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(54) Titre : ACCESSOIRE UNIVERSEL ELASTIQUE POUR FUMER LE TABAC, LE CANNABIS ET LES CIGARETTES ELECTRONIQUES A TAMIS INTEGRE ET BOITIER DE TRANSPORT L'UTILISANT

(54) Title: UNIVERSAL ELASTIC IMPLEMENT FOR SMOKING TOBACCO, CANNABIS AND E-CIGARETTES WITH A BUILT-IN SCREEN AND A CARRYING CASE USING SAME

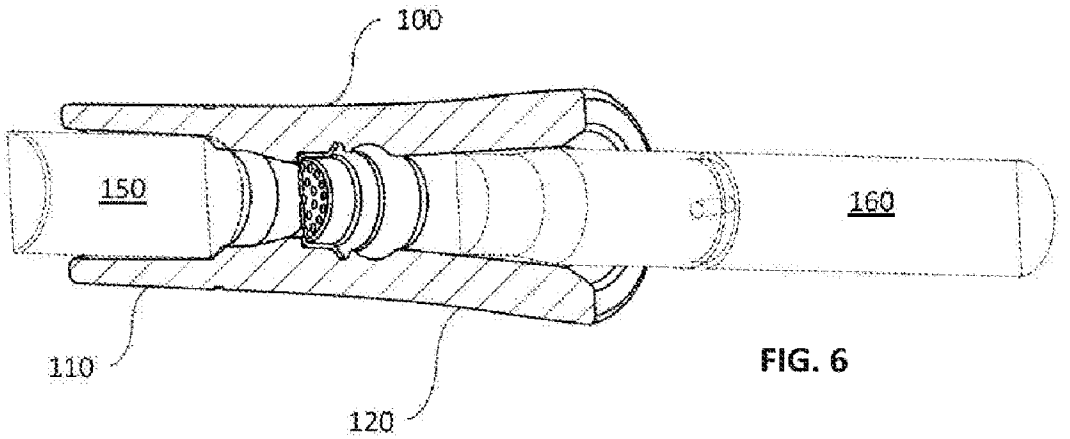

FIG. 6

(57) Abrégé/Abstract:
A universal elastic smoking implement (100, 200, 380) is designed to retain a partially inserted smoke filter (150) on one end and one of a cigarette, a cigar, a smoke pipe, or another smoking device (160) on the other end thereof. A screen (130) is provided in the internal central region of the smoking implement (100, 200, 380) to retain large burning particles as well as to act as a mechanical stop for positioning of such smoke filters (150) or smoking devices (160) inside the smoking implement (100, 200, 380). Either the mouthpiece end (110, 210) and/of the opposite smoking end (120, 220) of the smoking implement (100, 200, 380) may have two or more internal stages of stepped up sizes so as to reduce the overall length of the implement while accommodating a broader range of insert sizes. Also provided is a carrying case (300) for use with the elastic smoking implement (100, 200, 380) positioned between a tubular housing (310) and a tubular cover (340). This makes it convenient to store and seal a tubular carrying case (300) with smoking material between smoking sessions.

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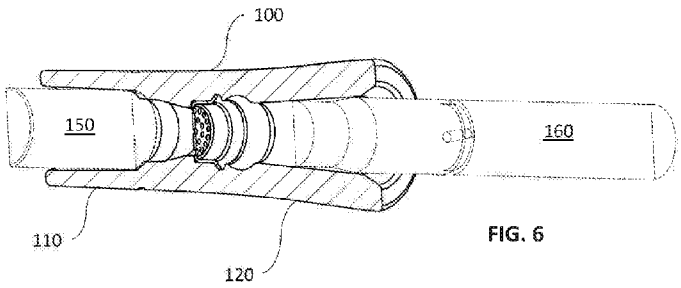

FIG. 6

(57) Abstract: A universal elastic smoking implement (100, 200, 380) is designed to retain a partially inserted smoke filter (150) on one end and one of a cigarette, a cigar, a smoke pipe, or another smoking device (160) on the other end thereof. A screen (130) is provided in the internal central region of the smoking implement (100, 200, 380) to retain large burning particles as well as to act as a mechanical stop for positioning of such smoke filters (150) or smoking devices (160) inside the smoking implement (100, 200, 380). Either the mouthpiece end (110, 210) and/of the opposite smoking end (120, 220) of the smoking implement (100, 200, 380) may have two or more internal stages of stepped up sizes so as to reduce the overall length of the implement while accommodating a broader range of insert sizes. Also provided is a carrying case (300) for use with the elastic smoking implement (100, 200, 380) positioned between a tubular housing (310) and a tubular cover (340). This makes it convenient to store and seal a tubular carrying case (300) with smoking material between smoking sessions.

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UNIVERSAL ELASTIC IMPLEMENT FOR SMOKING TOBACCO, CANNABIS AND E-CIGARETTES WITH A BUILT-IN SCREEN AND A CARRYING CASE USING SAME

BACKGROUND

[001] Without limiting the scope of the invention, its background is described in connection with smoking devices and accessories. More particularly, the invention describes a universal implement configured to removably retain a cigarette, an e-cigarette, a cigar, a smoking pipe or alike on one end and an optional smoke filter on the other. The invention also describes an airtight carrying case in combination with an elastic implement.

[002] Smoking is a practice in which a combustible material, typically a plant such as tobacco, cannabis, or even herbs, is slowly burned and the resulting smoke is inhaled by the smoker. Combustion of the substance causes the release into the smoke of active drugs such as nicotine or THC, and therefore makes them available for a smoker to absorb through the lungs upon inhalation. The most common way of smoking today is via cigarettes, primarily industrially manufactured but also hand-rolled using rolling paper for example. Other smoking tools include traditional pipes, cigars, hookahs and water-pipes, or bongs. A more recent addition to a variety of smoking devices is a so-called e-cigarette, which does not produce a smoke in a technical sense of the word but instead causes evaporation of an inhalable aerosol, which may contain suspended particles desired to be consumed by the smoker.

[003] For the purposes of this description, a variety of cigarettes, cigars, smoking pipes, cannabis joints, bongs, water pipes and other smoking devices are referred to collectively as a tubular container with burning smoking material. Included in this definition are all smoking devices in which the actual smoking material may be positioned somewhat away from the tubular container but is still connected thereto, for example as is the case with water pipes. Also included in this definition are e-cigarettes and their aerosolized analogs.

[004] People smoke for recreation, as a part of rituals, and for medical purposes. It will be appreciated that, while cannabis for recreational use is illegal in many parts of the world, its use as a medicine is legal in a number of countries, including Canada, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Israel, Italy, Finland, and Portugal. In the United States, permission for medical use of cannabis varies from state to state, several having enacted laws to allow regulated cannabis consumption, possession, cultivation, and distribution for medicinal purposes. Therefore, legal statutes now permit both the recreational and medical use of cannabis for the delivery of THC (Δ9-tetrahydrocannabinol), CBD (cannabidiol), and other cannabinoids to a user in many parts of the world.

[005] Inhaling combusted cannabis is the most common, effective, and least expensive method for delivering a pharmacological action of THC to the brain and body. The THC dose of inhaled cannabis

smoke is largely determined by the concentration of precursor THCA (tetrahydrocannabinolic acid) present in the buds and small leaves of the plant and its temperature-dependent conversion to THC during combustion.

[006] Though smoking is commonplace and enjoyable, inhalation of smoke resulting from burning of any plant substance may adversely affect the health of a smoker. Carcinogens in tobacco or cannabis smoke may increase a smoker's risk of developing cardiovascular disease, pulmonary disease, cancer, and other diseases. Many industrially manufactured cigarettes employ a built-in filter to reduce the amount of nicotine, tetrahydrocannabinol, tar, resin, smoke, and particulate matter that a smoker inhales when a cigarette is burned. Industrially manufactured filters are designed to not create appreciable resistance to air flow therethrough and may comprise filtering various materials packed to a predetermined length, such as approximately thirty percent of a cigarette's length.

[007] Although it is common now to smoke a tobacco cigarette with a built-in filter, when it comes to cannabis, such industrially produced cigarettes are not broadly available. One convenient method for smoking cannabis is to hand-roll loose cannabis stock into a self-made cigarette. Unfortunately, the resulting 'joints' have uneven burn characteristics, are harsh to the lungs, and deliver an unpredictable dose of cannabinoids. Cannabinoid dosing will depend on how loose the roll is, the size of cannabis particles, puff volume, and how uniformly cannabinoids are distributed throughout the cannabis product. Additionally, the smoldering cigarette may shed burning coals, causing a fire hazard.

[008] Stand-alone smoke filters are therefore frequently deployed to protect the smoker from harmful substances of cannabis smoke. Such filters need to be placed in series with burning cannabis, such as a self-made cigarette. A combination of a self-rolled cigarette and a filter may be retained together by a conventional cigarette holder. However, rigid conventional cigarette holders are incapable of accommodating self-rolled cigarettes of various sizes on one end and a variety of separately manufactured filters on the other. The need therefore exists for a universal smoking implement capable of accepting a range of cigarettes and filters on both ends thereof.

[009] In addition to self-rolled cigarettes, as well as conventional smoking pipes and cigars, a broad selection of other smoking devices are in frequent use, especially in case of cannabis, including hookahs and water pipes, or bongs. These devices may be shared between smokers. To protect an individual smoker against pathogens that can be transmitted from another smoker in this case, there is a need for an individual smoking implement that can be placed at the end of such other devices and separate the smoker from a direct contact with such shared smoking device. To accomplish this, this smoking implement has to be capable of attaching to a variety of sizes of smoking pipes and other smoking devices.

[0010] Finally, conventional pipes and other smoking appliances have a rigid and typically round mouthpiece. To facilitate a better smoking experience, there is a need for a mouthpiece with a deformable mouthpiece allowing the smoker to adjust its shape so as to not having to struggle to retain a larger diameter smoking appliance or a cigar between the lips in an airtight fashion.

[0011] It is also a common practice to consume a single tubular container with a smoking material such as cannabis over more than one smoking session. In this case, lighting up a burning end of the tubular container and inhaling the smoke a few times leaves a problem of safely extinguishing the smoking end of the tubular container and storing it until the next smoking session. Simple carrying cases made as hard shell tubes are typically used for that purpose. The user is expected to put the remaining tubular container into the carrying case, close off the cap and store the smoking material until next use.

