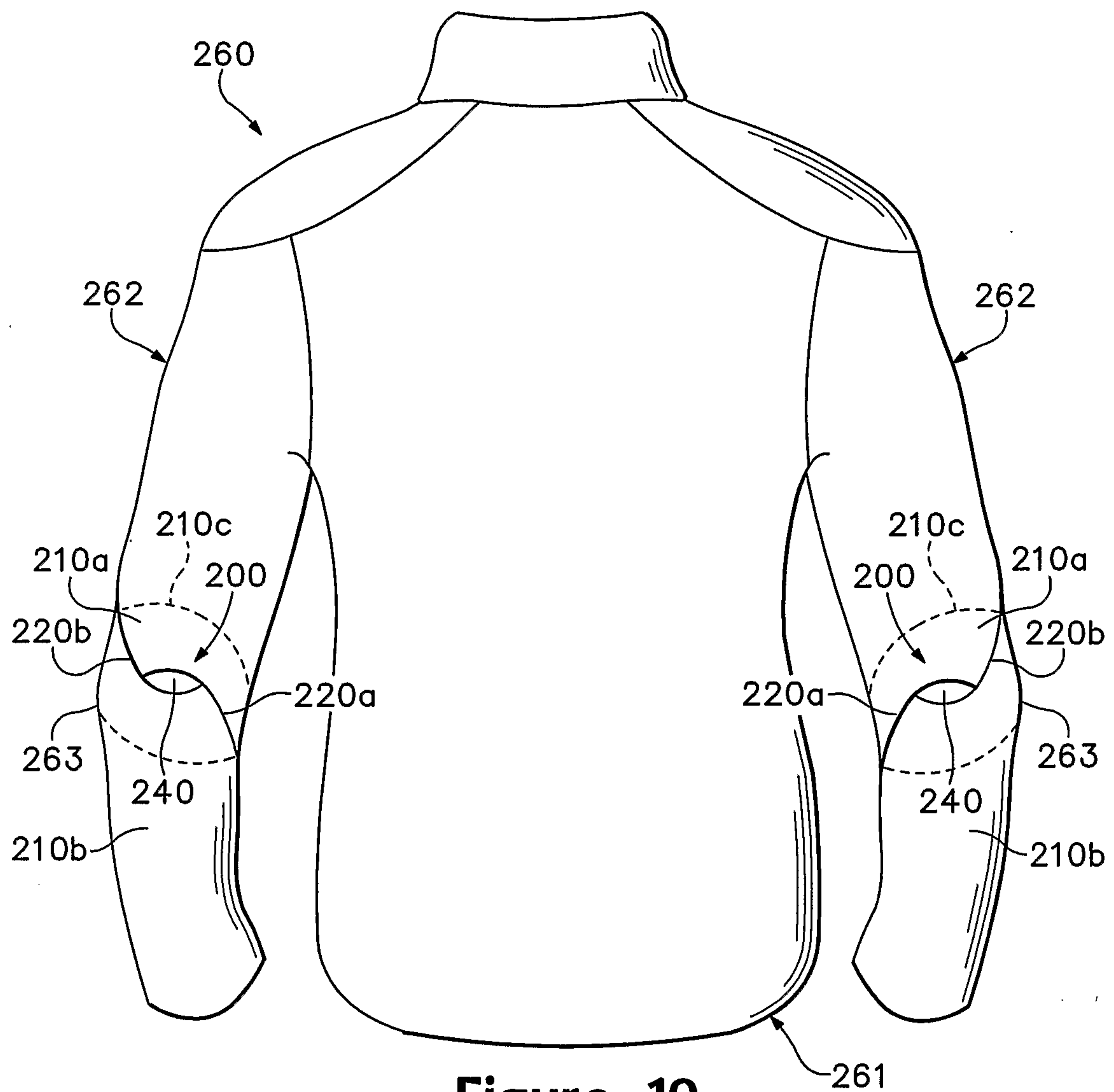
6/16

**Figure 8**

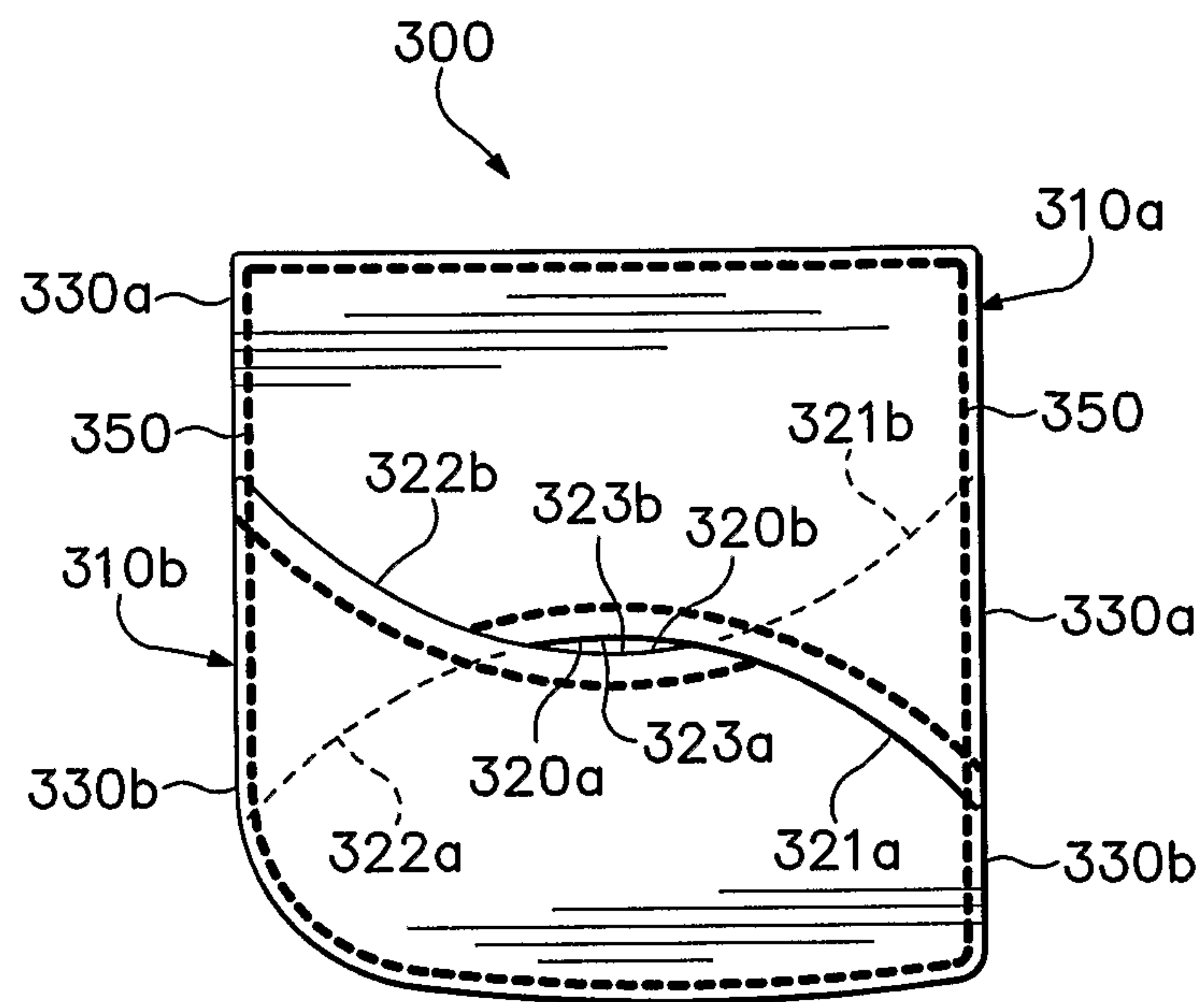
