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(54) Titre : SYSTÈME DE FORMATION AUX SITES D'INJECTION
(54) Title: INJECTION SITE TRAINING SYSTEM

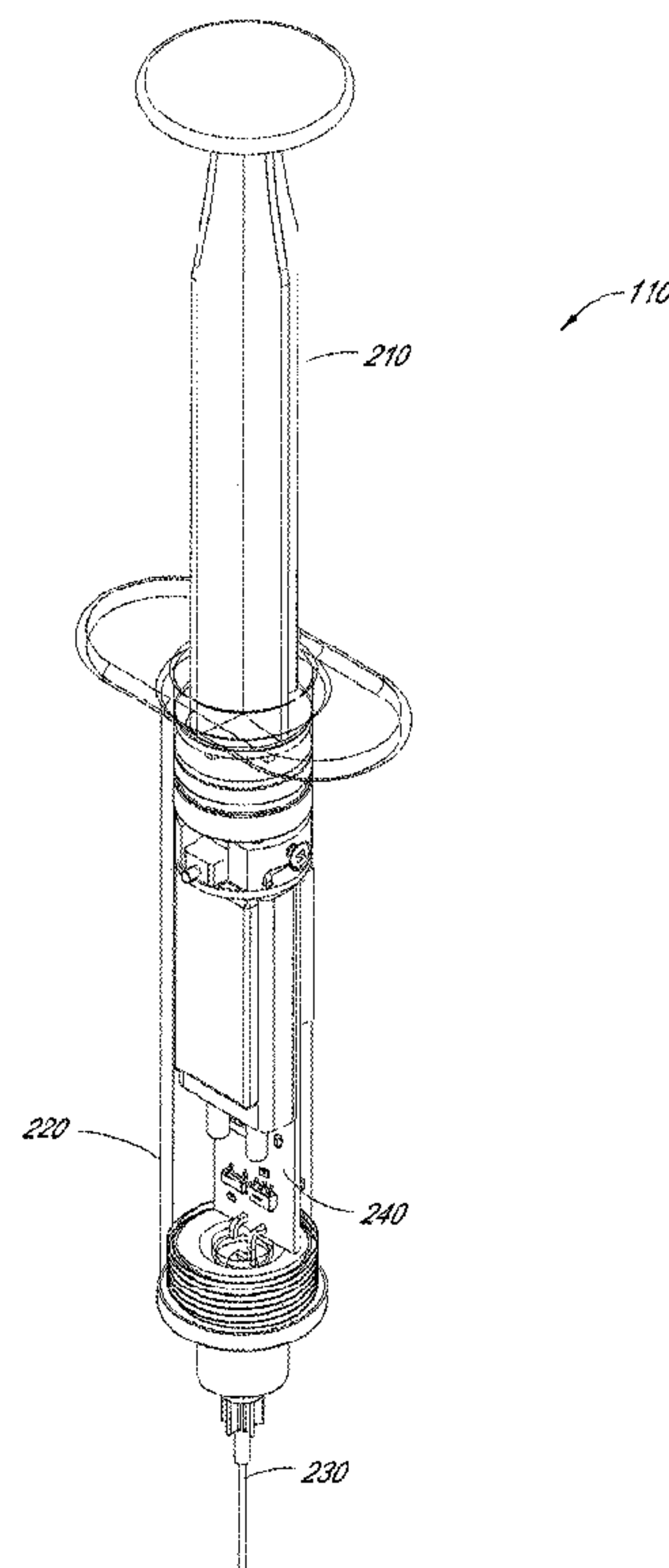
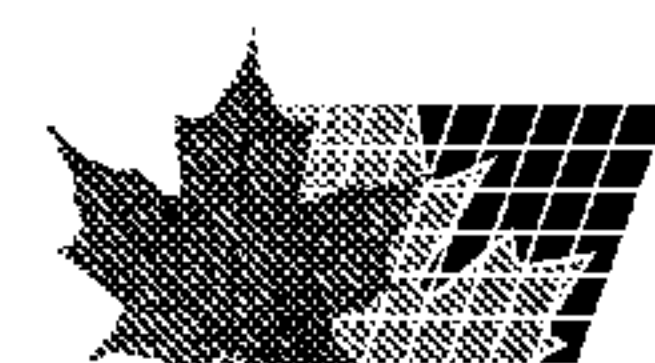


FIG. 2A

(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

An injection apparatus and training system for prophylactic, curative, therapeutic, acupuncture, or cosmetic injection training and certification, in an embodiment, an injection training system is described that includes a testing tool having a needle and a position sensor, where the position sensor is configured to obtain position information of the testing tool. The system also includes an injection apparatus configured to receive a simulated injection by the testing tool. The system includes a display device configured to receive the position information and to display position data reflective of the position information.



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(54) Title: INJECTION SITE TRAINING SYSTEM

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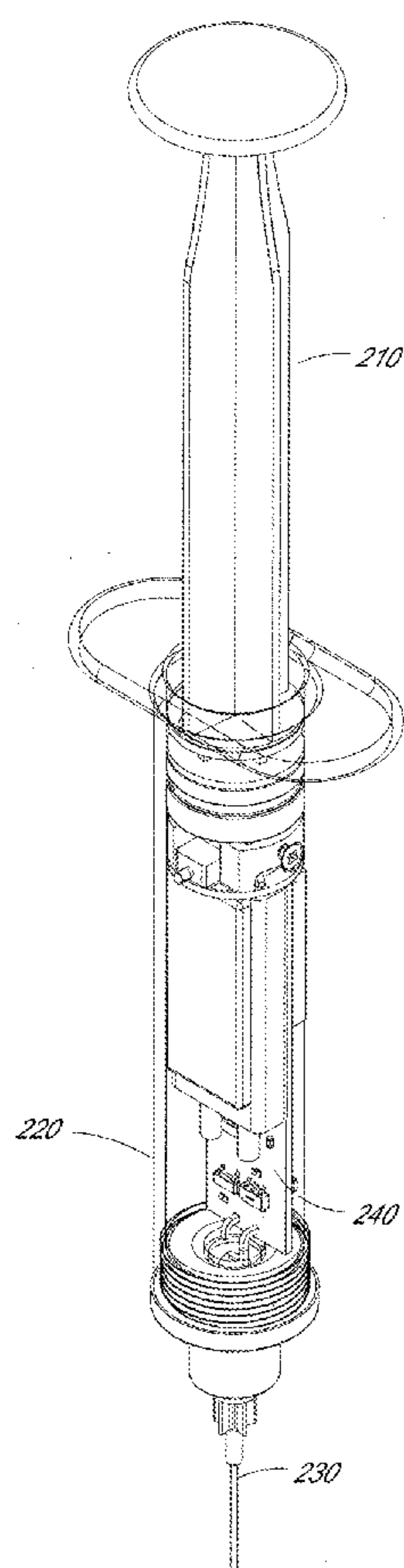


FIG. 2A

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- *as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii))*

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INJECTION SITE TRAINING SYSTEM

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Number 61/928,915, filed on January 17, 2014, U.S. Provisional Application Number 61/939,093, filed on February 12, 2014, and U.S. Provisional Application Number 62/066,792, filed on October 21, 2014, the entirety of which are hereby incorporated herein by reference.

[0002] Any and all applications for which a foreign or domestic priority claim is identified in the Application Data Sheet as filed with the present application are hereby incorporated by reference under 37 CFR 1.57.

BACKGROUND

[0003] A variety of medical injection procedures are often performed in prophylactic, curative, therapeutic, or cosmetic treatments. Injections may be administered in various locations on the body, such as under the conjunctiva, into arteries, bone marrow, the spine, the sternum, the pleural space of the chest region, the peritoneal cavity, joint spaces, and internal organs. Injections can also be helpful in administering medication directly into anatomic locations that are generating pain. These injections may be administered intravenously (through the vein), intramuscularly (into the muscle), intradermally (beneath the skin), subcutaneously (into the fatty layer of skin), or intraperitoneally (into the body cavity). Injections can be performed on humans as well as on animals. The methods of administering injections typically vary for different procedures and may depend on the substance being injected, needle size, or area of injection.

[0004] Injections are not limited to treating medical conditions, but may be expanded to treating aesthetic imperfections or restorative cosmetic procedures. Many of these procedures are performed through injections of various products into different parts of the body. The aesthetics and therapeutic industry comprises two main categories of injectable products: neuromodulators and dermal fillers. The neuromodulator industry commonly uses nerve-inhibiting products such as Botox®, Dysport®, and Xeomin®. The dermal filler industry uses products administered by providers to patients for both cosmetic and therapeutic reasons, such as, for example, Juvederm®, Restylane®, Belotero®, Sculptra®,

Artefill[®], and others. These providers or injectors may include plastic surgeons, facial plastic surgeons, oculoplastic surgeons, dermatologists, nurse practitioners, dentists and nurses.

[0005] A problem in the administration of injections is that there is no official certification or training process. Anyone with a minimal medically-related license may inject a patient. These "injectors" may include primary care physicians, dentists, veterinarians, nurse practitioners, nurses, physician's assistants, or aesthetic spa physicians. However, the qualifications and training requirements for injectors vary by country, state, and county. For example, in most states in the United States, the only requirement to be permitted to inject patients with neuromodulators and/or fillers is to have a nursing degree or medical degree. Accordingly, there is a lack of uniformity and expertise in administering such injections. The drawbacks with this lack of uniformity in training and expertise are widespread throughout the medical industry. Doctors and practitioners often are not well-trained in administering injections of diagnostic, therapeutic, and cosmetic chemical substances. This lack of training has led to instances of chronic pain, headaches, bruising, swelling, or bleeding in patients.

[0006] Current injection training options are classroom-based, with hands-on training performed on live models. The availability of models is limited. Moreover, even when available, live models are limited in the number and types of injections they may receive. The need for live models is restrictive because injectors are unable to be exposed to a wide and diverse range of situations and anatomies in which to practice. For example, it may be difficult to find live models with different skin tones or densities. This makes the training process less effective because patients have diverse anatomical features as well as varying prophylactic, curative, therapeutic, or cosmetic needs. Live models are also restrictive because injectors are unable to practice injection methods on the internal organs of a live model due to safety and health considerations.