[0012] Such simple carrying cases (sometimes also called "doob tubes") have many disadvantages:

- First, a tubular container with a smoking material such as a cannabis joint is placed together with the remaining burned particles and ash in the same carrying case. Reopening of the case and retrieving the tubular material causes the user to expose his hands or face to the ash falling out from the carrying case.

- Second, these carrying cases are not reliably airtight, causing proliferation of the tobacco or cannabis smell and remaining smoke outside the carrying case, and exposing others thereto.

- Third, simple carrying cases to not provide adequate protection to deny access to the smoking material by children and minors, and finally

- Fourth, some residual burning of the smoking material inside a plastic tube may cause partial burning of the plastic tube itself as the tubular material is not fixedly retained inside the carrying case, simply placed inside thereof and can shift its position from time to time.

[0013] Besides, these tubular carrying cases do not have any room for additional smoking accessories such as filters or the elastic implement as I described previously to be stored together with the remaining smoking material to make it convenient to resume smoking thereof at a different time. The need, therefore, exists for a novel carrying case in combination with the universal elastic implement as described previously to address these problems and further improve the smoking experience of the user when a single tubular container is consumed over multiple smoking sessions.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0014] Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to overcome these and other drawbacks of the prior art by providing a novel smoking implement capable of universally accepting of and attaching to a variety of smoking devices and cigarettes on one side and a filter on the other end thereof.

[0015] It is another object of the present invention to provide a smoking implement providing at least some basic level of smoke and particulate filtering even without another filter attached thereto.

[0016] It is a further object of the present invention to provide a universal smoking implement capable of attaching to a smoking appliance so as to provide individual protection for a smoker from exposure to a risk of being in contact with a contaminated surface of such smoking appliance.

[0017] It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide a universal smoking appliance with adjustable opening that can be deformed into a desired shape for best smoking experience.

[0018] It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a novel carrying case in combination with an elastic smoking implement that supports the tubular container with the burning end suspended inside thereof, thereby preventing heating and burning of the carrying case itself.

[0019] Another object of the present invention is to provide a novel carrying case capable of storing the tubular container with the smoking material in a water-tight and/or in an airtight manner.

[0020] A further object of the present invention is to provide a carrying case with an internal cavity large enough to store inside not only the tubular container with smoking material but also a smoke filter assembled with the elastic smoking implement, thereby making it convenient to remove the assembly of the tubular container, elastic smoking implement, and the smoke filter as a single body and resume smoking.

[0021] A further yet object of the present invention is to provide a novel carrying case capable of keeping children and minors away from the tubular container with the smoking material by providing a child-proof lock between the components of the carrying case.

[0022] The universal elastic smoking implement of the invention may be generally made from an elastically resilient material so as to allow both ends thereof to repeatedly expand outwards and surround one or two of the inserts therein for secure airtight attachment thereto. Such inserts on one side may include a variety of sizes of the tubular container with a burning smoking material such as cigarettes, cigars and other smoking devices, and on the other side these inserts may include a range of smoke filters. One or both ends of the universal implement may further include a malleable insert to allow the user to change the shape of the implement to suit a personal preference.

[0023] The carrying case of the present invention comprises two main components: a carrying case housing and a carrying case cover. Both have a generally tubular shape and are sized to form an internal cavity when the carrying case cover is attached to the carrying case housing. This internal cavity is sized to be sufficiently large to accept the elastic smoking implement therein with the tubular container having the smoking material attached on one end thereof and the smoke filter attached on the other end of the elastic

smoking implement. A child-proof lock may be formed between the open end of the carrying case housing and the open end of the carrying case cover, whereby a push-and-turn motion is required to separate the components of the carrying case.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0024] Subject matter is particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed in the concluding portion of the specification. The foregoing and other features of the present disclosure will become more fully apparent from the following description and appended claims, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings. Understanding that these drawings depict only several embodiments in accordance with the disclosure and are, therefore, not to be considered limiting of its scope, the disclosure will be described with additional specificity and detail through use of the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0025] FIGURE 1 is a perspective side view of the implement for smoking of the first embodiment of the present invention,

[0026] FIGURE 2 is a partial cross-sectional view thereof,

[0027] FIGURE 3 is a perspective front view of the implement,

[0028] FIGURE 4 is a perspective rear view of the same,

[0029] FIGURE 5 is a one-quarter cut-out perspective side view of the implement,

[0030] FIGURE 6 is an assembly cross-sectional side view drawing of the implement together with a filter and an e-cigarette retained therein,

[0031] FIGURE 7 is a one-quarter cut-out perspective side view of the implement equipped with a malleable insert component in the mouthpiece,

[0032] FIGURE 8 is a side perspective view of the same with the mouthpiece reshaped into an oval shape,

[0033] FIGURE 9 is a partial cross-sectional view of the smoking implement of the second embodiment of the present invention,

[0034] FIGURE 10 is a perspective one-quarter cut-out front view of the same,

[0035] FIGURE 11 is a perspective one-quarter cut-out rear view of the same,

[0036] FIGURE 12 is an assembly view of the implement of the invention together with a filter and a self-rolled cigarette retained therein,

[0037] FIGURE 13 is a side perspective view of the assembly of a smoking pipe and a filter retained on

both ends of the smoking implement of the invention,

[0038] FIGURE 14 is a perspective cross-sectional side view of the same as in Fig. 13,

[0039] FIGURE 15 is a one-quarter cut-out perspective side view of the implement of the second embodiment equipped with a malleable insert component in the mouthpiece end thereof,

[0040] FIGURE 16 is a one-quarter cut-out perspective view showing a mouthpiece end shaped into an oval using the malleable insert embedded therein,

[0041] FIGURE 17 is a perspective exploded view of the carrying case components,

[0042] FIGURE 18 is a side cross-sectional longitudinal view of the same,

[0043] FIGURE 19 is a perspective view of the carrying case housing,

[0044] FIGURE 20 is a perspective view of the carrying case cover,

[0045] FIGURE 21 is a perspective cross-sectional view of the elastic smoking implement for use with the carrying case,

[0046] FIGURE 22 is a side view of the carrying case of the invention as assembled illustrating aligned indicia to allow the opening of the carrying case,

[0047] FIGURE 23 is a cross-sectional longitudinal side view of the same,

[0048] FIGURE 24 is a perspective ¼ cutout view of the same,

[0049] FIGURE 25 is an enlarged view of the portion of the carrying case illustrating the details of the elastic smoking implement interacting with the carrying case housing,

[0050] FIGURE 26 is the same as in Fig. 25 but showing an alternative design of the elastic smoking implement to achieve a watertight and airtight seal of the smoking material inside the carrying case of the invention,

[0051] FIGURE 27 is a cross-sectional perpendicular view as indicated in Fig. 25 showing the carrying case in a closed position,

[0052] FIGURE 28 shows the same but with the carrying case cover turned and prepared for opening, and

[0053] FIGURE 29 is a cross-sectional longitudinal view of the carrying case showing the position of the tubular container and the smoke filter inside thereof.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[0054] The following description sets forth various examples along with specific details to provide a thorough understanding of claimed subject matter. It will be understood by those skilled in the art, however, that claimed subject matter may be practiced without one or more of the specific details disclosed herein. Further, in some circumstances, well-known methods, procedures, systems, components and/or circuits have not been described in detail in order to avoid unnecessarily obscuring claimed subject matter. In the following detailed description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings, which form a part hereof. In the drawings, similar symbols typically identify similar components, unless context dictates otherwise. The illustrative embodiments described in the detailed description, drawings, and claims are not meant to be limiting. Other embodiments may be utilized, and other changes may be made, without departing from the spirit or scope of the subject matter presented here. It will be readily understood that the aspects of the present disclosure, as generally described herein, and illustrated in the figures, can be arranged, substituted, combined, and designed in a wide variety of different configurations, all of which are explicitly contemplated and make part of this disclosure.

[0055] Figs. 1-8 illustrate the first embodiment 100 of the smoking implement of the invention. Fig. 1 shows a general perspective side view of the smoking implement 100. For the purposes of this description, the terms "implement", "smoking implement", and "implement for smoking" are used interchangeably and have the same meaning. The smoking implement 100 has a generally tubular body and includes a generally smaller diameter first opening at a mouthpiece end 110 located on the opposite side from a generally larger second opening at a smoking end 120. An external groove 102 may be located closer to the mouthpiece end 110 and used to help indicating for the smoker how to identify a shorter mouthpiece end 110 from a longer smoking end 120.

[0056] The generally tubular body of the smoking implement 100 may be made from a single elastic material. It may be beneficial to use a thermo-insulating, biocompatible elastic material so as to assure a safe contact with the smoker's lips and to avoid a sensation of cold upon touching the implement. In embodiments, the selection of the suitable material may be made with consideration of a melting temperature thereof, which may be selected to be above the expected temperature of the burning smoking material – so as to avoid melting or another distortion or damage of the implement during use.

[0057] Various individual colors and color mixtures may be added to the material of the implement 100 as well as various external patterns and textures may be made on its external surface (not shown). This may be done to allow several users to easily identify their own smoking implement by appearance or by touch and avoid cross-contamination when a single smoking appliance is shared between several smokers.

[0058] Finally, a tubular body material with sufficient extent of elasticity may be used to manufacture the smoking implement 100 so as to allow resilient expansion of one or both of its ends as described below to

retain a variety of inserts therein in an airtight manner. In embodiments, the material for the smoking implement 100 may be selected with shore A durometer ranging from about 40 to about 70, or in a range from medium soft to medium hard.

[0059] Polyethylene, polyurethane, polypropylene, natural rubber, silicone, or combinations thereof are all suitable examples of a material for the body of the smoking implement 100. In addition to above listed considerations, the use of these materials may allow easy washing of the smoking implement 100 with conventional soap and water or even in a dishwasher to remove smoking and other stains therefrom.

[0060] In further embodiments, more than one material may be used for the construction of the smoking implement 100. For example, the inner portion of the implement 100 may be made from a first softer material which may be used to increase the strength of the friction fit upon positioning of an insert therein. The outer portion of the smoking implement 100 may be made from a second stiffer material, that may provide for a better touch sensation for the smoker. Selecting such first and second material from the same general chemical family may be advantageous for their secure bond to each other.

[0061] The tubular body of the smoking implement 100 may be manufactured using conventional polymer production techniques including molding, overmolding, insert molding, vacuum forming, casting, etc. as the invention is not limited in this regard. To facilitate easy manufacturing, the design of the smoking implement 100 may include its internal portions to be smallest in diameter in the central portion of the implement and gradually increase in diameter towards one or both ends thereof. That approach would make the design easier to mold using conventional manufacturing techniques as described above.