7/16

**Figure 9**

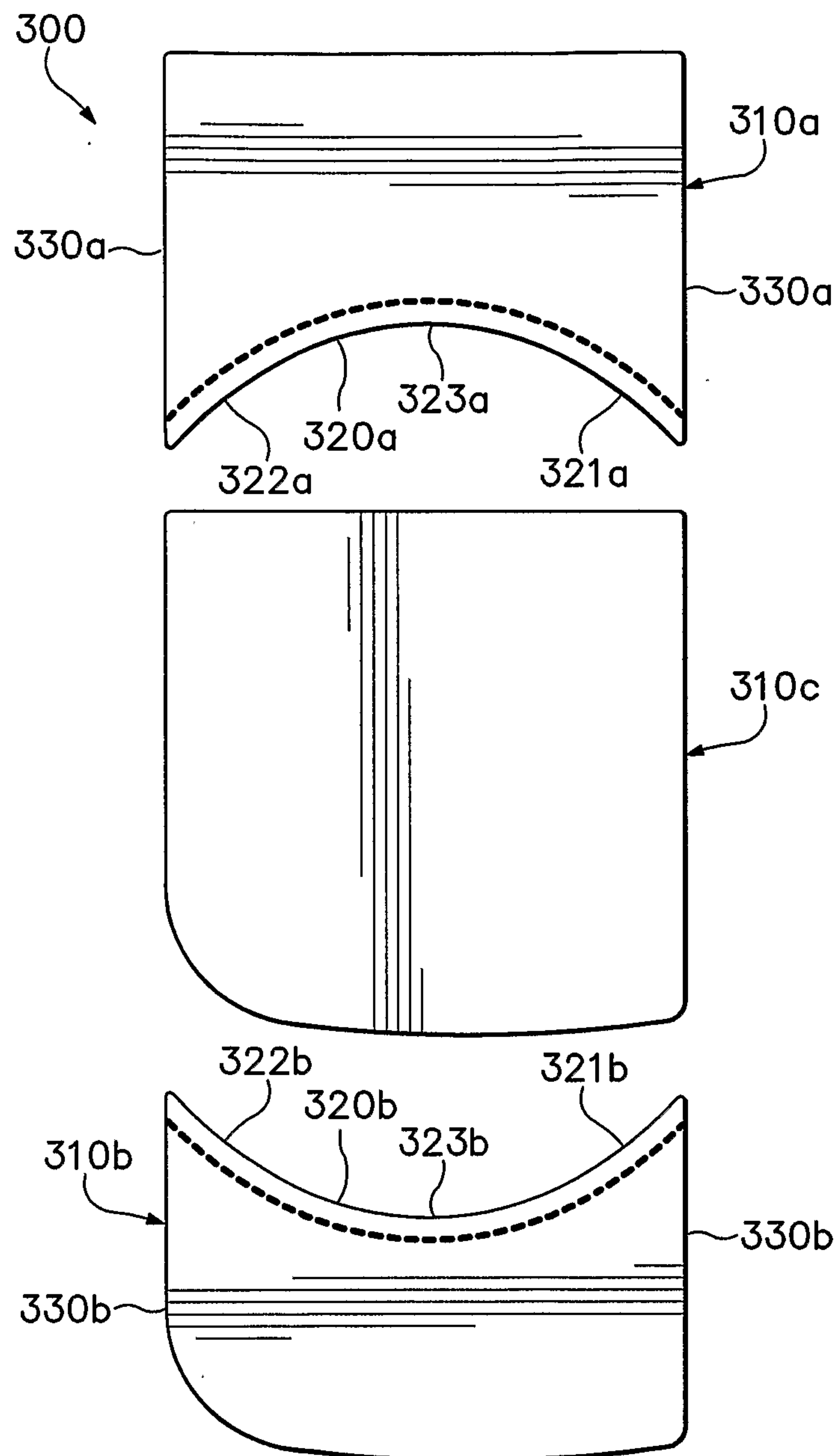
8/16

**Figure 10**