[0007] As a result of these limited training scenarios, individuals seeking treatments involving injections have a much higher risk of being treated by an inexperienced injector. This may result in low patient satisfaction with the results, or in failed procedures. In many instances, patients have experienced

lumpiness from incorrect dermal filler injections. Some failed procedures may result in irreversible problems and permanent damage to a patient's body. For example, patients have experienced vision loss, direct injury to the globe of the eye, and brain infarctions where injectors have incorrectly performed dermal filler procedures. Additional examples of side effects include inflammatory granuloma, skin necrosis, endophthalmitis, injectable-related vascular compromise, cellulitis, biofilm formation, subcutaneous nodules, fibrotic nodules, and other infections.

[0008] As a result of the varying qualifications and training requirements for injectors, there is currently no standard to train, educate, and certify providers on the proper and accurate process of various injection techniques. Patients seeking injections also have few resources for determining the qualifications or experience of a care practitioner.

SUMMARY

[0009] The present disclosure generally relates to an injection apparatus and training system for prophylactic, curative, therapeutic, acupuncture, or cosmetic injection training and certification. The training system eliminates the need to find live models for hands-on training sessions. The training system provides feedback on trainees and the accuracy of injection procedures performed. In an embodiment, feedback is provided in real time. The training system can be used as a measurement on how the "trainee" is doing prior to receiving actual product by the manufacturing company as a measure of qualification. The training system reduces the risks associated with inexperienced and uncertified medical personnel performing injection procedures.

[0010] The training system can be used to educate, train, and certify medical personnel for injection procedures. It can also be utilized as a testing program for certifying medical personnel. The system will enable users to practice a variety of injections, ranging from on label to off label product injections. In some embodiments, the system may allow users to train for therapeutic treatments. In other embodiments, the system may allow users to train for injections into arteries, bone marrow, the spine, the sternum, the pleural space of the chest region, the peritoneal cavity, joint spaces, internal organs, or any other injection sites. The system may be used for any type of injection, including, but not limited to those involving prophylactic, curative, therapeutic, or

cosmetic treatments in both humans and animals. Illustratively, by way of non-limiting example, the disclosed system may be used to simulate a cosmetic application of filling of a wrinkle with a dermal filler. In other applications, the systems disclosed herein can be used for dental application and training for dental procedures.

[0011] In an aspect of the present disclosure, an injection training system is described that includes a testing tool having a needle and a position sensor, where the position sensor is configured to obtain position information of the testing tool. The system also includes an injection apparatus configured to receive a simulated injection by the testing tool. The system includes a display device configured to receive the position information and to display position data reflective of the position information, wherein the display device includes a processor and a memory device.

[0012] In an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system, a method of tracking the position of a testing tool used in an injection training system is described. The method includes obtaining position information of the testing tool from one or more sensors; determining an estimate of the position of the testing tool; transmitting, to a display device, data reflective of the estimate of the position of the testing tool; and displaying, on the display device, the data reflective of the estimate of the position of the testing tool.

[0013] In an embodiment, an injection training system is disclosed. The injection training system includes a testing tool having a needle, a plunger, and a marker configured to reflect electromagnetic waves. The system also includes an injection apparatus configured to receive a simulated injection by the testing tool. The injection apparatus also has a marker configured to reflect electromagnetic waves. The system includes an optical tracking system having a field of view, where the optical tracking system is positioned such that the injection apparatus is in the field of view. The optical tracking system is configured to obtain position information of the testing tool and the injection apparatus and to transmit the position information to a display device. The display device is configured to receive the position information and to display position data reflective of the position information.

[0014] In one embodiment, there are three main components of the training system: (1) a training apparatus (also referred to interchangeably as an injection apparatus throughout the present disclosure) which features an anatomically accurate model of a human or human body part necessary for injection training, (2) a light detection device, such as, for example, a camera, associated with the training apparatus, and (3) a testing tool with light emitting capabilities. In an embodiment, a fourth component of the training system can include an output device that can run an application which receives communications from the training apparatus or light detection device and generates information regarding injection parameters based on the communications from the injection apparatus or light detection device. In an embodiment, the images captured by the camera are processed by a processor included either in the injection apparatus or in the light detection device before being communicated to the output device. This processing can include, for example, determining an indication of one or more injection parameters. In an embodiment, the anatomical model can include various injection conditions, such as, for example, layered skin, available in multiple tones and textures to mimic a diverse span of age, race, and skin texture. In an embodiment, the layered skin can be removable and/or replaceable. The injection apparatus can simulate any human or animal part, such as, for example, the face, head, brain, neck, back, chest, spine, torso, arms, legs, hands, feet, mouth, or any other body part or portion of the body of interest. In an embodiment, the testing tool can be, for example a syringe or hypodermic needle. In an embodiment, the injection apparatus is reusable. In an embodiment, the injection apparatus is disposable.

[0015] In an embodiment a syringe for simulating injection is disclosed. The syringe can include a barrel having a portal at a distal end, and an electronics assembly having a light source at a distal end of the electronics assembly. The electronics assembly can be configured to fit inside the barrel with the light source positioned at the portal of the barrel. A needle can be attached to the barrel. The needle can have a fiber bundle extending axially through it such that the fiber bundle is in close-fitting relation with the light source.

[0016] In some embodiments a testing tool for use in an injection training system includes a barrel having a fitting at a distal end of the barrel. The

fitting can have a portal, and the barrel can have an opening and a finger grip at a proximal end of the barrel. A plunger can be configured to fit in the opening of the barrel to apply a force directed axially toward the distal end of the barrel. The testing tool can include an electronics assembly that has a light source at its distal end and a force sensor at its proximal end. The electronics assembly can be configured to fit inside the barrel with the light source positioned at the portal of the fitting, and the force sensor positioned near the proximal end of the barrel. The force sensor can be configured to sense the force applied by the plunger. The testing tool can include a needle assembly attached to the fitting of the barrel. The needle assembly can have a hollow needle, a fiber bundle extending axially through the hollow needle, and a hub configured to secure the hollow needle and to attach the needle assembly to the fitting of the barrel. The needle assembly can be attached to the barrel such that the fiber bundle within the hollow needle is in close-fitting relation with the light source of the electronics assembly.

[0017] In an embodiment, a method of simulating an injection into a synthetic anatomical structure is disclosed. The synthetic anatomical structure can be configured to attenuate light emitted into it and to detect the attenuated light. The method can include providing a testing tool to simulate a syringe. The testing tool can be configured to emit light through a needle at a distal end of the testing tool. The method can also include inserting the needle into the synthetic anatomical structure such that the light emitted through the needle is attenuated and detected by the synthetic anatomical structure.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0018] Figure 1 illustrates an injection training system comprising an injection apparatus, a testing tool and an output device in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0019] Figure 2A is a perspective view of an embodiment of an assembled testing tool.

[0020] Figure 2B is an exploded perspective view of an embodiment of a testing tool.

[0021] Figure 2C is a perspective view of an embodiment of a barrel of a testing tool.

[0022] Figure 2D is a perspective view of an embodiment of a label of a testing tool.

[0023] Figure 2E is a perspective view of an embodiment of a needle assembly of a testing tool.

[0024] Figure 2F is an exploded perspective view of an embodiment of a needle assembly of a testing tool.

[0025] Figure 2G is a top view of the distal end of an embodiment of the needle assembly of a testing tool.

[0026] Figure 3A is a simplified block diagram of an embodiment of an electronics assembly of a testing tool.

[0027] Figure 3B is a perspective view of an embodiment of an electronics assembly of a testing tool.

[0028] Figure 3C is an exploded perspective view of an embodiment of a force sensor sub-assembly of an electronics assembly of a testing tool.

[0029] Figure 4A is a perspective view of an embodiment of a testing tool docked in an embodiment of a docking station.

[0030] Figure 4B is a perspective view of an embodiment of a docking station.

[0031] Figure 4C is a perspective view of an embodiment of a docking station with its cover removed.

[0032] Figure 5 illustrates an embodiment of the injection training system.

[0033] Figures 6A and 6B are two perspective views of an example trajectory for an injection.

[0034] Figure 7 illustrates an example embodiment of a three-dimensional (3D) injection detection sensor.

[0035] Figure 8 illustrates an example embodiment of a 3D injection detection sensor.

[0036] Figure 9 illustrates a side view of one embodiment of the injection apparatus including a 3D injection detection sensor.

[0037] Figure 10 is a process flow diagram of a method of manufacturing an anatomically shaped injection apparatus including a 3D tracking system.

[0038] Figure 11 is a process flow diagram for a method of 3D injection training.

[0039] Figure 12 illustrates an embodiment of an injection training system comprising an injection apparatus, a testing tool, and a resting cradle in which the testing tool follows a sequence of motion (A through D) from the resting cradle to an injection site of the injection apparatus.

[0040] Figure 13A illustrates a process flow diagram of a process to determine the position and orientation of a testing tool according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system.

[0041] Figures 13B, 13B1, and 13B2, collectively, illustrate a process flow diagram of a process to determine the position and orientation of a testing tool according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system.

[0042] Figure 14A is simplified perspective view of an exemplary optical tracking system illuminating a testing tool according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system.

[0043] Figure 14B is simplified perspective view of an exemplary optical tracking system sensing reflected light from testing tool according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system.

[0044] Figure 14C illustrates a testing tool configured with multiple markers according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system.

[0045] Figure 14D illustrates aspects of the user interface/display device according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system.

[0046] Figure 15A illustrates an embodiment of an injection training system comprising an injection apparatus, a testing tool, an output device and an optical tracking system, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0047] Figure 15B illustrates an embodiment of an injection training system comprising an injection apparatus, a testing tool, an output device and a plurality of optical tracking systems, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0048] Embodiments will now be described with reference to the accompanying figures. The following description is merely illustrative in nature and is in no way intended to limit the disclosure, its application, or its uses. For purposes of clarity, the same reference numbers will be used in the drawings to identify similar elements. The terminology used in the description presented herein is not intended to be interpreted in any limited or restrictive manner, simply because it is being used in conjunction with a detailed description of certain specific embodiments of the disclosure. Furthermore, embodiments of the disclosure may include several novel features, no single one of which is solely responsible for its desirable attributes or which is essential to practicing the present disclosure. It should be understood that steps within a method may be executed in different order without altering the principles of the present disclosure.