[0062] Fig. 2 shows various internal portions of the smoking implement 100 that are now described in greater detail. The mouthpiece end 110 may be generally designed to accommodate a variety of smoke filters at least partially inserted from the right side of the smoking implement as shown in the drawing. Such smoking filters are produced by a variety of manufacturers. Filters generally comprise a rigid cylindrical housing containing a smoke filter material. The filter housing may include an opening on both sides thereof so as to allow the smoker to apply suction on one side of the filter and draw cigarette smoking therethrough from the other end. Typically, such smoke filters are provided as tubes with an external diameter ranging from about 6 mm to about 9 mm.

[0063] The mouthpiece 110 may be designed to accept inside thereof a range of smoke filter diameters starting at about 6 mm and extending to about 9 mm – so as to accommodate a majority of such smoke filters available on the market. The internal portion of the mouthpiece 110 may include a first internal mouthpiece stage 114 extending to a second internal mouthpiece stage 112 located serially in line with the first mouthpiece stage 114. The smaller diameter first mouthpiece stage 114 may be positioned closer to the central region of the smoking implement 100 and may include a tapered or generally cylindrical inner surface 114' with a diameter less or at about 6 mm. The first stage 114 is therefore designed to accept

smaller "slim" smoke filters of about 6 to about 7 mm in diameter. Retention of such smoke filter in an airtight manner may be accomplished by a simple friction or press fit as the elastic material of the smoking implement 100 "grabs" the hard surface of the smoke filter once sufficiently expanded to match the filter's external diameter as a result of pushing the smoke filter inside the body of the smoking implement 100. The length of the first stage 114 and the second stage 112 may be selected such that together both stages 114 and 112 are shorter than the length of the standalone smoke filter. In embodiments, such combined length may be about 20 mm. In this case, the remaining portion of the smoke filter protruding outside the smoking implement 100 may be used to serve as a mouthpiece for the smoker. In addition, the protruding portion of the smoke filter may be used to hold and remove the smoke filter from the smoking implement 100 after its use.

[0064] The second internal mouthpiece stage 112 of the mouthpiece end 110 may be sized to have a larger internal diameter that the first mouthpiece stage 114 in order to accept a larger smoke filter, with this internal diameter ranging from about 8 mm to about 9 mm. Such larger or "regular" filter may be inserted inside the second mouthpiece stage 112 and be retained therein via a press fit with its internal surface 112'. A short and tapered first step transition 113 may be made between the first mouthpiece stage 114 and the second mouthpiece stage 112 so as to direct the slim filters towards the center of the first mouthpiece stage 114 after traversing the second mouthpiece stage 112.

[0065] While those skilled in the art would appreciate that a single mouthpiece stage having a tapered design of the mouthpiece end 110 may be created to span the entire range of smoke filter diameters, it would be less advantageous to do so as such design would necessarily have to have a greater length than the two-stage design of the invention. Making the smoking implement too long with a single tapered mouthpiece end may have a disadvantage to running out of length for a smoke filter, in which case smaller sized smoke filter may have to be completely inserted into the depths of the mouthpiece end 110 of the smoking implement 100. Not only this is difficult to do by hand, but it would also complicate the removal of the smoke filter from the smoking implement 100 after its use is finished.

[0066] A screen 130 may be positioned inside the central area of the smoking implement 100 between the mouthpiece end 110 and the smoking end 120, see Figs. 3, 4, and 5. Such screen may be made using metal such as steel, aluminum, copper, or brass. In embodiments, the screen may be insert-molded inside the smoking implement 100. In other embodiments, the screen 130 may be simply inserted and retained inside the smoking implement 100, in which case it may also be removed if needed – for example for replacement purposes. The pore size of the screen 130 may be selected to be from about 0.5 mm to about 1.5 mm. In embodiments, the pore size may be selected to be about 0.5 mm; 0.6 mm; 0.7 mm; 0.8 mm; 0.9 mm; 1.0 mm; 1.1 mm; 1.2 mm; 1.3 mm; 1.4 mm; 1.5 mm or any size inbetween. The main purpose of the screen 130 is to retain large particles that can be liberated during the burning of the smoking material – so as to prevent these particles from traveling to the smoker's lungs. These particles may include resin clumps and

droplets, burned flower remains, ash, etc. Importantly, the screen 130 has to be designed so as not to create any significant resistance to airflow. Hard to inhale smoking device is not desired as it causes a need for deep aspiration during the smoking process. Such deep aspiration makes smoking difficult and strains the chest muscles of the smoker. To accomplish the ease of use, the total available cross-section of the air passage through the screen 130 may be selected to be at least 2 mm^2, at least 2.5 mm^2, at least 3 mm^2, at least 3.5 mm^2, at least 4 mm^2, or even larger.

[0067] The diameter of the round screen 130 may be about 5 mm as this is the narrowest portion of the smoking implement. In embodiments, the screen 130 may not be orthogonal to the longitudinal center line of the smoking implement. It may be positioned at an oblique angle, for example at 45 degrees, 60 degrees, 75 degrees or any angle inbetween about 45 degrees and about 90 degrees to the center line. In that case, the screen may be formed in the shape of an oval rather than being round as seen in the drawings. The advantage of the oval screen design is an increase in the surface area of the screen as compared to the round screen design. In that case, larger number of smaller diameter pores may be provided on the screen 130 so as to reduce the resistance to air flow therethrough while preventing particles from going across the screen 130 and towards the smoker's lungs.

[0068] As the screen 130 is positioned generally in the central region of the smoking implement 100, it also serves as a natural mechanical stop for inserts therein from both ends of the implement. Not only the screen 130 acts as a natural limit for positioning various inserts inside the implement 100 such as smoke filters and tubular containers with slowly burning smoking material, it also helps to prevent dislodging of one insert by positioning another one from the opposite end of the smoking implement 100.

[0069] A further purpose of the screen 130 is to serve as a rigid reinforcement component so as to prevent collapse of the elastic central region of smoking implement when compressed by the fingers of the smoker, especially when used with larger size inserts, which leave the central region of the implement empty.

[0070] The internal region of the smoking end 120 may also be made to be cylindrical or with a gradual taper as seen in Fig. 2 and Fig. 5. The diameter of the internal surface 118 may be about 7 mm at the transition point from the entry taper 122 – and may reduce to about 6 mm towards the central region of the smoking implement 100. This sizing may be sufficient to retain a number of smoking devices as well as cigarettes. One example is seen in Fig. 6, which shows an assembly of an e-cigarette 160 (shown in dotted lines as it does not constitute a part of the present invention) inserted into the smoking end 120 of the implement 100 and a smoke filter 160 (also shown in dotted lines) inserted into the mouthpiece end 110 of the implement 100 with the other end of the filter 160 protruding outside the first opening of the mouthpiece end 110.

[0071] Between the inner surface 118 of the smoking end 120 and the screen 130 there may be provided an attachment region 116. The internal surface of the attachment region 116 may have an internal size

larger than that of the inner surface 118. In embodiments, the shape of the attachment region 116 may be made round or tapered. This region may be included in the design of the smoking implement 100 for the purposes of a resiliently sliding over and securely attaching to a custom smoking device having a correspondingly mating external shape of its endpiece. Sliding of the smoking implement 100 over such endpiece with a predetermined geometry and locking in place using the attachment region 116 will allow retention of the implement 100 over such smoking device. In this case, the smoking implement 100 may serve as a removable personal smoking mouthpiece – to be used with or without the filter inserted on the other end thereof.

[0072] Figs. 7 and 8 show a further variation of the first embodiment of the invention in which the shape of the mouthpiece end 110 of the smoking implement 100 may be adjusted and reshaped by the smoker to suit his or her individual preferences. To achieve this desired reshaping ability, the mouthpiece end 110 may have a malleable insert 135 embedded inside thereof and configured to be deformed or bent manually and retain its shape after such bending. A metal band or an O-ring may be used for such purpose in one example. Any malleable metal will be suitable to make the insert 135 from, such as copper, brass, steel or aluminum. Fig. 8 shows a perspective view of the smoking implement of the invention after the mouthpiece end 110 has been reshaped to have a flatter oval opening.

[0073] In further embodiments, the malleable insert may not be a single-piece solid O-ring spanning all the way around the entire circular periphery of the mouthpiece end of the implement. Such malleable insert may in this case comprise two malleable semi-circles located opposite each other to make up a full circular shape between the two of them. That design will allow the opening of the mouthpiece end 110 to still expand in places not covered by the metal semi-circles and accept a filter insert of a diameter larger than the internal diameter of the mouthpiece end 110. Further shapes of the malleable insert 135 having interruptions of suitable sizes along the circular periphery of the mouthpiece opening to allow for its outward resilient expansion are contemplated by the present invention.

[0074] The second embodiment of the smoking implement is now described in greater detail and is illustrated in Fig. 9 through Fig. 16. Fig. 9 shows a partial cross-section of the smoking implement 200 defining a mouthpiece end 210 and an opposite smoking end 220 with a screen 230 located in the central region of the implement inbetween thereof. The mouthpiece end 210 may be made using a similar two-stage design as that of the first embodiment of the invention described above.

[0075] The smoking end 220 may be designed to accommodate a broader range of cigarettes, cigars, smoking pipes and other smoking accessories than that of the first embodiment. To accomplish this, the smoking end 220 may be made to have multiple internal smoking stages of increasing diameter starting with the smallest diameter first internal smoking stage 222 located near the central region of the smoking implement 200. The internal geometry of the first internal smoking stage 222 may be generally circular or

gradually tapered with an increasing flare towards the second opening of the smoking end 220 of the implement 200. The starting diameter near the screen 230 may be about 5 mm, which may increase to about 6 mm or about 7 mm away from the screen 230. The first smoking stage 222 may be designed to accept an insert of a slim cigarette of other small smoking devices.

[0076] At least one additional internal smoking stage may be provided with a diameter larger than that of the first smoking stage 222. As seen in Figs. 9, 10, and 11 a second internal smoking stage 224 may be provided with internal diameters of about 7 mm, 8 mm, 9 mm, 10 mm, 11 mm or any diameter inbetween. This stage may be separated from the first smoking stage 222 by a second tapered step transition 223. The second smoking stage 224 may be designed to snugly accept medium sized smoking devices such as small cigars, mouthpiece portions of smaller smoking pipes, e-cigarettes, etc.

[0077] Fig. 12 shows one example of an assembly comprising a smoking filter 250 (shown in dotted lines) partially inserted into the mouthpiece end 220 of the smoking implement 200 – with a self-rolled cigar 260 (shown in dotted lines) partially inserted into the second smoking stage 224 of the implement 200.