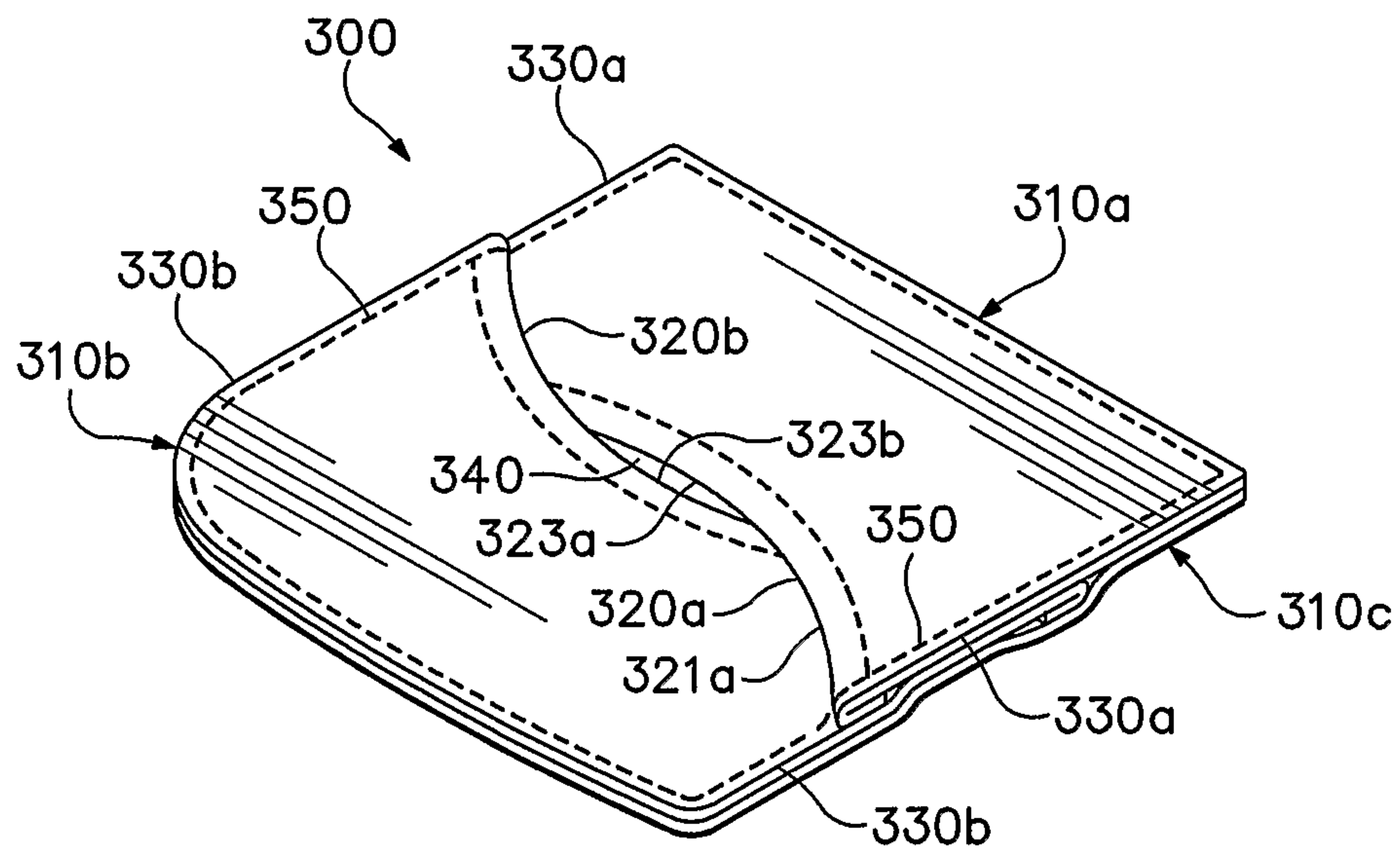
9/16

**Figure 11**

10/16

**Figure 12**

11/16