[0049] FIG. 1 depicts an embodiment of an injection training system 100. An injection apparatus 105, comprising a synthetic anatomical structure, can be used for any type of injection training involved with administering diagnostic and therapeutic chemical substances. For example, injection training can be provided for epidural techniques and for intra-cardiac injections. In one embodiment, the injection apparatus 105 can anatomically model the face, neck, and head of a human or animal. Although not shown in the accompanying drawings, the injection apparatus 105 can model other injection sites including the chest, arms, mouth, back, buttocks, etc. The injection apparatus 105 may also represent any body part of a human or animal, including internal organs. In

some embodiments, the injection apparatus 105 may include a simulated skull and layers of muscle and skin. The injection apparatus 105 can be positioned on a base 108 to facilitate use on flat surfaces, such as a table or desk.

[0050] A testing tool 110 is also illustrated which can be used with the injection apparatus 105 and in conjunction with a camera/light detector 120 located within the injection apparatus 105. The testing tool 110 may simulate any type of equipment used in connection with an injection or minimally invasive procedure, such as a needle, catheter or cannula. As described in further detail below, the camera/light detector 120 can capture visual indications of the user's injection using the testing tool 110. The visual indications provide an operator or user with information regarding the location, depth, pressure, or angle of the injection. In an embodiment, the testing tool 110 contains a light source that emits light through the needle portion of the testing tool 110 which is used to aid in obtaining the visual indications detectable by a camera/light detector 120. The light source can emit visible light. In an embodiment, a gradient of white light is emitted through the needle portion of the testing tool. Other colors of visible light can also be used, such as green, blue, red, yellow or any combination of those colors. In an alternative embodiment, the light source may emit light along a spectrum of visible or non-visible light, such as fluorescent, ultraviolet, or infrared light. In some embodiments, the light emitted from the light source is attenuated differently depending on which layer of simulated skin, muscle, or tissue the injection apparatus 105 is penetrated. Different colors, directions, graph lines, visual patterns, polarization, fluorescence, or intensities of light can be captured by the camera/light detector 120 as the testing tool 110 is inserted through the different layers of material surrounding the injection apparatus 105. The resulting light detected by the camera/light detector 120 can be used to determine the location of the injection, the pressure exerted by the user, the angle of injection, and/or the depth of the injection. This information can be detected, for example by a camera/light detector 120, and communicated to a user interface/display device 140 for training, testing, and/or certification purposes. In some embodiments, information used to determine the location of the injection, the pressure exerted by the user, the angle of injection, and/or the depth of the injection can be collected by the testing tool 110 and communicated to a user

interface/display device 140 and/or a camera/light detector 120 for training, testing and certification purposes.

[0051] The camera/light detector 120 within the simulated skull of the injection apparatus 105 captures the attenuated light emitted by the testing tool 110, simulating an injection, through video recording and/or photographic images. The camera/light detector 120 can include a processor and can communicate output from the camera/light detector 120 to a user interface/display device 140. The information gathered from the camera/light detector 120 and testing tool 110 may be communicated to a user interface/display device 140 for data collection, testing or certification purposes. Output from the camera/light detector 120 can be raw or processed video or images obtained from the camera/light detector 120. The processor of the camera/light detector 120 can include software configured to interpret the visual indications for testing purposes or can merely pass images to the user interface/display device 140 for further processing. In an embodiment, the user interface/display device 140 can also communicate instructions to the camera/light detector 120 and/or to the testing tool 110.

[0052] Attention is now directed to embodiments of the testing tool 110. Although disclosed with reference to particular embodiments of the testing tool 110, an artisan will recognize from the disclosure herein that there is a large number and wide variety of embodiments and configurations that may be used to perform the functions of a testing tool 110 as described herein.

[0053] FIGS. 2A and 2B illustrate (in assembled and exploded views, respectively) an embodiment of the testing tool 110 adapted for use to train individuals to inject materials with a syringe. In an embodiment the testing tool 110 includes a plunger 210, a barrel 220, a needle assembly 230, and an electronics assembly 240. Also illustrated are fasteners 221, such as screws, to secure portions of the electronics assembly 240 to the barrel 220.

[0054] For purposes of this description, the end of the test tool 110 toward the needle assembly 230 is referred to as the “distal end,” and motion or direction toward the distal end is described as being “distal.” The end of the test tool 110 longitudinally opposite the distal end is referred to as “the proximal end,” and motion or direction toward the proximal end is described as being “proximal.”

[0055] The plunger 210 can be manufactured by using many types of materials including polypropylene, glass, and other materials known to skilled artisans. The plunger 210 includes a top portion 212 at the proximal end of the plunger 210. The plunger 210 also includes a shaft 214 which, in an embodiment, is x-shaped. In some embodiments the plunger shaft 214 can be cylindrical or any other shape suitable to perform the function of a plunger 210. In some embodiments, the plunger 210 is collapsible to simulate the process of injecting material into a patient. In some embodiments the plunger 210 is configured to house the electronics assembly 240. In some embodiments the plunger 210 is collapsible and configured to measure the plunger's 210 motion of contraction to determine a volume of material that would have been injected under the simulated circumstances and conditions of use of the testing tool 110. The collapsible plunger 210 can be reset by pulling it back to its original, un-collapsed (or extended) position. In some embodiments data reflecting the position of the plunger 210 is collected and communicated to, for example, the user interface/display device 140 and/or to the camera/light detector 120. In an embodiment the testing tool 110 includes a hydraulic and/or a friction-based device, acting against the plunger 210, to simulate the force of resistance that a liquid material with certain properties of viscosity, would exert against the plunger 210 as it is injected into a patient.

[0056] At the distal end of the plunger 210 is a seal 216, which is made of rubber in an embodiment. A skilled artisan will appreciate that in some embodiments the plunger seal 216 may be made from any material suitable for creating a seal between the plunger 210 and the inside walls of the barrel 220, such as various types of elastomers and/or polymers. In some embodiments the plunger 210 lacks a seal 216 because the testing tool 110 is not used to deliver liquid, chemical substances, thereby lacking a need to form a seal.

[0057] FIG. 2C is a perspective view of an embodiment of a barrel 220 of a testing tool 110. The barrel 220 can be made from many types of materials including polypropylene, glass, and other materials known to skilled artisans. The barrel 220 includes a grip 222 and an opening 223 at the barrel's proximal end. The grip 222 provides finger support for reciprocation of the plunger 210 relative to the barrel 220 during use for training. At the distal end of the barrel 220 is a

threaded portion 224 configured to receive a fitting 226. The fitting has a portal 225 through which light passes from a light source (on the electronics assembly 240) to a fiber bundle housed within a hollow needle (in the needle assembly 230). In some embodiments the fitting 226 can be a Luer fitting, a standardized set of fittings used to make leak-free mechanical connections between a male-taper fitting and a mating female part on medical and laboratory instruments, including hypodermic syringe tips and needles. In some embodiments the fitting 226 is not tapered. Advantageously, in some embodiments, the fitting 226 can accommodate numerous configurations of needle assemblies 230 corresponding to various injection indications and applications. In some embodiments a customized fitting 226 includes a thread with no taper component to facilitate intimate contact between a light source and a fiber bundle that transmits the emitted light into the injection apparatus 105. In an embodiment the barrel 220 includes bores 228 configured to receive connector pins attached to the electronics assembly 240 to enable charging of a battery when, for example, the testing tool 110 is housed in a docking station. The barrel 220 also includes holes 229 through which fasteners, such as screws, can be used to secure the electronics assembly 240 to the barrel 220.

[0058] FIG. 2D is a perspective view of an embodiment of a label 250 of a testing tool 110. In an embodiment, the label 250 is configured to fit inside the barrel 220 in close-fitting relation with an inner wall of the barrel 220. In an embodiment the label 250 is configured to fit outside the barrel 220 in close-fitting relation with an outer wall of the barrel 220. The label 250 can be configured to present any type of information including, among other things, branding and/or instructional information.

[0059] FIGS. 2E-2F are perspective views (assembled and exploded, respectively) of an embodiment of a needle assembly 230 of a testing tool 110, including a hollow needle 232, a needle hub 234, an adapter 236, and a fiber bundle 238 positioned centrally along the longitudinal axis of the needle assembly 230 and configured to transmit light at the distal end of the testing tool 110. In some embodiments a needle hub 234 is configured to connect directly to the fitting 226 of the barrel 220, thereby eliminating the need for an adapter 236. The fiber bundle 238 is housed within the hollow needle 232. In an embodiment the hollow needle 232 is made from hypodermic tubing. A wide variety of hollow

needles 232 used for, among other things, hypodermic applications, have outer diameters described by gauge numbers ranging from 7 to 34. Hollow needles 232 within this gauge range can be used in various embodiments of the disclosed needle assembly 230. Smaller gauge numbers indicate larger outer diameters. The inner diameters of such hollow needles 232 depend on both gauge and wall thickness. Thin-wall needles have identical outer diameters, but larger inner diameters, for a given gauge. Thin-wall needles can also be used in various embodiments of the needle assembly 230. In an embodiment the hollow needle 232 is made of stainless steel and has a gauge size of 23RW. A skilled artisan will appreciate that the hollow needle 232 can be of many different gauge sizes without departing from the scope of the disclosure herein. Free space between the fiber bundle 238 and the inner wall of the hollow needle 232 can be potted with optical epoxy. The proximal and distal ends of the hollow needle 232, having the fiber bundle 238 secured inside it, can be polished flat. The hollow needle 232 can be epoxy-bonded to the needle hub 234, which attaches to the fitting 226 on the barrel 220. FIG. 2G is a top view of the distal end of the needle assembly 230 illustrating the fiber bundle 238 housed and secured with optical epoxy within the hollow needle 232.

[0060] FIG. 3A is a simplified block diagram of an embodiment of the electronics assembly 240 of the testing tool 110. Functionally, among other things, the electronics assembly 240 emits light from a light source 320, measures the electronic assembly's 240 physical position and/or orientation with a position sensor 308, and measures force applied to the plunger 210 by a force sensor 312. The electronics assembly 240 communicates the measured position information and the measured force information to, for example, an external user interface/display device 140, and/or to a camera/light detector 120, by way of a communications protocol. In some embodiments the electronics assembly 240 communicates data by way of a USB port 322 using a cable that has a minimal diameter and is highly compliant. In some embodiments the electronics assembly 240 communicates data by way of a radio 310 employing, for example, a Bluetooth wireless communications protocol.