[0078] A third internal smoking stage 226 may also be provided at the second opening of the smoking end of the implement 200. This third smoking stage 226 may be the largest for its internal diameter and may be separated from the second smoking stage 224 by a third tapered transition 225. The internal diameter of the cylindrical or gradually tapered third smoking stage 225 may be selected to be about 12 mm, 13 mm, 14 mm, 15 mm, 16 mm, 17 mm or any size inbetween as the invention is not limited in this regard. The third smoking stage 226 may be designed to accommodate the airtight insertion of larger smoking devices such as cigars, pipes, mouthpiece portions of bongs etc. In an exemplary illustration seen in Figs. 13 and 14, a smoking pipe 270 (shown in dotted lines) is partially inserted and retained by the third stage 226 of the smoking implement 200, while a smoke filter 250 (also shown in dotted lines) is partially inserted into the mouthpiece end 210 on the other side thereof.

[0079] In embodiments, further smoking stages of even larger diameters may be provided to allow insertion and friction-based retention of a variety of other even larger smoking device as the invention is not limited in this regard.

[0080] As discussed above, making either the mouthpiece end 210 or the smoking end 220 with multiple stages of stepped up diameters allows the entire design of the smoking implement 200 to be as short as possible while accommodating a broad range of sizes for both the smoke filters as well as tubular containers with burning smoking material.

[0081] As would be appreciated by those skilled in the art, the smoke filter 250 may or may not be used by the smoker. In case when there is no filter present, the smoker takes the implement 200 and retains in the mouth by using the lips placed around the smoking implement 200. To facilitate an easier retention of the

smoking implement 200 in the smoker's mouth for a better smoking experience, the implement 200 may feature a malleable insert component 235 embedded in the elastic mouthpiece end 210 of thereof – see Fig. 15. The design and use of the malleable insert 235 may be similar to that described above for the first embodiment of the invention. The malleable insert 235 allows the smoker to manually change the shape of the opening of the mouthpiece end 210 from initially round to that of an oval – see Fig. 16. An oval shape may be preferred by the smoker in case when no filter is inserted into the implement 200.

[0082] In further embodiments, the internal surfaces of the smoking implement may not be designed as smooth and round. Various generally longitudinal ribs and bumps (not shown in the drawings) may be added so as to increase the ability of the smoking implement to retain various smoke filters and smoking devices upon their insertion thereinto.

[0083] The carrying case to be used with the smoking implement of the invention is now described with reference to Figs. 17 to 29. Figs. 17 and 18 show various views of the carrying case 300 comprising the following three main components: the carrying case housing 310, the carrying case cover 340, and the elastic smoking implement 380 located in between the housing 310 and the cover 340. Figs. 19-21 show all these components separately.

[0084] The carrying case housing 310 may be made to be hollow and have a generally tubular shape - with one end 312 being closed-off and the other end 314 being open. An internal generally cylindrical opening 316 may be formed inside the carrying case housing 310. The internal opening 316 may be sized to accept the elastic smoking implement 380 (as seen in Fig. 21), which in turn may be shaped and sized to accept inside thereof a suitably sized tubular container 330 with smoking material therein. In embodiments, the internal opening 316 may be sized to have a diameter ranging from about 7 mm to about 22 mm, such as for example 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, mm or any size in between as the present invention is not limited in this regard.

[0085] The length of the carrying case housing 310 may be selected to be sufficient to accept the full length of the suitably sized tubular container 330 with smoking material therein. In embodiments, the length of the carrying case housing 310 may range from about 100 mm to about 180 mm, such as for example 100, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180 mm or any length in between as the invention is not limited in this regard.

[0086] The open end 314 of the carrying case housing 310 may be made to sealingly attach to the open end 344 of the carrying case cover 340. While a simple sliding overlap between respective cylindrical surfaces on both open ends would provide such sliding attachment, the present invention describes a more sophisticated design aimed at creating both an airtight/watertight seal as well as a child-proof push-and-turn lock to discourage children and minors from accessing the smoking material inside the carrying case 100.

[0087] Fig. 19 among other illustrations shows the details of the open end 314 of the carrying case housing 310. The open end 314 features a sleeve 326 formed at the edge of the open end 314. The sleeve 326 features a depression 322 configured to accept a corresponding protrusion 352 in the carrying case cover 340 when the cover 340 is slidingly moved for attachment with the housing 310 as explained in greater detail below. Behind the sleeve 326, there is a groove 324 sized to allow free rotation of the protrusion 352 once the cover 340 is mounted onto the housing 310. The groove 324 is defined by a sidewall of the sleeve 326 on one side and by a sidewall of the remaining portion of the carrying case housing 310 on the other side thereof. The sleeve 326 may be a separate component attached to the housing 310 or in other embodiments may be made together with the housing 310 as a single body.

[0088] The carrying case housing 310 may further feature a housing marker 320 made in longitudinal alignment with the depression 322. The housing marker 320 may function to assist the user in aligning the depression 322 with the protrusion 352 so as to facilitate attachment or detachment of the cover 340 to and from the housing 310.

[0089] The housing marker 320 may be made as a visible depression or a stamp into the surface of the housing 310, or may be painted with a contrast color on the housing 310. In embodiments, the housing marker may be painted using fluorescent paint so it may glow in the dark to be visible even in poor lighting conditions. In further embodiments, the housing marker 320 may be made as an outward protrusion so as to be both visible as well as supporting a tactile identification by the user.

[0090] The carrying case cover 340 may be made to as a hollow generally tubular structure - with one end 342 being closed-off and the other end 344 being open. An internal generally cylindrical opening 346 may be formed inside the carrying case cover 340. The internal opening 346 may be sized to accept the smoke filter 360 – see Fig. 29. In embodiments, the internal opening 316 may be sized to be smaller, same or larger than the opening 316 of the carrying case housing 310. It may have a diameter ranging from about 7 mm to about 22 mm, such as for example 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, mm or any size in between as the present invention is not limited in this regard as long as the open end 344 of the cover 340 may be sized to be slidably attached over the open end 314 of the carrying case housing 310.

[0091] The length of the carrying case cover 340 may be selected to be sufficient to accept the full length of the suitably sized smoke filter 360 protruding from the elastic smoking implement 380. In embodiments, the length of the carrying case housing 310 may range from about 20 mm to about 80 mm, such as for example 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 mm, or any length in between as the invention is not limited in this regard.

[0092] The carrying case cover 340 may feature a pocket retaining component, such as a pocket clip (not shown in the drawings) to facilitate retention of the carrying case in a pocket of the user – similar to conventional pens and pencils.

[0093] A protrusion 352 may be made on the inside of the internal cavity 346 close to the edge of the open end 346. The protrusion 352 may function as a key when the cover 340 is attached to the housing 310 as described below in greater detail. Such protrusion may be integrally formed with the carrying case cover 340, for example by injection molding if the cover 340 is made from plastic. In further embodiments, the protrusion 352 may be made by a small stamping tool if the carrying case cover 340 is made from metal or another malleable material. A cover marker 350 may be made on the outside of the cover 340 to mark the location of the protrusion 352 inside thereof, making it convenient for the user to align the protrusion of the cover 352 with the corresponding depression 322 of the carrying case housing 310. The size of the protrusion 352 may be selected to correspond to the size of the depression 322 such that when aligned (see Fig. 27), the protrusion 352 fits inside the depression 322 allowing the attachment between the cover 340 and the housing 310.

[0094] Both the carrying case housing 310 and the carrying case cover 340 may be made from rigid plastic (such as for example ABS, polypropylene, or polycarbonate), metal (such as for example stainless steel, aluminum, copper, or suitable alloys thereof) or from a composite blend of rigid materials, such as a base plastic with an embedded decorative metal or other plastic components. In further embodiments, soft rubber components may be added to either the housing or the cover to improve the grip or generally enhance the feel of the product, as the invention is not limited thereto.

[0095] The elastic smoking implement 380 is described in greater detail above. The smoking end 382 of the elastic smoking implement 380 may be sized and configured to elastically expand and removably accept the tubular container 330 with smoking material, when the tubular container 330 is at least partially inserted therein. To fit inside the carrying case 300, the external diameter of the smoking end 382 may be suitably selected to allow a removable press-fit attachment of the elastic smoking implement 380 inside the open end 314 of the carrying case housing 310 – see Figs. 17-18. The smoking end, in this case, may be sized and configured to elastically compress and removably fit inside the open end 314 of the carrying case housing 310 forming an airtight and/or a watertight seal in between. A shoulder 392 may be made in a central portion of the elastic smoking implement 380 to act as a stopper element when the elastic smoking implement 380 is inserted inside the open end 314 of the housing 310.

[0096] In embodiments, the external diameter of the smoking end 382 may be made to be slightly larger than the internal diameter of the open end 314 – in which case positioning of the smoking end 382 inside the open end 314 of the housing 310 would compress to make for an airtight/watertight seal between these two elements. In further embodiments, the external diameter of the smoking end 382 of the elastic smoking implement 382 may be made to be the same or slightly smaller than the internal diameter of the opening 314 to facilitate the ease of insertion and removal of the elastic implement 380 into and out of the open end 314. A sealing gasket 388 may be formed to protrude radially outwards from the external surface of the smoking end 382 in order to provide a compressible seal between the

elastic smoking implement 380 and the carrying case housing 310 upon insertion thereof – see Fig. 26.

[0097] The mouthpiece end 384 may be sized and configured to elastically expand and removably accept a cylindrical smoke filter 360 at least partially inserted therein for an airtight press-fit attachment. The external size of the mouthpiece end 384 may be selected to fit inside the open end 344 of the carrying case cover 340, in which case the entire elastic smoking implement 380 may be positioned and retained inside the carrying case upon attachment of the carrying case housing 310 to the carrying case cover 340 – see Fig. 29.

[0098] In further embodiments, the mouthpiece end 384 may feature a built-in protruding gasket 394 sized to elastically compress when inside the open end 344 of the carrying case cover 340, thereby forming an airtight seal in between - as seen in a close-up illustration in Fig. 26. In this case, attaching the cover 340 to the housing 310 with the elastic smoking implement 380 in between would seal the housing 310 against the smoking and 380 and the cover 340 against the mouthpiece end 384 – resulting in providing an airtight seal of the entire internal cavity 316/346 within both of the carrying case housing 310 and the carrying case cover 340.