**Figure 13**

12/16

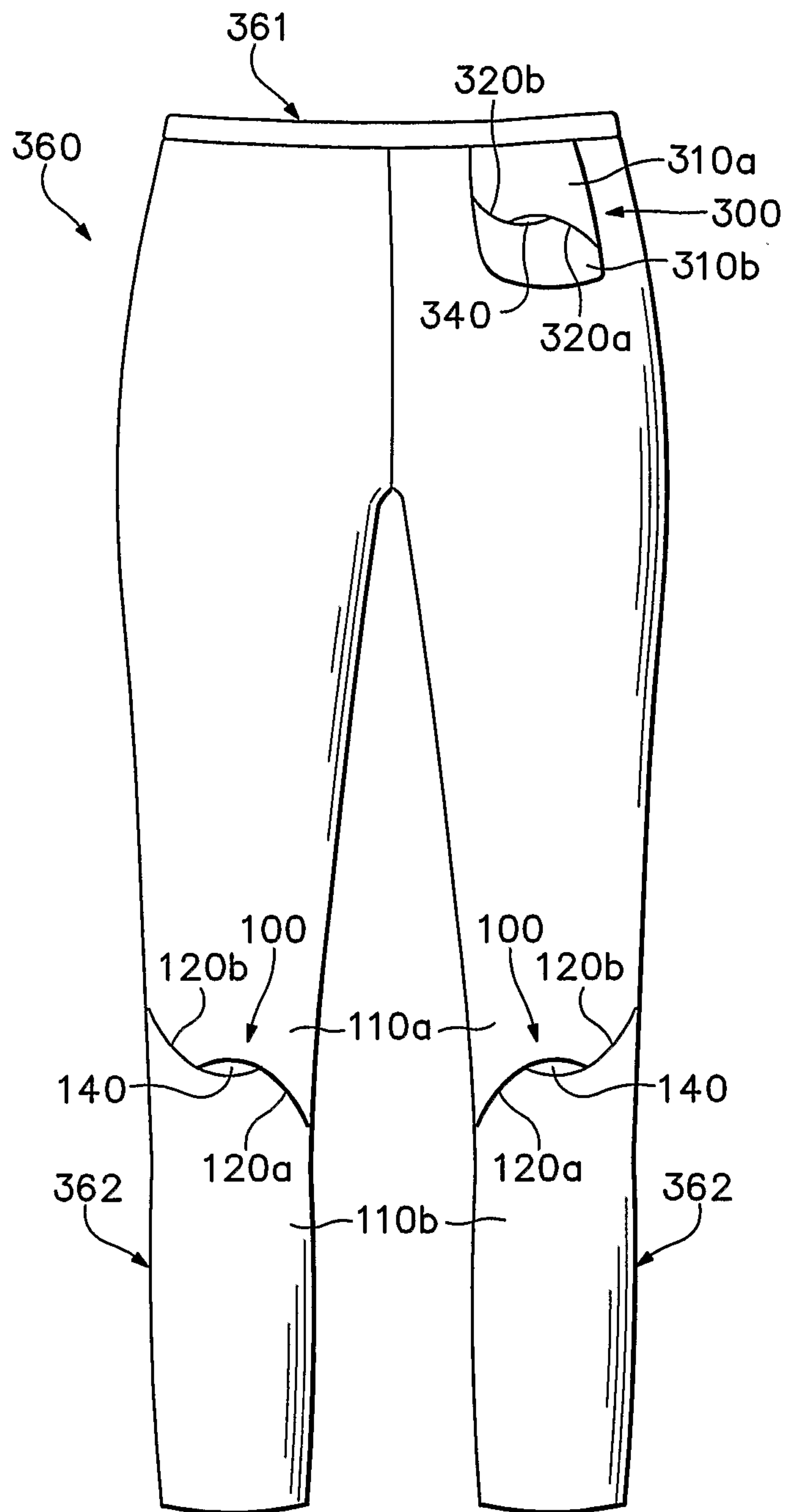
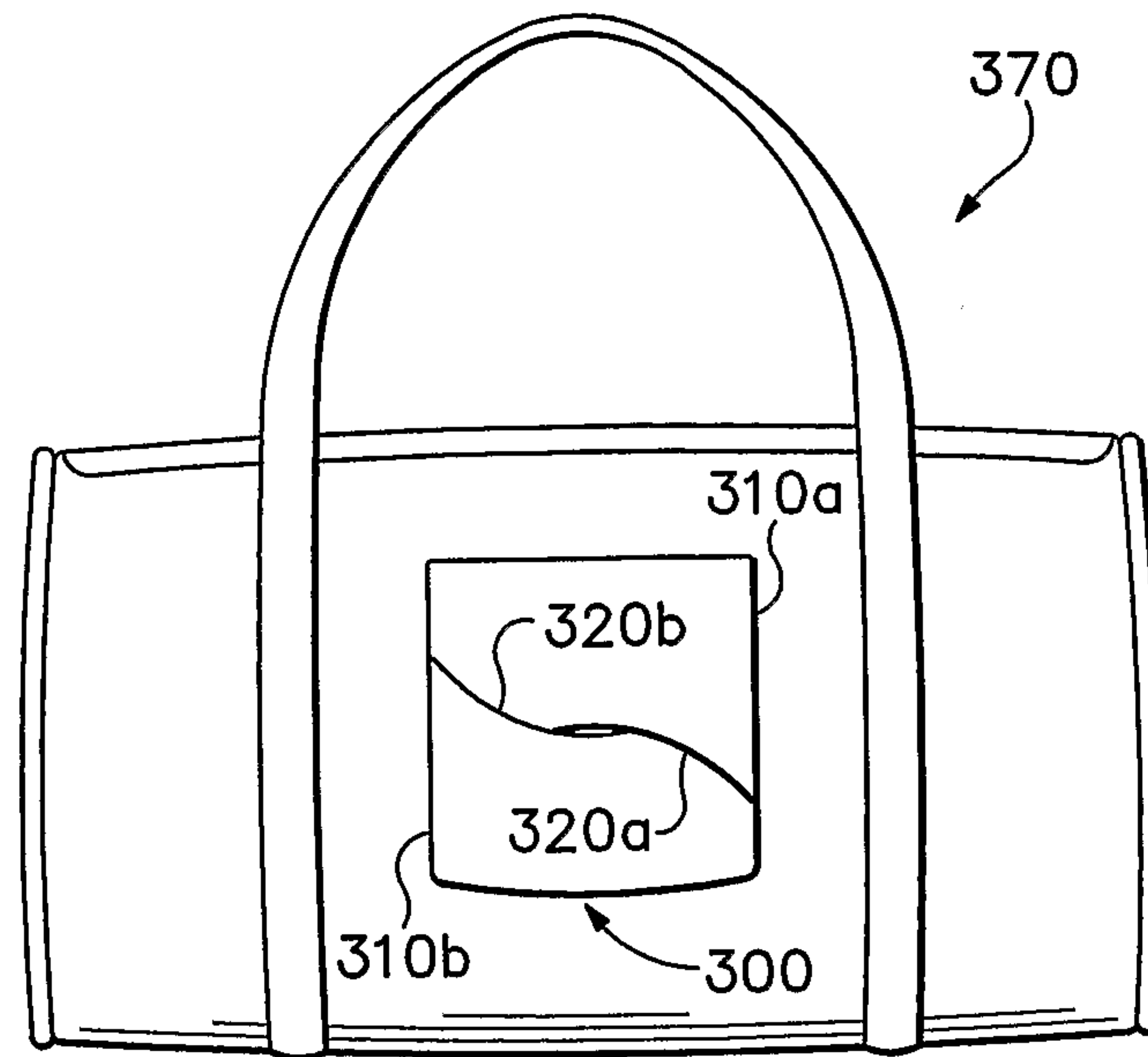