[0061] As illustrated in FIG. 3A, an embodiment of the electronics assembly 240 includes a battery 302, a power management controller 304, a voltage regulator 306, a position sensor 308, a radio 310, a force sensor 312, a

data acquisition system 314, one or more processors 316, a light source driver 318, a light source 320 and one or more power/communication ports 322. In some embodiments the battery 302 is rechargeable, and the power management controller 304 is configured to communicate with an external battery-charging power/communication port 322, such as, for example, a universal serial bus (USB) port. The battery 302 can supply power to the components and circuitry of the electronics assembly 240. In an embodiment the battery 302 is an ultrathin, rechargeable, lithium polymer cell. A skilled artisan will appreciate that numerous other batteries can be used in the disclosed electronics assembly 240.

[0062] According to an embodiment, the electronics assembly 240 comprises a battery 302 and a light source 320, where the electronics assembly 240 is configured to emit light through the hollow needle 232 to achieve basic functionality of the disclosed testing tool 110. In an embodiment, the electronics assembly 240 comprises a light source 320 and a port 322 through which an external power source may be electrically connected to energize the light source 320 to achieve basic functionality of the testing tool 110. One skilled in the art will appreciate that various functional capabilities described in connection with embodiments of the electronics assembly 240 can be implemented in numerous ways. To illustrate this point, illustrative components, blocks, modules, and circuits have been described generally in terms of their functionality. The manner by which such functionality is implemented can depend upon the particular application and design constraints imposed on the overall system. The described functionality can be implemented in varying ways for each particular application, but such embodiment decisions should not be interpreted as causing a departure from the scope of the present disclosure.

[0063] To operate effectively in the injection training system 100, the light source 320 must be sensed by the camera/light detector 120. In an embodiment the camera/light detector 120 is configured to sense visible light and infrared light. In an embodiment the light source is a light emitting diode (LED) that emits low, infrared light at a wavelength of 810 nanometers (nm). In an embodiment the light source 320 is a laser that emits low infrared light at a wavelength of 850 nm. In an embodiment the light source 320 has a narrow emission angle of twenty degrees or less. In an embodiment, the light source 320 is an LED that has its dome removed and is polished flat to facilitate intimate

contact with the proximal end of the fiber bundle 238 and the light source 320 when the testing tool 110 is assembled. In some embodiments lenses, reflectors, and/or fiber optic tapers are coupled to the light source 320 to focus and/or to intensify the emitted light in the direction of the fiber bundle 238. In some embodiments the intensity of the light emitted by the testing tool 110 is proportional to the amount of pressure applied to a plunger 210 of the testing tool 110, thereby simulating a process by which liquid material is injected through the testing tool 110. A skilled artisan will appreciate that many other light sources 320 and light ranges of various wavelengths can be used in the disclosed training system 100 without departing from the scope of the disclosure herein.

[0064] In an embodiment the force sensor 312 is configured to sense up to twenty pounds (20 lbs.) of force with a 2 percent accuracy factor. In an embodiment the position sensor 308 is a three-axis digital gyroscope with angle resolution of two degrees and with a sensor drift adjustment capability (pitch, yaw and roll) of one degree. A skilled artisan will appreciate that numerous other position sensors 308 and force sensors 312 can be used in the disclosed electronics assembly 240 without departing from the scope of the disclosure herein. In an embodiment the electronics assembly includes a power conditioning component, such as a voltage regulator 306, to enable operation of the position sensor 308 and the force sensor 312. In an embodiment the position sensor 308 senses the position of the testing tool 110 in three-dimensional space, and the sensed position information is communicated to the user interface/display device 140 and/or to the camera/light detector 120.

[0065] FIG. 3B is a perspective view of an embodiment of the electronics assembly 240. Advantageously, the electronics assembly 240 is configured to fit within the barrel 220 of the testing tool 110. A rectangular circuit board 324 comprises a substrate onto which several components of the assembly 240 are attached. In an embodiment the electronics assembly includes the battery 302, the power management controller 304, the voltage regulator 306, the light source driver 318 and the light source 320. When the electronics assembly 240 is configured in the testing tool 110, it is positioned such that the light source 320 is located at the distal end of the testing tool 110, within the fitting 226 so as to make intimate contact with the proximal end of the fiber bundle 238, which is secured to the needle assembly 230.

[0066] In an embodiment the electronics assembly 240 also includes a force sensor sub-assembly 360 illustrated in FIG. 3B and in FIG. 3C, in assembled and exploded views, respectively. The force sensor sub-assembly 360 has a circular printed circuit board 326 comprising a substrate to which several components of the force sensor sub-assembly 360 are attached, including a force sensor 312, backstops 328, and connector pins 330. The backstops 328 provide structural support for the force sensor sub-assembly 360 and serve as a mechanism by which to secure the force sensor sub-assembly 360 to the barrel 220. The circular printed circuit board 326 is attached to the two backstops 328 with fasteners 329. The connector pins 330 are used to couple to an external power source to charge the battery 302. In an embodiment, the connector pins 330 are spring-loaded contacts that are soldered to the circular printed circuit board 326 and configured to fit through the bores 228 in the barrel 220. By protruding through the bores 228 the connector pins 330 are able to make electrical connection with an external power source to enable charging of the battery 302.

[0067] When positioned within the testing tool 110, the force sensor sub-assembly 360 is oriented substantially perpendicular to the rectangular printed circuit board 324 such that the force sensor 312 is configured to sense axial force applied in the distal direction by the plunger 210. The force sensor sub-assembly 360 is secured to the barrel 220 by fasteners 221 (shown in FIG. 2B), such as flat head screws, that are inserted through the holes 229 of the barrel 220 and secured into threaded screw holes 362 located centrally on the backstops 328. In this manner the force sensor sub-assembly 360 resists being deflected in response to force applied to the force sensor 312 by the plunger 210.

[0068] In an embodiment the circular printed circuit board 326 is electrically coupled to the proximal end of the rectangular printed circuit board 324 to enable electrical communication between the force sensor 312 and the processor 316, and between the connector pins 330 and the power management controller 304.

[0069] An artisan will recognize from the disclosure herein that the functionality of the electronics assembly 240 may be accomplished in many

different ways, using many different electronic components and organized in a large number of ways without departing from the scope of the disclosure herein.

[0070] Referring back to FIGS. 2A-2B, assembly of the testing tool 110, for some embodiments, is accomplished by securing the needle assembly 230 to the fitting 226, and by securing the electronics assembly 240 into the barrel 220. Spring-loaded connector pins 330 retract inward to permit the electronics assembly 240 to move to the distal end of the inside of the barrel 220, such that the light source 320 is in close intimate relation with the proximal end of the fiber bundle 238 of the needle assembly 230. The electronics assembly 240 may be rotated axially such that the spring-loaded connector pins 330 are aligned with bore holes 228, at which point the spring-loaded connector pins will expand to lock into position. Fasteners 221 are then used to secure the electronics assembly 240 to the barrel 220. The plunger 210 is inserted into the proximal end of the barrel 220.

[0071] In some embodiments the plunger 210 is configured to move distally through the barrel 220 when force is applied to the plunger 210, thereby simulating the plunger motion associated with injecting material into a patient. In an embodiment, the plunger shaft 214 is cylindrical, having an outer diameter slightly less than the inner diameter of the barrel 220. As the cylindrical plunger shaft 214 moves through the barrel 220 in the distal direction, the plunger shaft 214 slides around and envelops the electronics assembly 240. In an embodiment, a resistance device offers a resistive force in response to the force applied to the plunger 210, corresponding to a resistive force experienced when injecting liquid materials into a patient. In an embodiment the resistive device is a friction-based device. In an embodiment the resistive device is a fluid-based device. In an embodiment the resistive device includes a spring configured to apply a resistive force to the plunger 210. One skilled in the art will readily appreciate that there are many ways by which to achieve the functionality of the resistive device. In an embodiment, the force applied by the plunger 210 and the force applied by the resistive device are sensed and communicated to a user interface/display device 140 and/or to a camera/light detector 120.

[0072] In some embodiments the plunger shaft 214 is configured to collapse telescopically to simulate plunger motion associated with injecting

material into a patient. In some embodiments, the collapsible plunger shaft 214 is configured to sense positional displacement of the plunger shaft 214 and to communicate the plunger shaft 214 displacement coordinates to a user interface/display device 140 and/or to a camera/light detector 120. In some embodiments measurements of the position of a movable, collapsible or telescoping plunger 210 are communicated to a user interface/display device 140 and/or to a camera/light detector 120 and used to determine whether proper doses are being delivered.

[0073] In some embodiments, the electronics assembly 240 is positioned within the plunger shaft 214, and is configured to move distally and proximally through the barrel 220, along with the plunger 210. Placing the electronics assembly 240 in a hollowed shaft 214 of the plunger 210 makes the barrel 220 available to hold a therapeutic agent that can be injected during the training into the injection apparatus 105. The position sensor 308 is configured to obtain position and orientation information of the testing tool 110 and of the plunger 210, and to wirelessly transmit the information to the user interface/display device 140. In an embodiment, the force sensor sub-assembly 360 can be positioned within the shaft 214 of the plunger 210 to measure the resistive force of the therapeutic agent in the barrel 220, as the injection is applied. The measured force information can be wirelessly transmitted to the user interface/display device 140. Illustratively, in such an embodiment the testing tool 110 operates in a manner similar to a syringe in that the testing tool 110 is configured to deliver a therapeutic agent through the needle 232 into the injection apparatus 105. In some embodiments the electronics assembly 240 is positioned within the plunger shaft 214 and is configured to move distally and proximally through the barrel 220, along with the plunger 210. The light source 320 is positioned at the distal end of the barrel 220, and a flexible connector connects the light source 320 to the electronics assembly 240. In some embodiments the flexible connector connecting the light source 320 to the electronics assembly is extendable and retractable. Accordingly, the plunger 210 is able to move axially into and out of the barrel 220, while the light source is configured to emit light through the tip 233 of the hollow needle 232.