[0099] A push-and-turn lock mechanism is formed between the features of the open end 314 of the housing 310 and the open end 344 of the cover 340 as described above. To attach the cover 340 to the housing 310, the user may first align the protrusion 352 with the depression 322 in the sleeve 326 – in order to advance the cover 340 over the housing 310. Once the protrusion 352 passes over and advances beyond the depression 322, the cover 340 may be turned to misalign the protrusion 352 from the depression 322 and lock the assembly to prevent accidental detachment of the cover 340 off the housing 310. A cross-section of the locked assembly is seen in Fig. 27.

[00100] To remove the cover 340 from the housing 310, the user first needs to turn the cover 340 to again align the protrusion 352 with the depression 322 – as seen in Fig. 28. Once these features are aligned, the cover 340 may be removed from the housing 310.

[00101] In further embodiments, a more sophisticated multi-stage push-and-turn lock may be provided to make it more difficult for children and minors to access the smoking material inside the carrying case 300. In this case, additional stages of push-and-turn may be provided by positioning a second or even third ring 326 spaced apart from the first ring 326 at the open end 314 (not shown in the drawings). A second and third depression 322 may be made using a radially angular orientation at a predetermined angle from the first depression 322, for example, 90 degrees apart in a clockwise direction. In this case, a second or third push-and-turn action may be needed to fully assemble and subsequently remove the cover 340 from the housing 310. A second and third housing marker may be provided along the periphery of the open end 314 to aid the user in this process. To separate the first housing marker from other markers, all housing markers may be made to be visually different, such as in different shapes or

colors.

[00102] Once the tubular container 330 and the smoke filter 360 are assembled with the elastic smoking implement 380 for use during a smoking session, it is convenient to place that assembly inside the carrying case 300 by first inserting the tubular container and the elastic smoking implement into the carrying case housing 310 until the shoulder 392 stops against the open end 314 of the housing 310. In this case, the tubular container 330 is retained inside and away from the walls of the housing 310 as well as away from the closed-off end 312. This advantageously prevents touching by the burning end of the tubular container 330 of any parts of the internal cavity 316 as the tubular container 330 is supported inside the elastic smoking implement 380. Closing off the cover 340 over the smoke filter 360 and the housing 310 (see Fig. 29) completes the assembly of the carrying case 300 and preserves the smoking material inside thereof for the next smoking session.

[00103] It is contemplated that any embodiment discussed in this specification can be implemented with respect to any method of the invention, and vice versa. It will be also understood that particular embodiments described herein are shown by way of illustration and not as limitations of the invention. The principal features of this invention can be employed in various embodiments without departing from the scope of the invention. Those skilled in the art will recognize, or be able to ascertain using no more than routine experimentation, numerous equivalents to the specific procedures described herein. Such equivalents are considered to be within the scope of this invention and are covered by the claims.

[00104] As used herein, words of approximation such as, without limitation, "about", "substantial" or "substantially" refers to a condition that when so modified is understood to not necessarily be absolute or perfect but would be considered close enough to those of ordinary skill in the art to warrant designating the condition as being present. The extent to which the description may vary will depend on how great a change can be instituted and still have one of ordinary skilled in the art recognize the modified feature as still having the required characteristics and capabilities of the unmodified feature. In general, but subject to the preceding discussion, a numerical value herein that is modified by a word of approximation such as "about" may vary from the stated value by at least ±1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 15, 20 or 25%.

[00105] All of the devices and/or methods disclosed and claimed herein can be made and executed without undue experimentation in light of the present disclosure. While the devices and methods of this invention have been described in terms of preferred embodiments, it will be apparent to those of skill in the art that variations may be applied to the devices and/or methods and in the steps or in the sequence of steps of the method described herein without departing from the concept, spirit and scope of the invention. All such similar substitutes and modifications apparent to those skilled in the art are deemed to be within the spirit, scope and concept of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A universal smoking implement (100, 200, 380) comprising a generally tubular body, wherein the improvement is characterized by said smoking implement being made from an elastically resilient material, said generally tubular body having a first opening at a mouthpiece end (110, 210) and a second opening at a smoking end (120, 220), said mouthpiece end (110, 210) located on the opposite side of said smoking end (120, 220) of said elastic smoking implement (100, 200, 380),

said mouthpiece end (110, 210) is sized and configured to elastically expand and removably accept a cylindrical smoke filter (150) at least partially inserted therein for an airtight press fit attachment, said mouthpiece end (110, 210) comprising an internal first mouthpiece stage of a generally cylindrical or tapered shape, said first mouthpiece stage extending in series to a larger internal second mouthpiece stage with a first tapered step transition inbetween, said second mouthpiece stage having a generally cylindrical or tapered shape terminating at said first opening, whereby said smoke filter (150) fits inside either one of said first mouthpiece stage or said second mouthpiece stage after expanding thereof to an external diameter of said smoke filter (150),

said smoking end (120, 220) is sized and configured to elastically expand and removably accept a tubular container (160) with burning smoking material at least partially inserted therein for an airtight press-fit attachment, said smoking end (120, 220) comprising an internal first smoking stage of a generally cylindrical or tapered shape extending to said second opening, whereby said tubular container (160) with burning smoking material fits inside said first smoking stage after expanding thereof to an external diameter of said tubular container (160),

said smoking implement (100, 200, 380) further comprising a screen (130) positioned inside thereof between said mouthpiece end (110, 210) and said smoking end (120, 220),

whereby said smoking implement (100, 200, 380) is configured to universally accept one of a variety of smoke filters (150) and one of a variety of tubular containers (160) with burning smoking material to removably connect thereof in series with each other and in an airtight manner.

2. The smoking implement (100, 200, 380) as in claim 1, wherein said first smoking stage extending in series to a larger internal second smoking stage with a second tapered step transition inbetween, said second smoking stage having a generally cylindrical or tapered shape extending to said second opening, whereby said tubular container (160) with burning smoking material fits inside either one of said first smoking stage or said second smoking stage after expanding thereof to an external diameter of said

tubular container (160).

3. The smoking implement (100, 200, 380) as in claim 2, wherein said second smoking stage extending in series to a larger yet internal third smoking stage with a third tapered step transition inbetween, said third smoking stage having a generally cylindrical or tapered shape extending to said second opening, whereby said tubular container (160) with burning smoking material fits inside either one of said first smoking stage, said second smoking stage, or said third smoking stage after expanding thereof to an external diameter of said tubular container (160).

4. The smoking implement (100, 200, 380) as in claim 1 further comprising a malleable insert (135) embedded at said mouthpiece end (110, 210) thereof, whereby deforming said malleable insert (135) allows to change the shape of said mouthpiece end (110, 210) of the smoking implement (100, 200).

5. The smoking implement (100, 200, 380) as in claim 1, wherein said first mouthpiece stage and said second mouthpiece stage have a combined length that is less than a length of said smoke filter (150), whereby allowing only a partial insertion of said smoke filter (150) into said smoking implement (100, 200).

6. The smoking implement (100, 200, 380) as in claim 1 further comprising an internal attachment region located between said screen (130) and said first internal smoking stage, said attachment region having an internal size exceeding that of said first internal smoking stage, whereby permitting said smoking implement (100, 200, 380) to resiliently slide over and securely attach to a smoking device having an external shape corresponding to the internal shape of said attachment region and said smoking end.

7. A carrying case (300) in combination with an elastic smoking implement (380) as in claim 1, said carrying case comprising:

a generally tubular hollow carrying case housing (310) with a closed-off end (312) on one side and an open end (314) on another side thereof,

a generally tubular hollow carrying case cover (340) with a closed-off end (342) on one side and an open end (344) on another side thereof,

wherein said open end (344) of the carrying case cover (340) is configured for removable attachment to said open end (314) of the carrying case housing (310) forming an internal cavity within both of said carrying case housing (310) and said carrying case cover (340),

wherein said internal cavity is sized to accept said elastic smoking implement (380) and the tubular

container (330) with a smoking material therein.

8. The carrying case (300) as in claim 8, wherein said smoking end (382) of the smoking implement (380) is sized and configured to elastically compress and removably fit inside said open end (314) of the carrying case housing (310) forming an airtight seal in between.

9. The carrying case (300) as in claim 8, wherein said mouthpiece end (384) of the smoking implement (380) is sized and configured to elastically compress and removably fit inside said open end (344) of the carrying case cover (340) forming an airtight seal in between, whereby said elastic smoking implement (380) providing an airtight seal of said internal cavity within both of said carrying case housing (310) and said carrying case cover (340).

10. The carrying case (300) as in claim 7, wherein said open end (344) of the carrying case cover (340) is equipped with a protrusion (352) , said open end (314) of the carrying case housing (310) is equipped with a corresponding depression (322) to accept said protrusion (352), whereby the carrying case housing (310) in combination with the carrying case cover (340) forms a push-and-turn lock in between.

11. The carrying case (300) as in claim 10, wherein said open end (344) of the carrying case cover (340) contains a cover marker (350) next to said protrusion (352), said open end (314) of the carrying case housing (310) contains a housing marker (320) next to said depression (322), whereby said housing marker (320) and said cover marker (350) when aligned indicating proper orientation for attachment or removal of the carrying case cover (340) to or from the carrying case housing (310).

12. The carrying case (300) as in claim 11, wherein said housing marker (320) and said cover marker (350) are made with fluorescent paint to be visible in the dark.

13. The carrying case (300) as in claim 7, wherein said open end (344) of the carrying case cover (340) is configured to slidably attach over said open end (314) of the carrying case housing (310) forming an airtight seal in between.

14. The carrying case (300) as in claim 7, wherein said internal cavity formed between the carrying case housing (310) and the carrying case cover (340) is sized to accept said elastic smoking implement (380) with said tubular container (330) having said smoking material therein on one side thereof and said cylindrical smoke filter (360) positioned at least partially in said elastic smoking implement on the other side thereof.