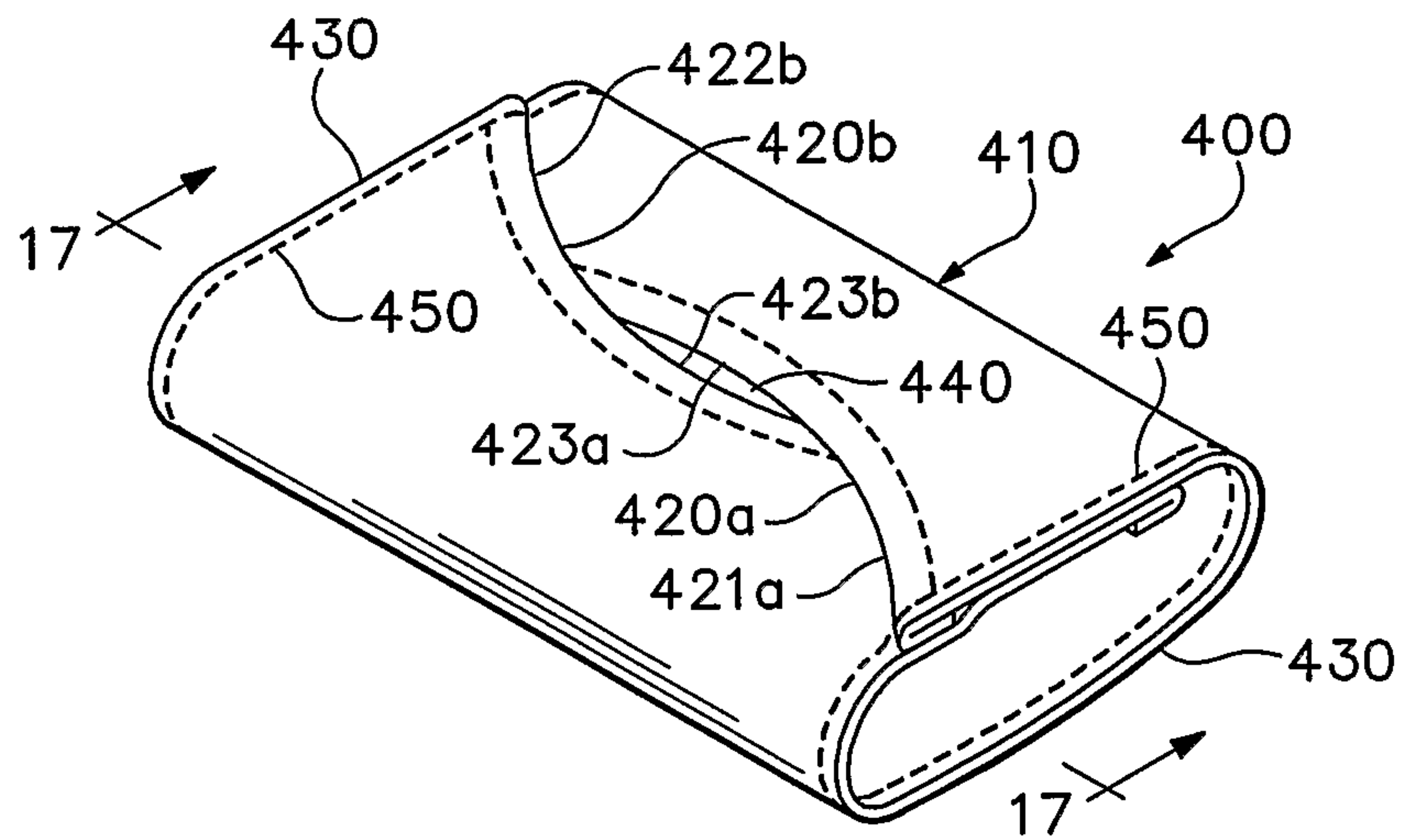
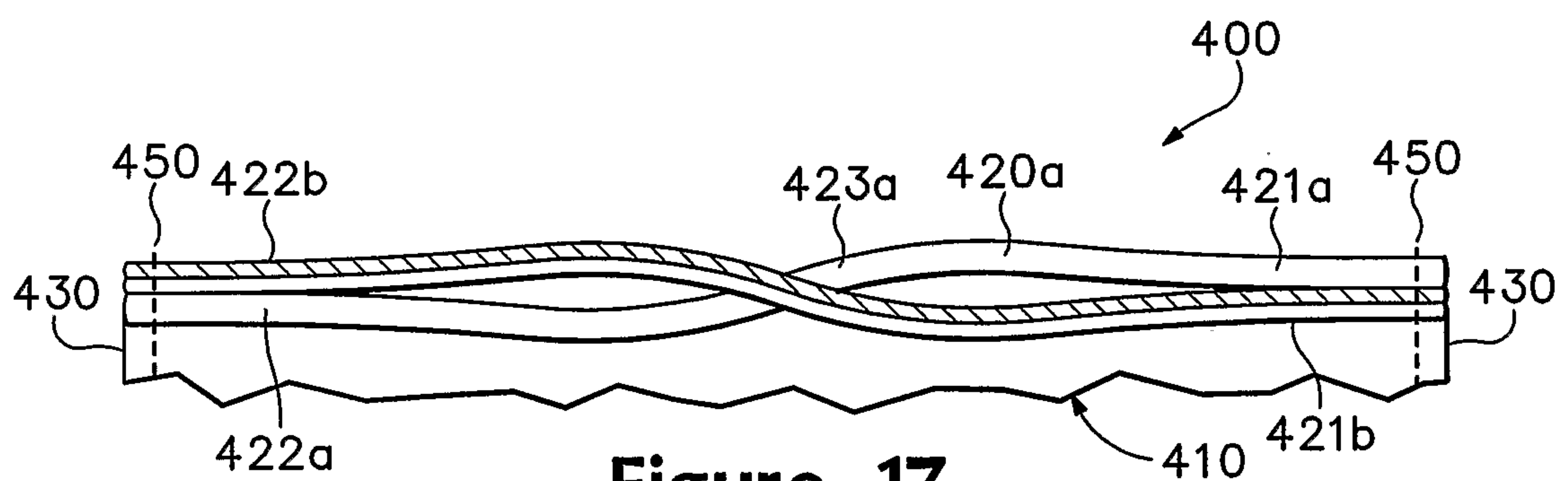


