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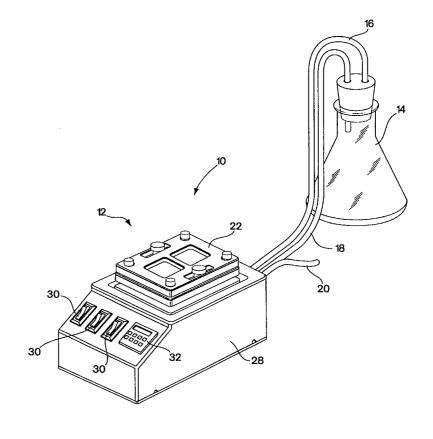
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(57) Abstract

Systems and methods for processing membrane flow-through assays to provide more rapid testing. The systems include a plate for receiving a cartridge having a membrane which for example, can be a membrane with antigens or antibodies fixed thereon. The agents can be pipetted onto the membrane and the systems can be activated to agitate the cartridge to evenly distribute the agents over the membrane, and a vacuum source can apply negative pressure to one side of the membrane to draw the agent therethrough.



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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC 6 G01N33/53 G01N G01N33/53 G01N33/543 B01L3/00 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) IPC 6 GOIN BOIL Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT Category ° Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages Relevant to claim No. P,X WO 99 00655 A (IMMUNETICS) 1,16,20, 7 January 1999 (1999-01-07) 22,23 page 15, paragraph 1 -page 16, paragraph 5; claim 14; figures 1-15 P,X WO 99 05528 A (IMMUNETICS) 1,16,20, 4 February 1999 (1999-02-04) 22,23 page 17, line 15 -page 19, line 25; figures 1-8 WO 94 08716 A (BAXTER DIAGNOSTICS INC) χ 22 28 April 1994 (1994-04-28) Υ page 5, line 7-27 1-21,23page 10, line 10-33 page 12, line 17 -page 17, line 9 claims 6,9,10; figures 1-5 -/--Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. X Patent family members are listed in 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 "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance invention "E" earlier document but published on or after the international "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "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 docu-"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or ments, such combination being obvious to a person skilled "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed in the art. "&" document member of the same patent family Date of the actual completion of the international search Date of mailing of the international search report 20 January 2000 08/02/2000 Name and mailing address of the ISA Authorized officer European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL – 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31–70) 340–2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31–70) 340–3016 Goetz, M

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