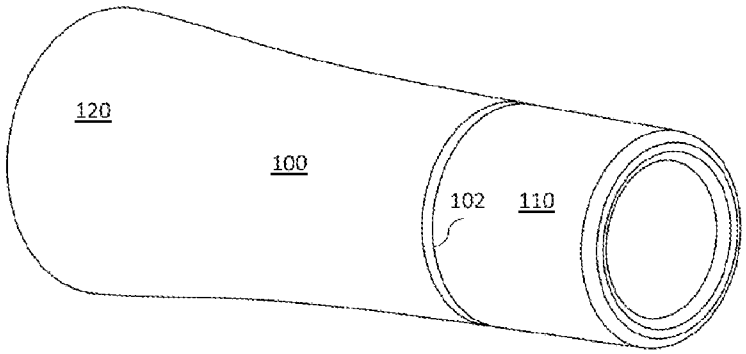

FIG. 1

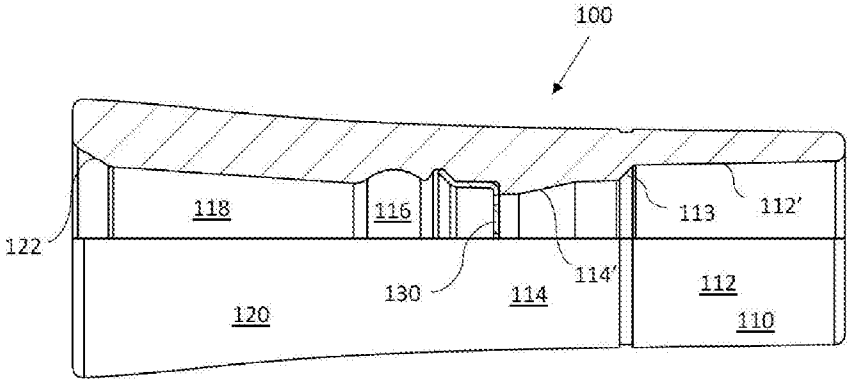

FIG. 2

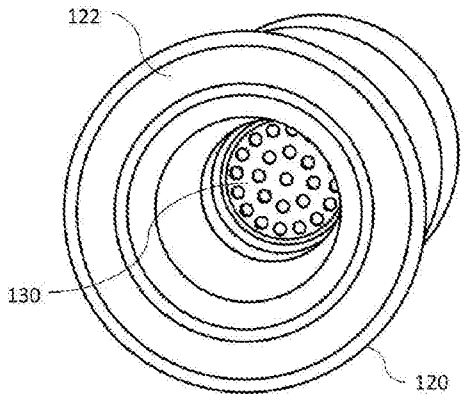

FIG. 3

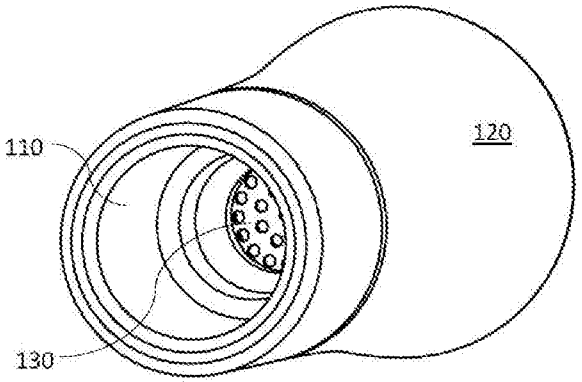

FIG. 4

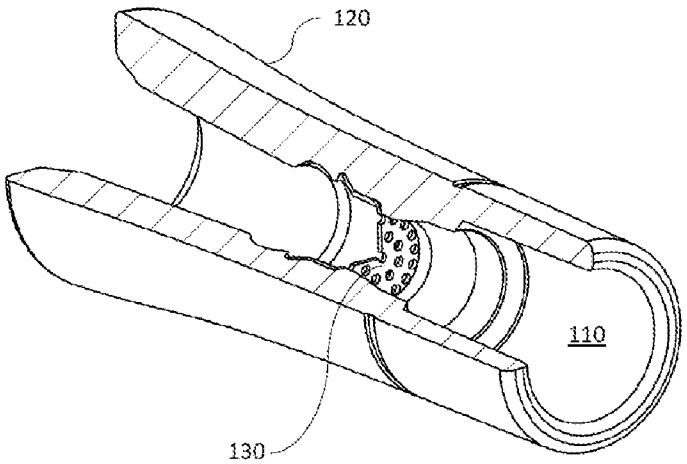

FIG. 5

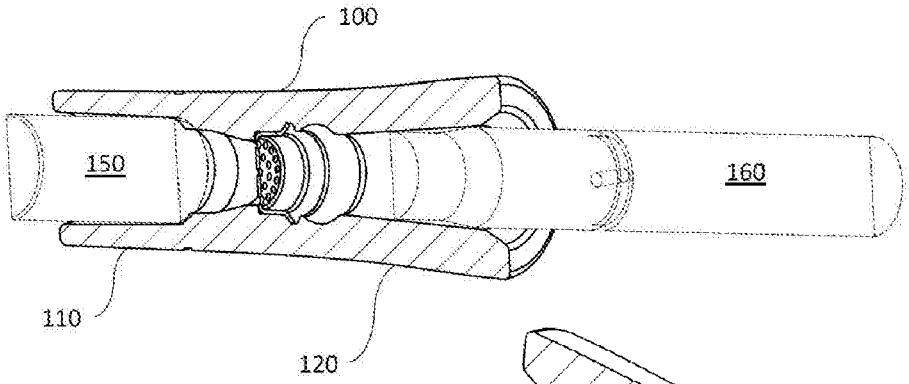

FIG. 6

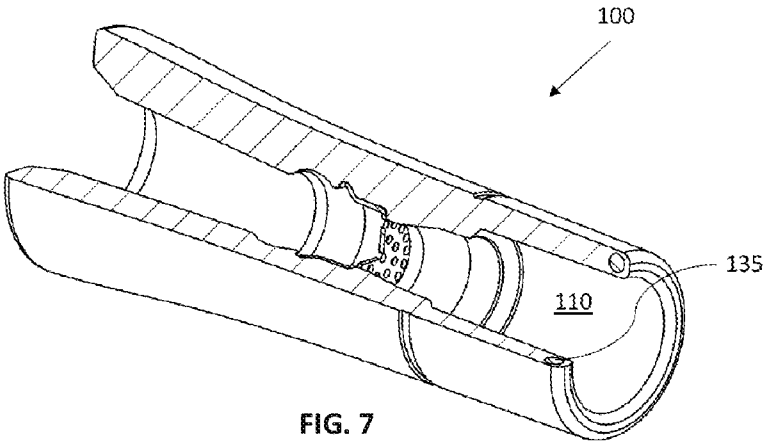

FIG. 7

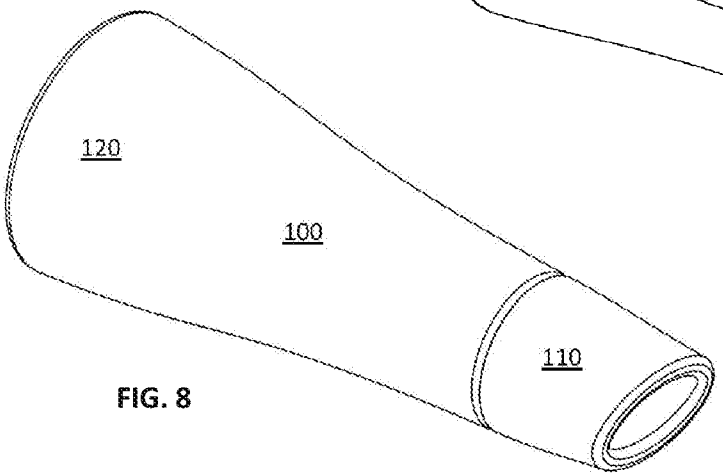

FIG. 8

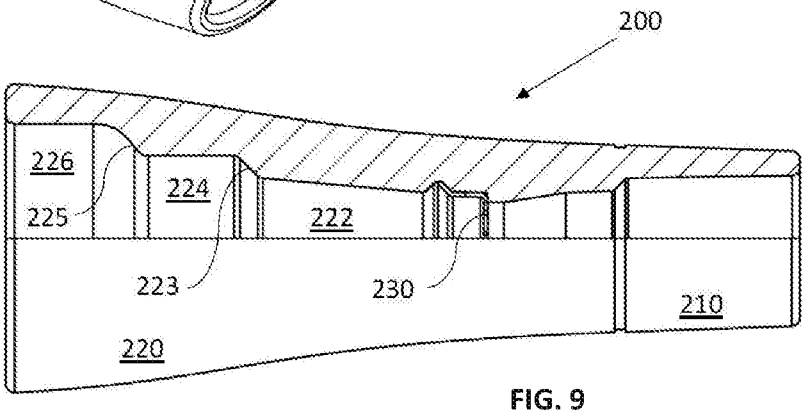

FIG. 9

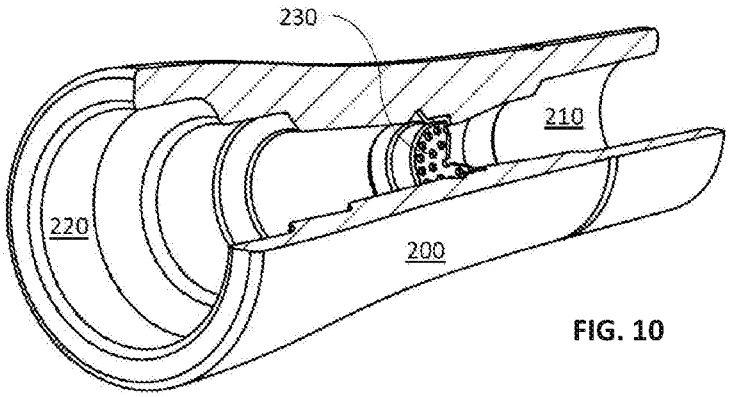