[0074] FIG. 4A illustrates an embodiment of a testing tool 110 docked in a docking station 400. The docking station 400 includes a dock cover 402, a

USB port 404, and two indicator lights 406. The docking station 400 is contoured to accommodate the testing tool 110 such that the connector pins 330 of the testing tool 110 are in contact with contact pins 408 to facilitate charging of the battery 302. FIG. 4B provides a view of a contact pin 408 of the docking station 400. FIG. 4C illustrates the docking station 400 with its cover 402 removed revealing a dock circuit board 410 electrically coupled to the USB port 404 and to the indicator lights 406. The dock circuit board 410 is also electrically coupled to contact pins 408 such that when a connection is made from, for example, a standard power outlet to the USB port 404, the contact pins are configured to support charging of the battery 302 of the testing tool 110 when the testing tool is docked in the docking station 400. Standoff elements 412 are employed to provide appropriate spacing within the structure of the docking station 400.

[0075] In some embodiments of the injection training system 100, an injection training apparatus 105 or method can use one or more three-dimensional (3D) position sensors to determine a position of a testing tool 110, such as a syringe and/or needle, in an artificial patient injection site (such as, for example, an artificial face). One or more 3D position sensors can also be used for training caregivers on performing injections where accurate positioning is important, such as in facial injections (e.g., Botox[®]), spinal injections, and/or the additional injections described above.

[0076] By integrating one or more 3D sensors, the injection training apparatus and method may provide enhanced accuracy when tracking the trainee's injection technique. Increased training accuracy can facilitate increased detail on the feedback provided to the trainee. The features discussed below with reference to Figures 5–11 may be included, in whole or part, with the training systems, methods, and devices described herein.

[0077] Figure 5 illustrates an embodiment of the injection apparatus 105, testing tool 110 and user interface/display device 140. The injection apparatus 105 shown forms a head bust with realistic look and feel of human flesh. The external surface of the injection apparatus 105 may be a substantially synthetic or simulated skin. The synthetic or simulated skin can be an opaque rubber or other material which simulates skin and facial features of real patients. Underlying the skin may be a layer of substantially clear rubber (and/or any

suitable elastomer) which simulates the viscosity, elasticity, and feel of skin, muscle, nerve, and bone tissue of a patient. The opaque skin and clear underlay may be capable of being pierced by a needle. It should be noted that the injection apparatus 105 need not include colored underlying skin to attenuate light.

[0078] The injection apparatus 105 is hollow and includes, within the cavity, a three-dimensional (3D) sensor 502. The 3D sensor 502 may include a camera, an array of light detectors or other sensor(s) capable of detecting a location of an object in three dimensions. The 3D sensor 502 is configured to detect a position of a needle and/or to view the interior surface of the injection apparatus 105. A field of view 504 is established in front of the 3D sensor 502. The field of view 504 represents an area in which the 3D sensor 502 may detect light.

[0079] A testing tool 110 is also shown. The testing tool 110 may be implemented as a syringe equipped with a light emitting needle, for example, as described in greater detail above. The light emitted by the testing tool 110 may be detected by the 3D sensor 502.

[0080] As shown in Figure 5, the 3D sensor 502 and the testing tool 110 are coupled with a signal processing and display interface 555 via cables 560 and 570. The signal processing and display interface 555 can include one or more processors configured to receive and process information, provided from the 3D sensor 502 and/or from the testing tool 110 that corresponds to the position of the testing tool 110 relative to the injection apparatus 105. Illustratively, the processing and display interface 555 processes the received information from the 3D sensor 502 and from the testing tool 110 to determine the testing tool's 110 position relative to the injection apparatus 105. Although illustrated in Figure 5 as being coupled by wires, coupling between the 3D sensor 502, the testing tool 110, and the user interface/display 140 can be accomplished via wired, wireless, or a combination of wired and wireless configurations. Moreover, the processing and interface 555 can be incorporated into the user interface/display 140. The method of coupling the 3D sensor 502 need not be identical to the method of coupling used for the testing tool 110.

[0081] In use, as illustrated in Figure 5, a trainee punctures the face of the injection apparatus 105 with the testing tool 110 which is emitting light from a

tip 233 of the hollow needle 232. When the tip 233 passes through the opaque skin layer of the injection apparatus 105, the 3D sensor 502 is configured to detect the light emitted from the tip 233 and to determine the three-dimensional position, in space, of the tip 233. The three-dimensional position information is transmitted to the signal processing and display interface 555, which is configured to communicate the three-dimensional position information to the user interface/display device 140. The user interface/display device 140 integrates the communicated position information into a digital model of the head bust injection apparatus 105. The user interface/display device 140 may be configured to present a visual representation of the position of the needle tip 233 relative to the injection site on the injection apparatus 105. The user interface/display device 140 allows the trainee to evaluate the actual needle position, as represented on the user interface/display device 140, in comparison to the ideal position, which is also represented on the user interface/display device 140. The user interface/display device 140, shown in Figure 5, is coupled with the signal processing and display interface 555 by a cable 580. The coupling may be via wired, wireless, or a combination of wired and wireless configurations.

[0082] The three-dimensional position information relative to the 3D sensor 502 is mapped in software to a graphical representation of the injection site on the user interface/display device 140. This mapping is performed by determining accurate three-dimensional coordinates corresponding to the position of the injection apparatus 105 in the world. The position of the 3D sensor 502 relative to the injection apparatus 105 is also determined with a high degree of precision. This precision allows a very accurate mapping of the detected three-dimensional position information of the hollow needle 232 and its tip 233 to be accurately detected by the 3D sensor 502 and accurately mapped in software to recreate the position of the needle 232 and the needle tip 233 of the testing tool 110. This information is then used to determine both the accuracy of the injection relative to a predetermined injection site accuracy goal, as well as to provide a graphical illustration of the injection, again relative to the injection site goal. This mapping and display can be provided substantially in real time so that a user can adjust the trajectory of injection during the training.

[0083] Figures 6A and 6B illustrate two views of a trajectory for an injection. Figure 6A illustrates a view from the perspective of the 3D sensor 502,

positioned inside the injection apparatus 105 and directed at the inner surface of the injection apparatus 105. To orient the reader, an eye 602 and a nose 604 have been labeled. An injection starting point 610 is detected by the 3D sensor 502. As the needle tip 233 proceeds into the injection apparatus 105, the changing positions of the light emitted from the needle tip 233 are measured by the 3D sensor 502. In some implementations, the measurement may be a video capture of the injection. In some implementations, the measurement may be a sampled capture at, for example, predetermined intervals. A trajectory path 630, from the starting point 610 to an ending point 620, is thus obtained. As shown in Figure 6A, the trajectory path 630 takes the form of an irregular injection path, which may, in some circumstances, indicate the need for additional training.

[0084] The trajectory path 630 may be presented via the user interface/display device 140. The presentation may include providing a line tracking the injection path. The presentation may include providing an animated depiction of the injection. In some implementations, the presentation may be augmented with additional information such as identifying and showing which muscles, skin, body parts, etc. the injection is coming in contact with or is penetrating. The augmentation of the presentation may retrieve one or more models of the desired physiological information from a data store. The models include three-dimensional information indicating the location(s) of certain anatomical or physiological features. The feature information, along with the three-dimensional injection location information, is mapped onto the presentation of the injection apparatus 105.

[0085] Because three-dimensions of information are being obtained, multiple views of the injection trajectory may be provided. Figure 6B provides a second view of the injection trajectory shown in Figure 6A. Figure 6B illustrates a view taken from an overhead perspective of a horizontal cross-section of the injection apparatus 105. The cross-section is taken at a point on the injection apparatus 105 which allows the viewer to see a horizontal injection trajectory path 660 of the needle. As in Figure 6A, to orient the reader, the eye 602 and the nose 604 have been labeled.

[0086] The horizontal injection trajectory path 660 begins at the starting point 610 and ends at the ending point 620. However, because the perspective

has changed, the shape of the path 660 is different than that shown in Figure 6A. This provides another view of the injection result. It will be understood that the presentation model may be arbitrarily rotated, and a representation of the trajectory path for the representational model, as rotated, may be generated. The rotation may be provided to the system as a display point of view identifying the location in space from which to view the trajectory path. Because the injection apparatus digital model is combined with the three-dimensional injection information and, in some instances, anatomical or physiological information, the injection training may provide a wide variety of views, depending on the technique needed for the injection. The views may be provided as animated depictions, such as video or reconstructed animations. For example, in some embodiments, historical trajectories for the same type of injection can be shown in a 3D overlap view which illustrates historical injection trajectories to a current injection trajectory. In this way, a care provider can visually compare trajectory information for improvement progression analysis and general accuracy analysis. Different historical trajectories can be shown in different colors, shades, and/or highlights in order to illustrate age and/or accuracy of the trajectories.

[0087] The aspects shown in Figure 5 allow a trainee to adjust his or her technique and monitor his or her progress toward the ideal injection technique. For example, the user interface/display device 140 may provide a view selector (not shown) to allow the trainee to see the injection site from a variety of views, such as rotated, zoomed in, zoomed out, cross-sectional, time-lapsed, and the like, both in real time and after the injection has occurred. As shown in Figure 5, a cross-sectional view is displayed on the user interface/display device 140 whereby the trainee can see how far through an opaque skin layer 590 into a clear material layer 592 the testing tool has passed.

[0088] In some implementations, the three-dimensional position information received from the 3D sensor 502 may be converted before integration into the digital model of the injection apparatus 105. In such implementations, the received three-dimensional position information may be calibrated, adjusted, or otherwise converted such that the position information of the testing tool 110 may be correlated with a position on the digital model of the injection apparatus 105.

[0089] As discussed, one or more sensors may be provided within the training apparatus 105 which provide three-dimensional position information for the testing tool 110. Figure 7 illustrates an example embodiment of a 3D sensor 502. A dimensional legend 799 is provided to indicate the three axes (e.g., X, Y and Z) of detection. This dimensional legend 799 is logical and may not physically be included in an embodiment of the injection training systems described. The names attributed to each axis may differ, but each axis should represent one unique dimension.

[0090] The 3D sensor 502 is shown receiving light from a testing tool 110 at a first position 702, and then at a second position 704. These positions are not simultaneous, but rather represent the sequential movement of the testing tool 110 over time. The light emitted from the testing tool 110 is received by the 3D sensor 502. The light is emitted from the tip 233 of the testing tool 110 and disperses on its way to the 3D sensor 502. As shown in Figure 7, a first area of light 710 is generated when the testing tool is located at the first position 702. A second area of light 712 is generated at a second time when the testing tool 110 is located at the second position 704. The 3D sensor 502 may be configured to measure one or more characteristics of the received light and generate information corresponding to the three-dimensional position of the testing tool 110 based on the characteristics detected. Illustratively, the characteristics may include angle, intensity, brightness, color, dispersion, and/or duration of the light.