Figure 14

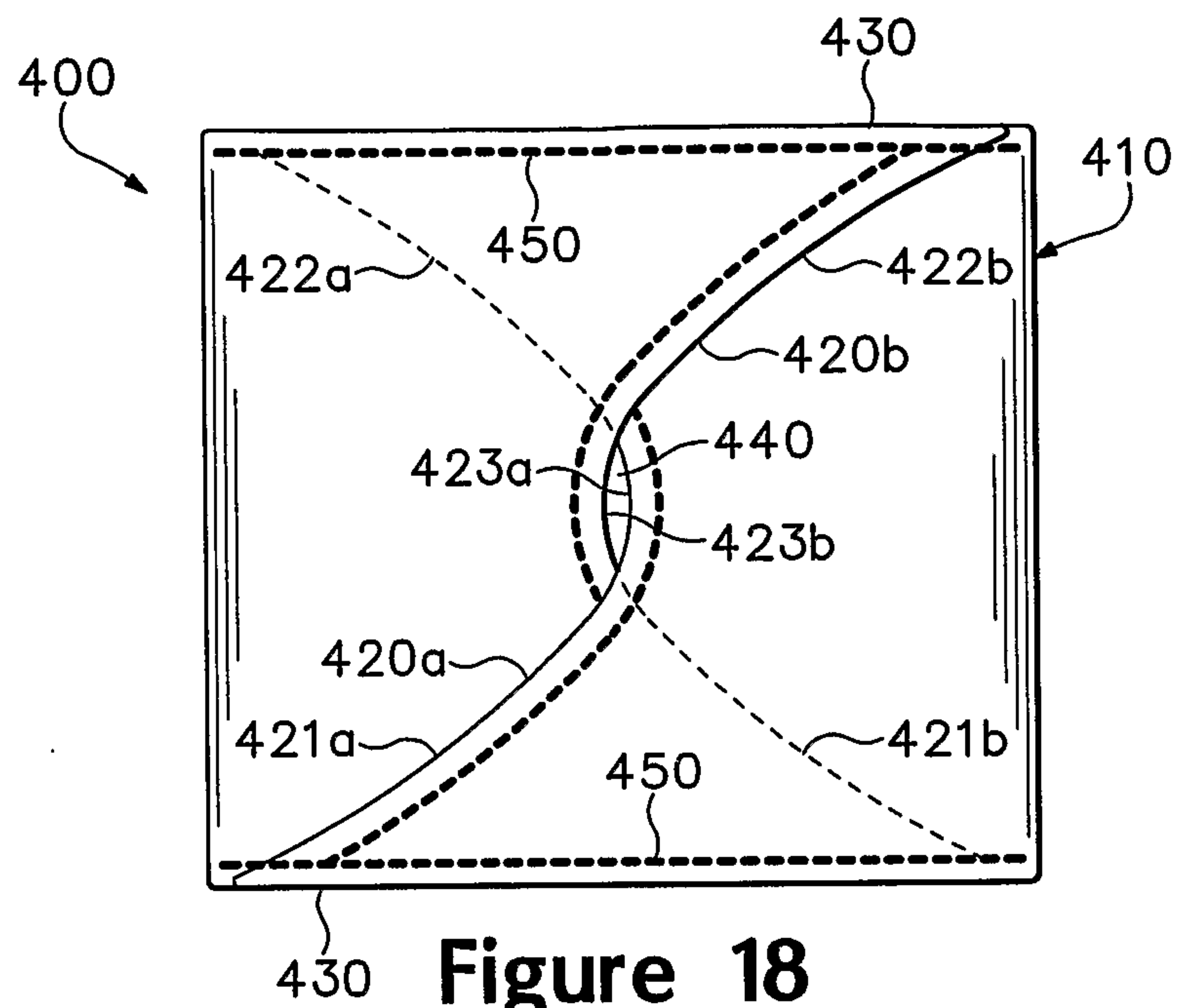
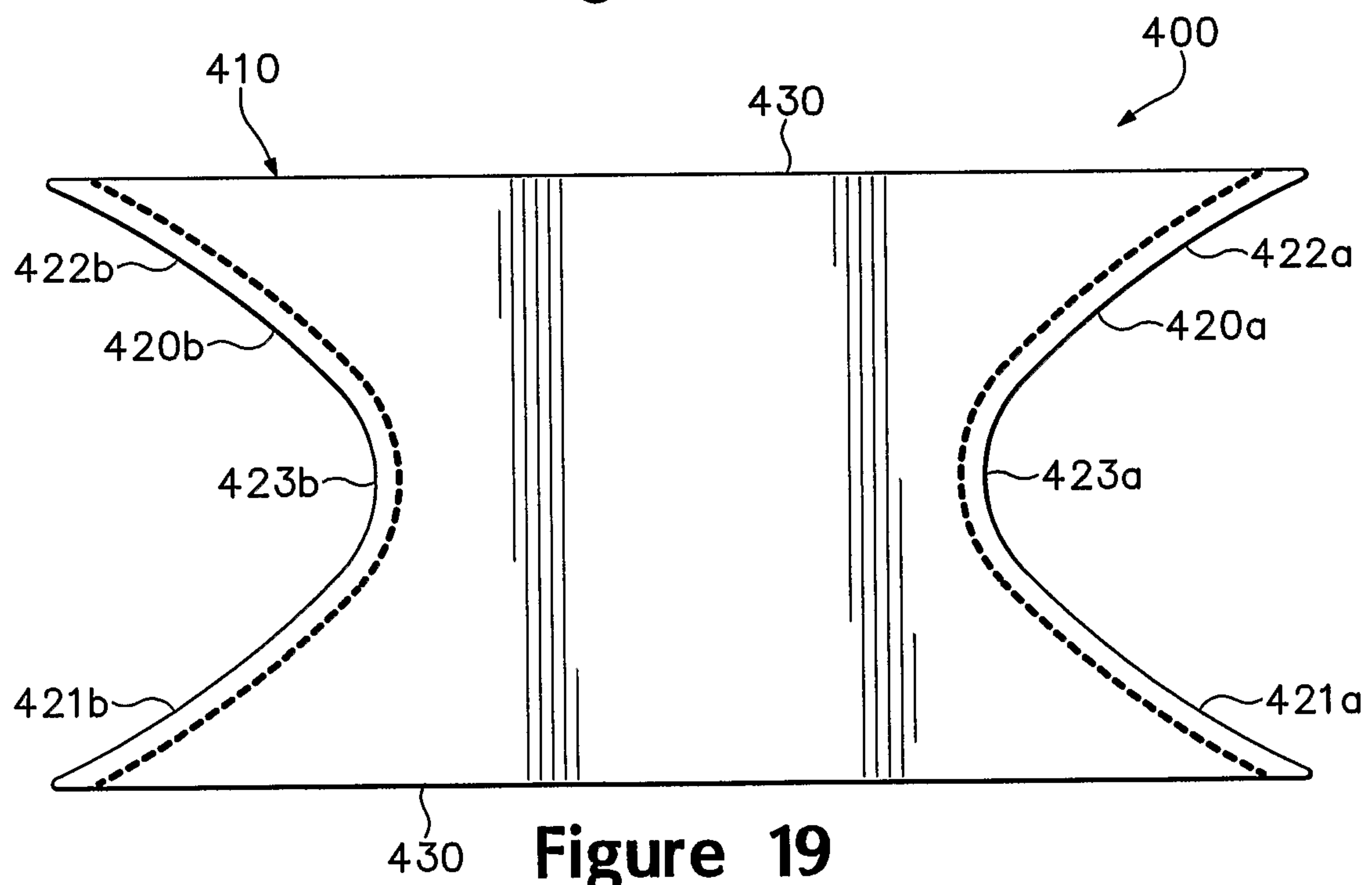