FIG. 10

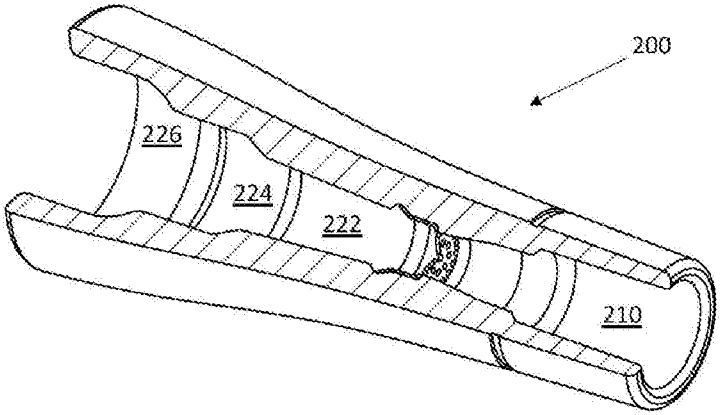

FIG. 11

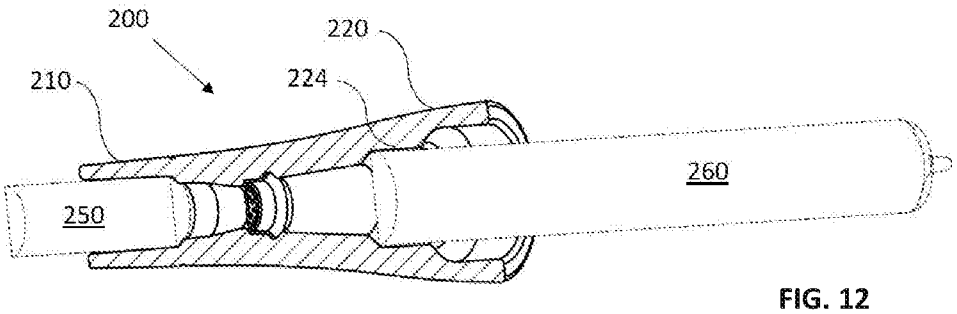

FIG. 12

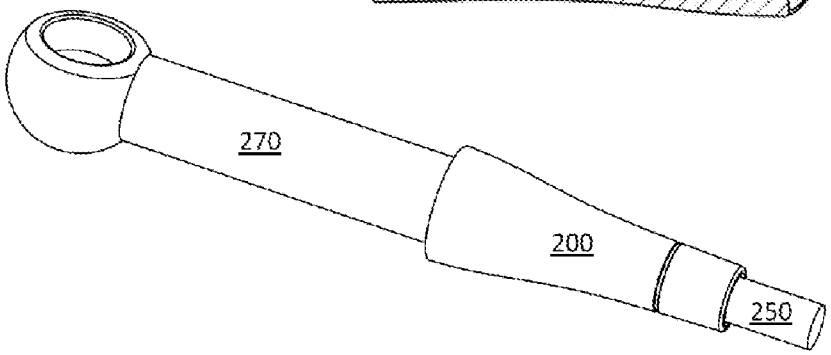

FIG. 13

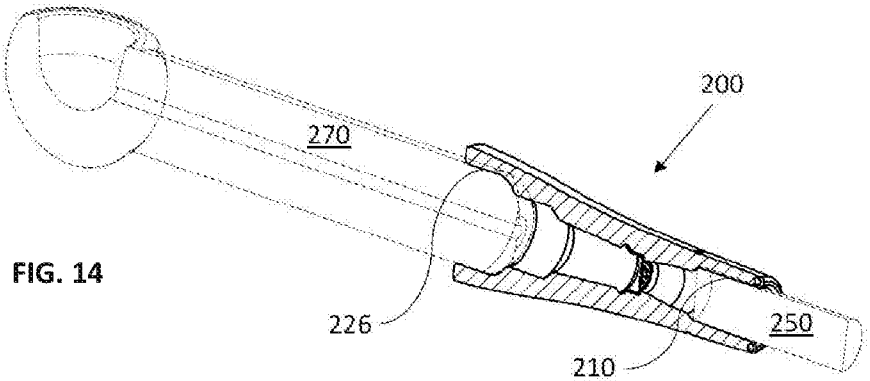

FIG. 14

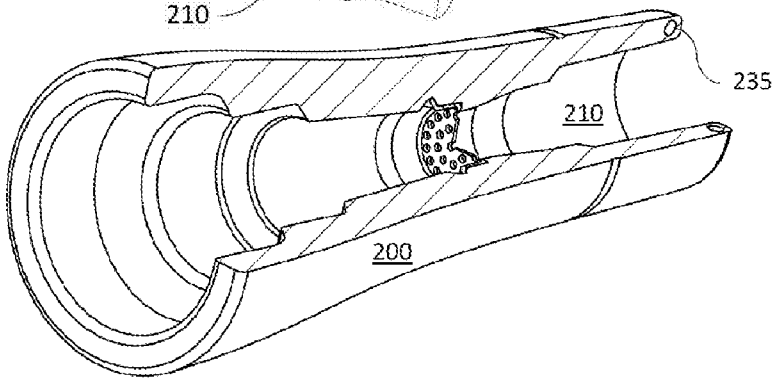

FIG. 15

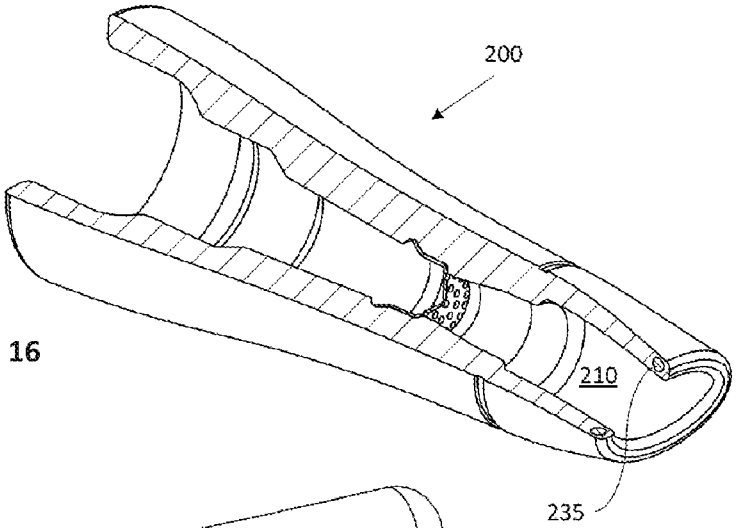

FIG. 16

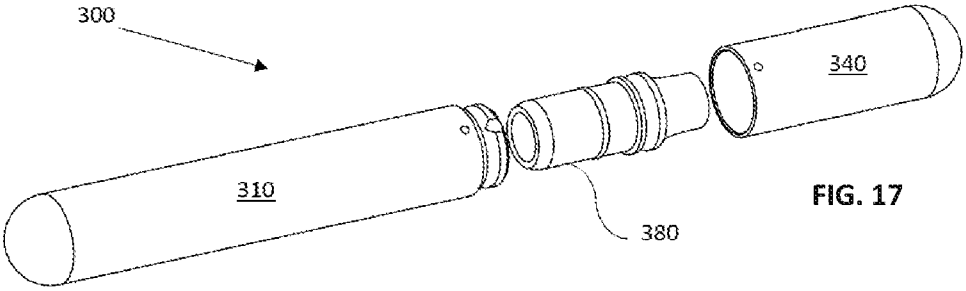

FIG. 17

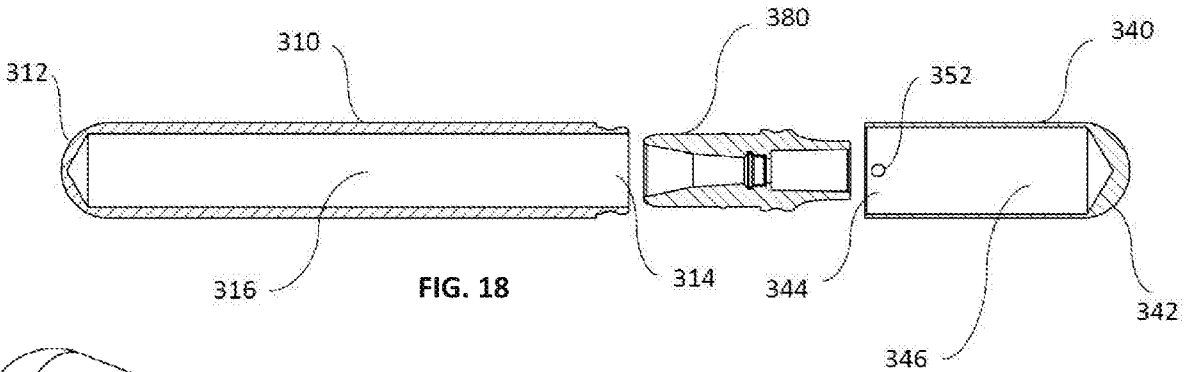

FIG. 18

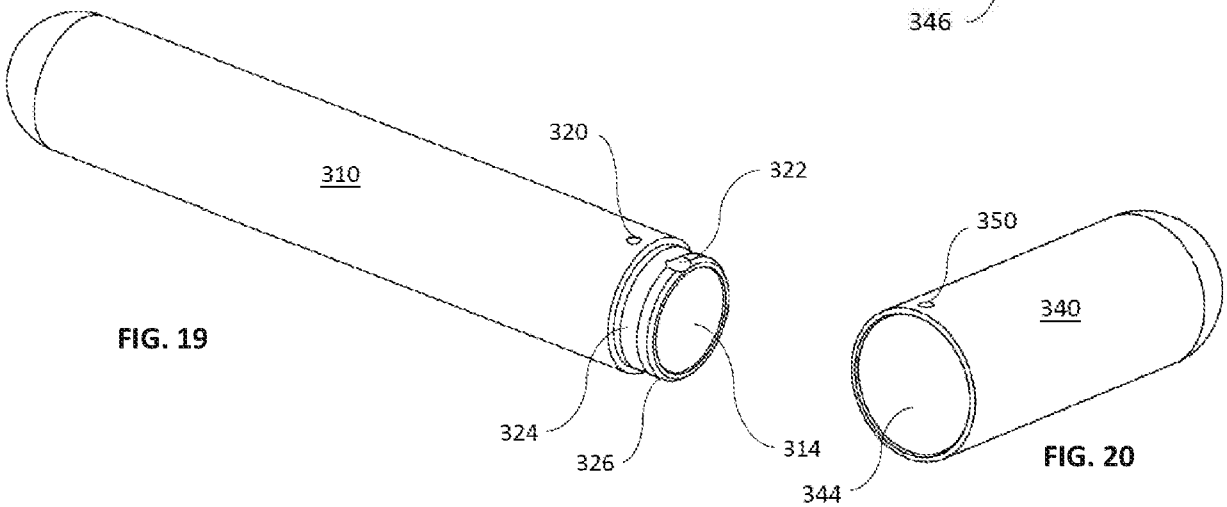

FIG. 19

FIG. 20