[0091] In one implementation, the 3D sensor 502 may include an array of light sensors. As light is emitted from the needle tip 233, one or more of the sensors in the array may receive light. By aggregating the information about which sensors received light and characteristics of the light received at each sensor, three-dimensional information about the position of the light source may be determined. Some 3D sensors 502 may be housed in a recess and, based on the light pattern cast on the sensor, determine the location of the light source. In generating the 3D location information, the 3D sensor 502 may also obtain calibration information for the needle tip 233 of the testing tool 110 to account for variability, such as in manufacturing, wear-and-tear, and power. Further calibration information may be used to specify the field of view 504 for the 3D sensor 502. The calibration information may be received, for example, through an

initialization sequence whereby the testing tool 110 is placed at a predetermined location on the injection apparatus.

[0092] Because the 3D sensor 502 knows the light source and its particular location vis-à-vis the light source, the 3D sensor 502 can generate accurate and, in some implementations, real-time 3D location information for the testing tool 110.

[0093] Figure 8 illustrates another embodiment of a 3D sensor 502. It may be desirable to implement the 3D sensor 502 as a stereoscopic sensor pair. A dimensional legend 899 is provided indicate the three axes (e.g., X, Y and Z) of detection. This dimensional legend 899 is logical and may not physically be included in an embodiment of the injection training systems described. The names attributed to each axis may differ, but each axis should represent one unique dimension.

[0094] The 3D sensor pair includes a first 3D sensor 502A and a second 3D sensor 502B. The first 3D sensor 502A and the second 3D sensor 502B are configured to receive, at substantially the same time, light from a testing tool 110. The testing tool 110 may be located at different positions at different times. Figure 8 shows a first position 810 at a first time, and a second position 812 at a second time, for the testing tool 110.

[0095] Each 3D sensor 502A and 502B is configured to measure one or more characteristics of the light transmitted from the testing tool's 110 position and to generate three-dimensional location information corresponding to the position of the testing tool 110, based in the detected characteristics. The characteristics may include angle, intensity, dispersion, brightness, color, or duration of the sensed light. Combining the characteristic data received from the first 3D sensor 502A and the second 3D sensor 502B, three-dimensional information for the testing tool 110 may be generated. The combination may be performed by one of the 3D sensors 502A and 502B, or by the signal processing and display interface 555. In an embodiment the combination can be performed in the user interface/display device 140.

[0096] In generating the 3D location information, the generation of the three-dimensional information may also include obtaining calibration information for the needle tip 233 to account for variability such as in manufacturing, wear-

and-tear, and power. The calibration information may be received, for example, through an initialization sequence whereby the testing tool 110 is placed at a predetermined location on the injection apparatus 105.

[0097] Figure 9 depicts a side view of one embodiment of the injection apparatus 105, including a 3D sensor 502. The injection apparatus 105 is formed as a human head. A testing tool 110 is shown inserted into the injection apparatus 105. The testing tool 110 may be implemented as described above, such as in reference to Figures 2A-G, 3A-C and 4A-C. To minimize diffraction of the light emitted from the testing tool 110, a surface of clear elastomer 910 may be made substantially perpendicular to the direction of light travel. Accordingly, in an embodiment the inner surface of the clear elastomer 910 is formed as a spherical surface with the center facing a 3D sensor 502. The 3D sensor 502 may be implemented as described above such as in reference to Figures 5, 7 and 8. The 3D sensor 502 is configured to detect light emitted by the testing tool 110 within a field of view 504.

[0098] Rather than utilize a light emitting testing tool 110 in combination with a single two-dimensional (2D) camera that detects a two-dimensional position of the light emitting needle tip 233, the injection training system 100 may include one or more 3D sensors 502 and/or tracking equipment. With a single 2D camera, a position with respect to a third dimension may be determined, for example, by tinting the clear elastomer surface 910, causing a color of the light to change as the needle tip 233 transitions through the tinted layer. Illustratively, the color may trend toward white light as the needle tip 233 moves closer to the inner surface of the clear elastomer surface 910.

[0099] It may be desirable to avoid tinting the clear elastomer surface 910 and allow the use of 3D tracking equipment, such as 3D sensors 502 (which may be cameras or other types of sensors), examples of which are shown in Figures 7 and 8 above. Further examples of 3D tracking equipment include equipment sold by Personal Space Technologies B.V. (available at <http://ps-tech.com/>). An additional example of 3D tracking equipment is described in a Centre Suisse d'Electronique et Microtechnique SA (CSEM) Scientific & Technical Report entitled "spaceCoder: a Nanometric 3D Position Sensing Device," which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

[0100] As the testing tool 110 penetrates an opaque skin layer 590 and enters the internal clear elastomer layer 592, the 3D sensor 502 detects characteristics of the light which can be used to generate a three-dimensional location of the testing tool 110. For example, it may be desirable to track a desired range 912 of needle penetration. In some implementations, the depth information is displayed on a display, such as the user interface/display device 140, as the testing tool 110 is inserted. This allows a trainee to visualize the location of the injection in near real-time. The signal processing and display interface 555 may provide the location information to facilitate such displays. In some implementations, the feedback may be provided in audio form such as a beep or an alert.

[0101] Figure 10 shows a process flow diagram of a method of manufacturing an anatomically shaped injection apparatus 105 including a 3D sensor 502, such as that shown in Figure 9. The method includes, at block 1002, forming an at least partially hollow base configured to provide structural support for a target injection test area. The method includes, at block 1004, coating at least a portion of the base with a clear layer of elastomer. The method also includes, at block 1006, coating at least a portion of the clear layer with an opaque layer. The base, clear layer, and opaque layer form an anatomical shape such as a skull. The method further includes, at block 1008, affixing a three-dimensional (3D) tracking system (which can include one or more 3D sensors 502) within the hollowed portion of the base, wherein the three-dimensional tracking system provides a field of view of the clear layer covering the target injection test area. The three-dimensional tracking system may be a 3D camera such as that shown in Figure 7 or a stereoscopic camera pair such as those shown in Figure 8. In some implementations, the method may also include coupling the 3D tracking system with a location processor configured to provide location information for a light source inserted into the clear layer. The location information identifies a three-dimensional location of the light source relative to the injection apparatus 105. The location processor may be implemented in the signal processing and display interface 555 shown in Figure 5.

[0102] Figure 11 illustrates a process flow diagram for a method of three-dimensional (3D) injection training. The method may be performed in whole

or in part by one or more of the devices described herein such as the training apparatuses described above.

[0103] The method includes, at block 1102, calibrating at least one of a light source and a three-dimensional tracking system. The light source may be a light emitter located at the tip 233 of a testing tool 110. The three-dimensional tracking system may include a 3D camera, a stereoscopic camera pair, or other sensor configured to provide three-dimensional location information for the light source. The method also includes, at block 1104, detecting, by the three-dimensional tracking system, a characteristic of light emitted from the light source for an injection. The characteristic may include intensity, angle, dispersion, brightness, color, or duration of the light. In some implementations, an array of sensors may be used to detect light. In such implementations, the characteristic may include which sensors in the array of sensors received light. The method further includes, at block 1106, generating three-dimensional location information of the light source based on the detected characteristics and said calibrating.

[0104] In some embodiments, the testing tool 110 is configured to determine its position and orientation in three-dimensional space relative to the injection apparatus 105. The testing tool 110 is also configured to communicate its position and orientation information to other components of the injection training system 100, such as, for example, the user interface/display device 140. The user interface/display device 140 can display, in near real time, the testing tool's 110 position relative to the injection apparatus 105, as injection training is performed. The testing tool 110 can also communicate its position and orientation information to the 3D sensor 502 and/or to the signal processing and display interface 555.

[0105] In an embodiment, the position sensor 308 collects nine dimensions of sensed information to determine the 3D position and orientation of the testing tool 110 in space with adequate accuracy. This is because processing sensed three-dimensional angular velocity provided by a 3D gyroscope leads to an accumulating error in the calculated position and orientation of the testing tool 110. To compensate for this error accumulation, measurements from a 3D accelerometer and from a 3D magnetometer can be used. The 3D accelerometer measures the earth's gravitational field, and the 3D magnetometer measures the

earth's magnetic field. Together, the sensed information from the 3D accelerometer and 3D magnetometer can provide an absolute reference of orientation that can be used to compensate for the progressively accumulating error of the sensed and processed angular velocity data provided by the 3D gyroscope. A method for sensor fusion includes processing the measured nine dimensions of sensed information (from the 3D gyroscope, the 3D accelerometer, and the 3D magnetometer) to determine a single estimate of position and orientation of the testing tool 110, in three-dimensional world coordinates.

[0106] In an embodiment, the position sensor 308 of the testing tool 110 comprises a inertial measurement unit (IMU) that includes one or more accelerometers, one or more gyroscopes, one or more magnetometers to provide, in near real time, information describing the 3D position and orientation of the testing tool 110. In some embodiments, the position sensor 308 can also include an embedded processor that handles, among other things, signal sampling, buffering, sensor calibration, and sensor fusion processing of the sensed inertial data. The position sensor 308 can also include a wireless network protocol for data transmission to external components, such as, for example, the user interface/display device 140, the 3D sensor 502, and the signal processing and display interface 555. Illustratively, the position sensor 308 senses, processes and transmits sensed position and orientation data of the testing tool 110 to a sensor fusion processing component that can be configured to operate on, for example, the user interface/display device 140. In an embodiment, the position sensor 308 transmits already-processed position and orientation information, delivered in three-dimensional, world coordinates, to the user interface/display device 140 which graphically displays the position of the testing tool 110 relative to the injection apparatus 105 in near real time as the injecting training occurs. The position sensor 308 can provide calibrated 3D linear acceleration, 3D angular velocity, 3D magnetic field, and optionally, atmospheric pressure data, to the sensor fusion processing component which processes the data to deliver precise position and orientation information of the testing tool 110. In an embodiment, the sensor fusion processing component employs a Kalman filter to provide three degrees-of-freedom position and orientation information of the testing tool 110 relative to the injection apparatus 105. The sensor fusion processing component uses data collected from the gyroscopes, accelerometers

and magnetometers to compute a statistical, optimal 3D position and orientation estimate, of high accuracy and with no drift, for movements of the testing tool 110.