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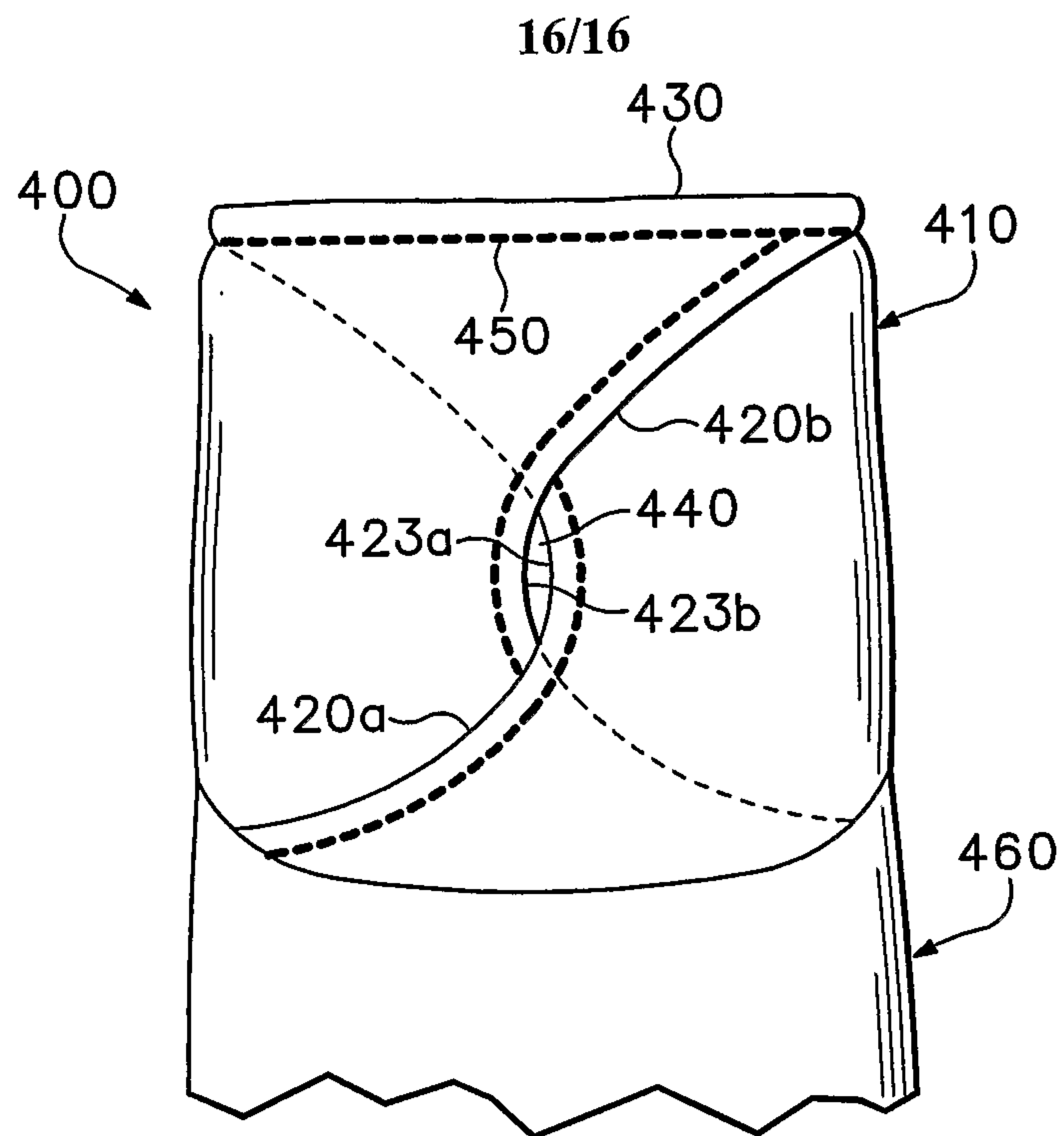
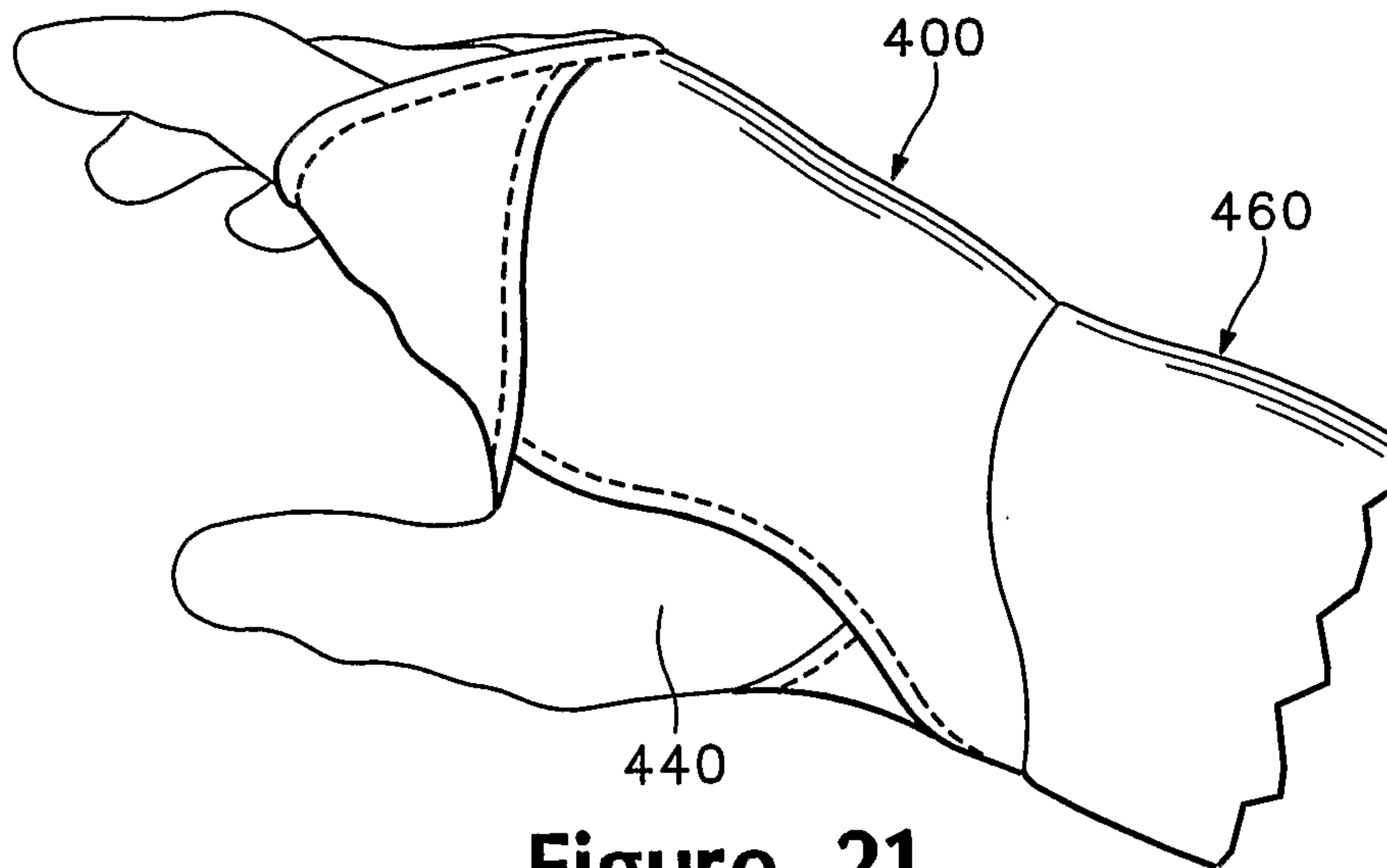
**Figure 15**

14/16

**Figure 16****Figure 17**

15/16

**Figure 18****Figure 19**

**Figure 20****Figure 21**