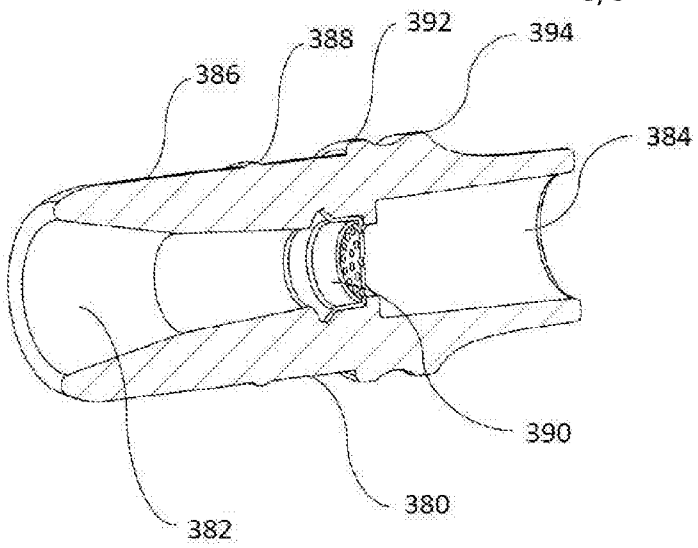

FIG. 21

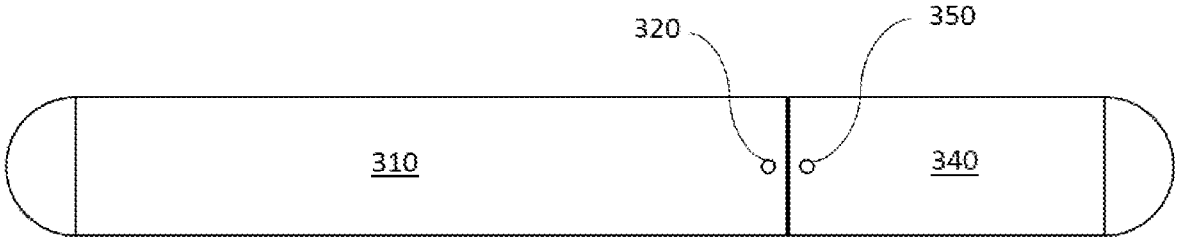

FIG. 22

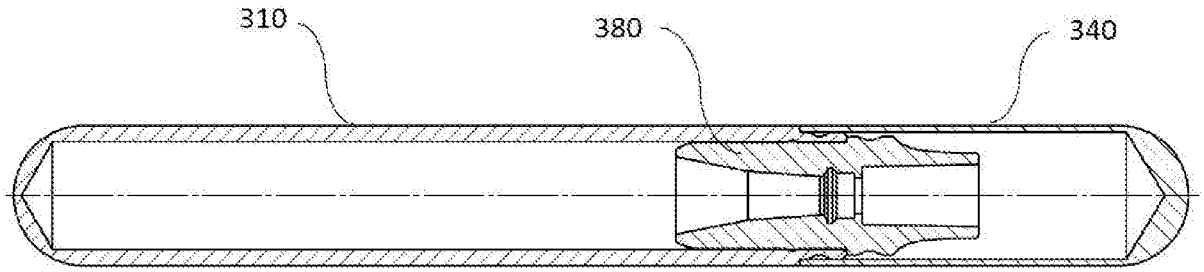

FIG. 23

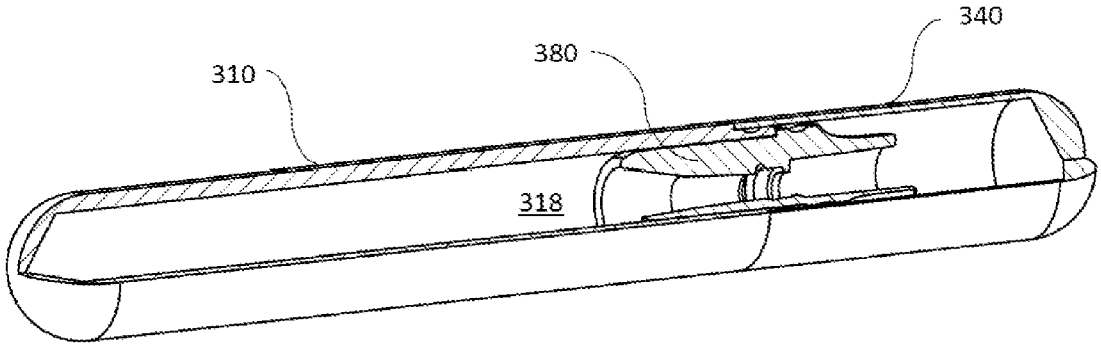

FIG. 24

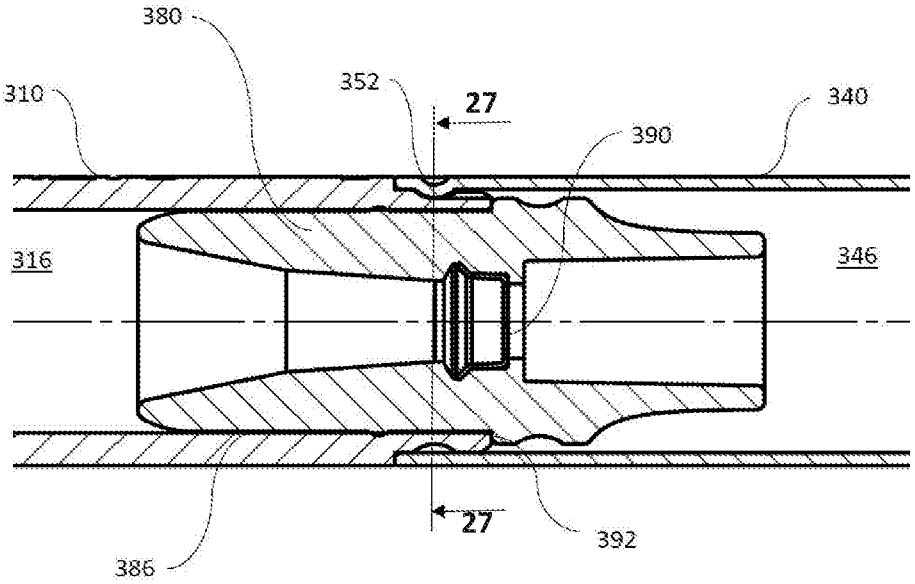

FIG. 25

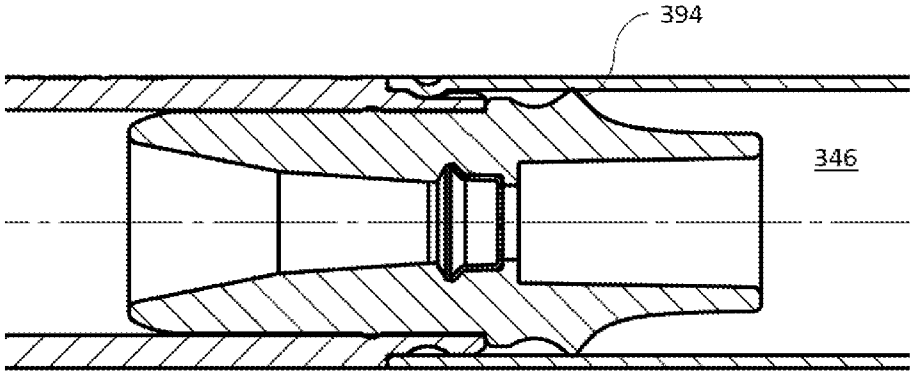

FIG. 26

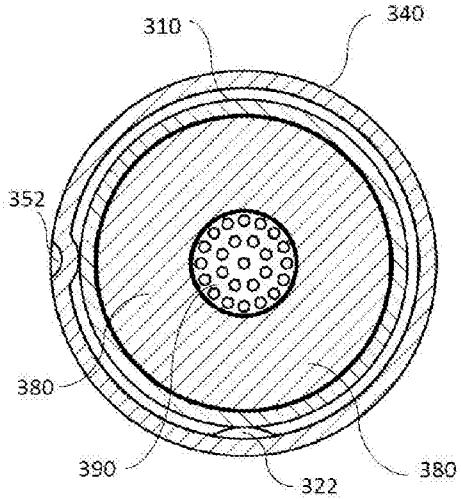

FIG. 27

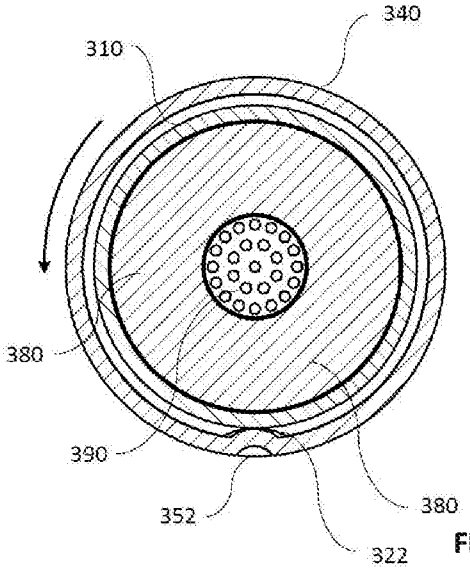

FIG. 28

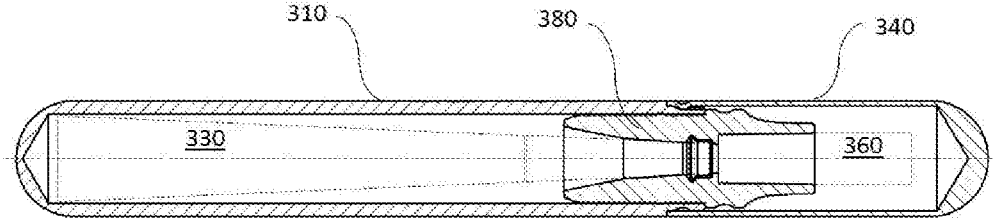

FIG. 29

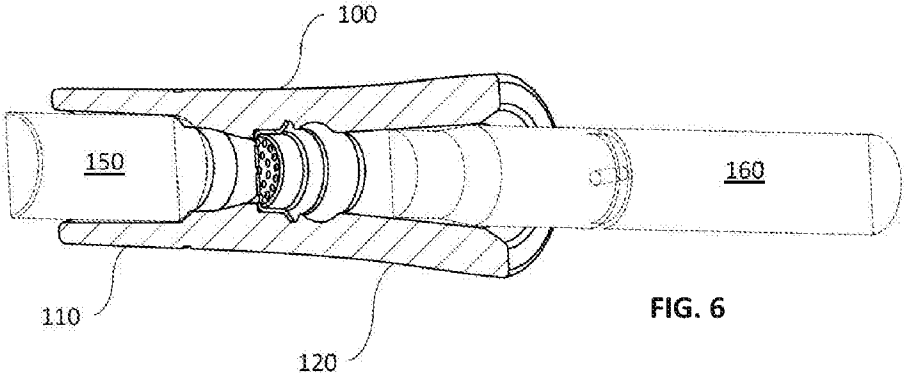

FIG. 6