[0107] Illustratively, the sensor fusion processing component comprises an algorithm in which the measurement of gravity (by the 3D accelerometers) and the earth's magnetic north (by the 3D magnetometers) compensate for otherwise slowly, but steadily increasing drift errors from the processing (using mathematical integration) of rate-of-turn data (angular velocity) measured from the rate gyroscopes. The described approach for compensating for drift can be referred to as attitude and heading referenced, and a system that employs this approach can be referred to as an Attitude and Heading Reference System (AHRS).

[0108] Figure 12 illustrates an embodiment of an injection training system 100 comprising an injection apparatus 105, a testing tool 110, and a resting cradle 1202 in which the testing tool 110 follows a sequence of motion (A through D) from the resting cradle 1202 to an injection site of the injection apparatus 105. In Figure 12, the injector's hand is not shown to better illustrate the motion of the testing tool 110. At position A, the testing tool 110 sits in the resting cradle 1202. The resting cradle 1202 is in a known, fixed position relative to the injection apparatus 105. This can serve to calibrate the injection training system 100 to know where the testing tool 110 is located relative to the injection apparatus 105 at the initiation of the injection training. In an embodiment, the resting cradle 1202 is attached to the base 108 of the injection apparatus 105. In an embodiment, the injection apparatus 105 has calibration points 1204 that can be used to establish an initial position of the testing tool 110 relative to the injection apparatus 105.

[0109] Starting from the known position relative to the injection apparatus 105, such as from the resting cradle 1202, the movement of the testing tool 110 can be determined, even as the needle tip 233 penetrates the material of the artificial face. By way of non-limiting illustration, the testing tool is lifted from the resting cradle 1202 to position B. The testing tool 110 is rotated to position C, where the needle tip 233 is directed toward the injection apparatus 105. At position D, the needle tip 233 of the testing tool 110 is inserted into the injection

apparatus 105. Position information corresponding to the testing tool 110, including the needle tip 233, can be conveyed to a digital model of the injection apparatus 105. The digital model includes target tissue (individual muscles) and details of vital structures (VS, which is also referred to as vital tissue, VT), such as, for example, arteries, veins, nerves, and skeletal portions, that are to be avoided or accommodated. By comparing the position of the needle tip 233, based on the determined position of the testing tool 110, to the target tissues and the vital structures illustrated on the user interface/display device 140, proximity to a desired injection target can be established. This proximity to target and to vital structures can serve as the basis for evaluating the skill of the injection trainee.

[0110] Various manufacturers offer for sale inertial measurement systems, devices, and methods, including sensor fusion processing components, for incorporation into products and systems. Such manufacturers include Xsens Technologies, B.V., of Enschede, the Netherlands; InvenSense, Inc. of Sunnyvale, California, USA; and Synopsys, Inc., of Mountain View, California, USA. Examples of systems, devices and/or methods for inertial measurement of objects in three-dimensional space are disclosed in U.S. Patent Numbers 7,725,279B2, issued on May 25, 2010; 8,165,844B2, issued on April 24, 2012; 8,203,487B2; issued on June 19, 2012; 8,250,921B2, issued on August 28, 2012; 8,351,773B2, issued on January 8, 2013; and in U.S. Patent Application Publication Numbers 2009/0278791A1, published on November 12, 2009; and 2009/0265671A1, published on October 22, 2009, each of which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

[0111] Computation of the position and orientation of an object in three-dimensional space is a task that can process inputs from several sensors to achieve accurate estimates of the position and orientation of the object. The method can be referred to generally as a fusion of sensor inputs. A sensor fusion process can reduce the impact of, and/or compensate for, inaccuracies of sensor measurements and/or processing approximations. Disclosed herein is a system and method to implement a fusion process that is computationally efficient and that includes nine dimensions of sensor input. In an embodiment, the system includes a processor that can be supplemented with hardware accelerators to help reduce power consumption. An example of a system, device and method to

compute the 3D orientation of an object by processing nine dimensions of data using a sensor fusion process is described in a paper entitled "Ultra Low-Power 9D Fusion Implementation: A Case Study," by Pieter Struik, which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

[0112] The disclosed system and method to fuse sensor information is one among many possible sensor fusion approaches. One skilled in the art will appreciate that there are numerous systems and methods for fusing sensor input to derive accurate position and orientation information of an object in three-dimensional space without departing from the spirit of the present disclosure. The disclosed system and method offers effective tracking performance while executing computations that are similar to those used by other sensor fusion processes. Performance optimization for this embodiment is based on an analysis of processing-intensive activities. One approach to optimization is to employ a fixed point processing implementation. Another approach to optimization can include the use of one or more hardware accelerators to execute certain computations efficiently. Such optimization approaches are directed at reducing the number of processing cycles required to determine accurate estimates of the position and orientation of an object in three-dimensional space.

[0113] Described herein is a system and method to calculate three-dimensional (3D) position and orientation of an object derived from inputs from three motion sensors attached to the object: an accelerometer configured to measure linear acceleration along three axes; a gyroscope configured to measure angular velocity around three axes; and a magnetometer configured to measure the strength of a magnetic field (such as the earth's magnetic field) along three axes. In an embodiment, the three motion sensors are attached to the testing tool 110. In an embodiment the three motion sensors are integrated into a single position sensor 308, as reflected in Figure 3A. In an embodiment, the sensors are sampled at a rate of 50 Hz; however, one skilled in the art will appreciate that the sensors can be sampled at different rates without deviating from the scope of the present disclosure. The sampled data from the three motion sensors, which provide nine sensor inputs, are processed to describe the testing tool's 110 position and orientation in three-dimensional space. The testing tool's position and orientation are described in terms of Euler angles as a set of rotations around a set of X-Y-Z axes of the testing tool 110.

[0114] Theoretically, the method to determine orientation angles around the three axes of the testing tool 110 is a straightforward process that includes mathematically integrating the three angular velocity measurements provided by the 3D gyroscope sensor. However, when implemented, sensor drift and/or processing approximations can lead to a steadily increasing set of errors that affect the accuracy of such determinations. A method to compensate for the inaccuracy of the processed angular velocity measurements includes processing accelerometer data and magnetometer (or compass) data, in a sensor fusion process. The disclosed system and method to fuse sensor input applies principles that are comparable in accuracy to systems and methods that employ techniques of linear quadratic estimation, such as Kalman filtering, which may also be used to fuse sensor input data in some embodiments.

[0115] The disclosed system and method to fuse sensor input uses quaternion algebra to determine a present position and orientation of the testing tool 110. In practical application, quaternions can be used in conjunction with other processing methods, such as Euler angles and rotation matrices, to calculate rotations of objects in three-dimensional space. Illustratively, a quaternion, where $Q = [q_0 \ q_1 \ q_2 \ q_3]$, can define a three-by-three rotation matrix "R" that translates each coordinate $\underline{x} = (x, y, z)$ of the initial testing tool's 110 orientation into its current position, $R\underline{x}$. A product (known as the Hamilton product in quaternion algebra, which is represented by the symbol " $\otimes$ ") of two quaternions, such as $Q_0 \otimes Q_1$, delivers another quaternion that describes a compound rotation performed by a first rotation, described by Q_0 , which is followed by a second rotation, described by Q_1 . Use of quaternion algebra can reduce computational processing requirements because most of the computations used to perform quaternion algebra do not employ computationally-intensive trigonometric functions.

[0116] Figure 13A illustrates a process flow diagram of a process 1300 to determine the position and orientation of a testing tool 110 according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system 100. One skilled in the art will appreciate that there are numerous ways by which the position and orientation of the testing tool 110 can be determined without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. At block 1302, the process begins by collecting

measured data from the 3D gyroscope, the 3D accelerometer, and the 3D magnetometer. The sampling rate can vary, depending on the components used to implement the process.

[0117] At block 1304, the present orientation of the testing tool 110 is represented by a quaternion "Q" which represents the currently measured angular acceleration data from the 3D gyroscope. This quaternion is an initial estimate of the position and orientation of the testing tool 110. The present orientation can be updated with information provided by the gyroscope sensor which may be represented as (gx, gy, gz). Additional rotation of the testing tool 110 that occurred since the most recent measurement can be represented by a quaternion $[1 \ (gx/f) \ (gy/f) \ (gz/f)]$, where f is defined as a sampling frequency used to execute the sensor fusion process. This representation may be expressed as quaternion $[C \ gx \ gy \ gz]$, with "C" being a constant that is proportional to the sampling frequency, f.

[0118] At block 1306, information provided by an accelerometer sensor is used to help compensate for accuracy errors in the angular velocity data provided by the gyroscope sensor. An acceleration vector (ax, ay, az), measured by the accelerometer, will equal the acceleration of gravity when the testing tool 110 is not in motion. When the testing tool 110 is in motion, its rotation can be characterized by rotation R, and the vector corresponding to gravity is directed towards the earth's center. When viewed relative to the motion of the sensors attached to the testing tool 110, the gravity vector will have been rotated by the same rotation R. Accordingly, the initial gravity vector $\underline{y}$ becomes $R\underline{y}$, relative to the testing tool 110, after rotation has taken place. If the testing tool 110 is not moving, the computed gravity vector, $R\underline{y}$, will be aligned with the measured accelerometer information (ax, ay, az). When $R\underline{y}$ and (ax, ay, az) are pointing in different directions, we determine that rotation R is inaccurate and, therefore, the coordinates representing the present orientation, Q, must be adjusted based on the vector cross product $R\underline{y} \times (ax, ay, az)$.

[0119] At block 1308, fusion with information sensed by the magnetometer can also be applied. It is assumed that the testing tool 110 is subject to the earth's magnetic field. It is also assumed that the testing tool 110 is not subject to interference from a separate magnetic field, such as, for example,

the field of a permanent magnet. Under these assumed conditions, the magnetic field measured by the 3D magnetometer (m_x , m_y , m_z) can be related to the initial orientation of the testing tool 110 by applying a reverse rotation R^* , where the vector $\underline{w} = R^*(m_x, m_y, m_z)$. It is also assumed that the earth's magnetic north is aligned in the direction of the X axis. Accordingly, an alignment error can be determined by comparing the vector $\underline{w}$ to a vector $\underline{w}'$, which is obtained by rotating the vector $\underline{w}$ onto the plane of the testing tool 110. An alignment error vector $\underline{c}$ can be calculated. The alignment error vector, $\underline{c}$, is proportional to the vector cross product $\underline{c} = \underline{w} \times \underline{w}'$. As $\underline{c}$ is related to the initial orientation of the testing tool 110, $R_{\underline{c}}$ corresponds to the adjustment that can be applied to the testing tool's 110 present position and orientation, represented by quaternion Q.

[0120] At block 1310, the adjusted quaternion Q is converted into three Euler angles. Euler angles are a way of representing the spatial orientation of a coordinate system as a composition of three elemental rotations, starting from a known, standard orientation. The relation between the quaternion Q and the converted Euler angles includes calculations that use inverse sine and inverse tangent functions. Illustratively, the rotation angle around the Y axis is determined with the following conversion equation: $Y = -\text{asin}(2*q_1*q_3 + 2*q_0*q_2)$, where the quaternion $Q = [q_0 \ q_1 \ q_2 \ q_3]$.

[0121] In an embodiment, the method 1300 to determine the position and orientation of a testing tool 110 updates the position and orientation of the testing tool 110 at the sampling rate of the sensors. Accordingly, at block 1312, the process 1300 determines whether the present injection training is continuing or whether it has ended. When the present injection training is continuing, the method 1300 returns to block 1302 to update the position and orientation information of the testing tool 110. When the present injection training is completed, the process 1300 terminates at block 1314.

[0122] Figures 13B, 13B1, and 13B2, collectively, illustrates a process flow diagram of a process 1340 to determine the position and orientation of a testing tool 110 according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system 100. Illustratively, process 1340 discloses one approach to implementing process 1300, described above. One skilled in the art will appreciate that there

are numerous ways by which process 1300 can be implemented without departing from the scope of the present disclosure.

[0123] At block 1350, the process begins by collecting measured data from the 3D gyroscope (providing angular momentum information), the 3D accelerometer (providing linear accelerations information), and the 3D magnetometer (providing magnetic field information). The present position and orientation of the testing tool 110 is represented by a quaternion, based on the measured angular acceleration data from the 3D gyroscope. Blocks 1352 through 1358 illustrate computation actions implemented to compensate for inaccuracies in the angular velocity data, provided by the 3D gyroscope, based on the linear acceleration information provided by the 3D accelerometer. This methodology uses the earth's gravitational field to identify inaccuracies in the measured angular momentum data and to compensate for those inaccuracies. At block 1352, the measured 3D accelerometer data is compared with a rotated initial gravity vector. At block 1354, the accelerator data is inverted and normalized. At block 1356, a vector cross product of the normalized accelerator data and the rotated gravity vector is computed. And at block 1358, a compensation for gyroscope data inaccuracies is made, using a constant acceleration compensation factor.

[0124] Blocks 1360 through 1368 illustrate actions implemented to compensate for inaccuracies in the angular velocity data, provided by the 3D gyroscope, based on the magnetic field information provided by the 3D magnetometer. This methodology uses the earth's magnetic field to identify inaccuracies in the measured angular momentum data and to compensate for those inaccuracies. At block 1360, the measured 3D magnetometer data is normalized and inverted. At block 1362, an inverse rotation of the normalized magnetometer data is computed. At block 1364, the computed rotation is aligned in orientation with the testing tool 110, based on earth's magnetic north. At block 1366, the computed rotation is rotated back to the original orientation, and an alignment error vector is computed by computing a cross product of rotation vector with the measured magnetometer data. At block 1370, a compensation for gyroscope data inaccuracies is made, using a constant magnetic compensation factor. At block 1370, the testing tool's position and orientation, represented in a quaternion, is updated based on the adjusted gyroscope data, and it is normalize

at block 1372. At block 1374, the updated position and orientation information of the testing tool 110 is converted into Euler angles which can be used by, for example, the user interface/display device 140 to graphically display the position of the testing tool 110. At block 1376, the process 1340 returns to block 1350, to begin another iteration when the injection training is continuing. Alternatively, the process terminates at block 1378 when the injection training is finished.

[0125] Advantageously, the disclosed method for determining the position and orientation of a testing tool 110 is robust, even when assumptions are not held. For example, when the testing tool 110 is moving, the measured accelerometer data (a_x , a_y , a_z) represents a non-zero linear acceleration relative to gravity; however the sensor fusion processing method nevertheless delivers accurate position data. Moreover, fusion of magnetometer data proves to be accurate in the presence of distortion in the gravitational magnetic field.

[0126] In an embodiment, the disclosed method can be implemented in a system of integrated hardware and software (or firmware) that can be optimized to process data from digital and analog sensors and to engage in power-efficient processing of the sensor data. The system can include a processor (such as the ARC EM4 32-bit processor core offered by Synopsys Inc.), a user-configurable set of serial digital interfaces, analog-to-digital converter interfaces, hardware accelerators, and a software library of digital signal processor (DSP) functions and input/output (I/O) software drivers. The system can take advantage of capabilities to implement tightly coupled I/O peripherals and tightly coupled hardware accelerators, which may be accessed directly from the processor pipeline without the overhead of additional hardware infrastructure, such as, for example, busses, bridges, and/or adapters.

[0127] In an embodiment, the system configuration contains one or more Inter-Integrated Circuit (I2C) master peripheral ports, a Serial Peripheral Interface (SPI) master peripheral port, and a general purpose input/output (GPIO) port. The processor can be configured to have a single-cycle 32-bit integer multiplier. The system can be configured to include one or more fixed-point hardware accelerators to perform computationally-intensive operations, such as, for example, multiply-accumulate (MAC) operations, trigonometric operations, and the square root operation. Illustratively, use of hardware accelerators can

reduce processor cycle time with respect to computationally-intensive operations such as the square root operation. A hardware accelerator accepts a 32-bit fixed point number as input and computes the square root in 31 cycles, evaluating one bit at a time which is substantially faster than calculating a square root by use of software delivered as part of a compiler's standard library.

[0128] Many of the required computations used in the disclosed method are computationally-intensive when implemented using standard software routines. For example, rotation and inverse rotation operations are matrix-vector multiplications where the (inverse) rotation matrix has coefficients that are based on the quaternion Q . Illustratively, inverse rotation operations involve many multiplications and additions. Similarly computing the inverse norm of a vector or a quaternion requires the following operations: multiplication, addition, square root, and division. Likewise, computing a vector cross product requires multiplication operations and addition operations. Computing the Hamilton product of two quaternions takes many multiplications and additions. Computing Euler angles involves trigonometric functions (atan2 and asin), where the arguments are expressions that are based on quaternion Q . These expressions include multiplication operations and addition operations. Use of one or more hardware accelerators to implement such operations can reduce overall processing time and power consumption.

[0129] To further improve performance and to reduce power consumption the disclosed system, device and method can be configured to be implemented using fixed point arithmetic as opposed to using floating point arithmetic. Conversion of numerical processing using floating point arithmetic to fixed point arithmetic requires care with respect to overflow and underflow in computations. However, after such conversion is performed successfully, the processing workload can be reduced by replacing floating point multiplication operations with single-cycle, 32-bit multiplications, and floating point addition operations with simple, 32-bit additions (or subtractions). Evaluation of the resulting fixed-point version of the disclosed method shows that the square root function, which is executed four times in each cycle of the disclosed method, consumes many processing cycles. Using a standard square root function call, which is typically included in a library of digital signal processing (DSP) functions, to apply the square root hardware accelerator can further reduce processing

cycle count. Another optimization can be to reduce the cycle count of the Euler angles computation by applying a hardware accelerator for the inverse sine function. Because the inverse tangent function can be expressed in terms of the inverse sine and square root operations, using the hardware accelerators for these computations reduces computational workload, power consumption, and processing time per iteration. Thus the processing cycle count of the disclosed nine-dimensional sensor fusion method can be reduced by implementing a fixed point version of the process that takes advantage of available hardware accelerators. Reduction of cycle count leads to lower energy, as the energy that is used for executing the algorithm is proportional to the required performance.

[0130] In an embodiment, position sensors 308 are used in both the barrel 220 of the testing tool 110 and in the plunger 210 of the testing tool 110 to determine the position of the plunger 210 relative to the barrel 220 of the testing tool 110. This information can be used to indicate distal travel movement of the plunger 210 in the testing tool 110 during simulated injection. The distal travel movement can represent a volume of fluid that would be injected, and therefore the distal travel movement can be used to determine a measure of the injection trainee's performance.

[0131] An embodiment of the disclosed system, device and method to determine the position and orientation of the testing tool 110, relative to the injection apparatus 105, during injection training includes the use of one or more retro-reflectors attached to the testing tool 110 in association with an optical tracking system. A retro-reflector (sometimes called a retroreflector or cataphote) is a device or surface that reflects light back to its source with a minimum of scattering. In a retro-reflector, an electromagnetic wave front is reflected back along a vector that is parallel to, but opposite in direction from, the wave's source. The angle of incidence at which the device or surface reflects light in this way is greater than zero, unlike a planar mirror, which reflects an electromagnetic wave (such as light) only if the mirror is exactly perpendicular to the wave front, having a zero angle of incidence. The retro-reflectors are locatable by an optical tracking system that can operate in, for example, the infrared (IR) range. The retro-reflectors can be positioned on the external surface of the testing tool 110 for use with optical tracking systems that operate by use of infrared illumination. This type of optical tracking allows for the triangulation of energy reflected from the

retro-reflectors to determine the testing tool's 110 position in three-dimensional space. In an embodiment, alignment of the needle tip 233 with the injection apparatus 105 can be accomplished by touching the needle tip 233 to a known location on the injection apparatus 105, such as calibration points 1204.

[0132] Figures 14A and 14B are perspective views of an exemplary optical tracking system 1400. Optical tracking is a 3D localization technology that monitors a defined measurement space using two or more light sensors 1402, such as, by way of non-limiting example, cameras. In an embodiment, each light sensor 1402 is equipped with an infrared (IR) pass filter (not shown) in front of the lens, and a ring of IR light emitting diodes (not shown) around the lens to periodically illuminate the measurement space of the optical tracking system 1400 with IR light, as illustrated in Figure 14A. Reflections from markers 1404 on the testing tool 110 are sensed by the light sensors 1402, and the sensed information is processed by the optical tracking system 1400 to determine the position and orientation of the testing tool 110 in three-dimensional space. Examples of optical tracking systems 1400 are described in a paper entitled "PST iris: Instruction Manual," published by Personal Space Technologies B.V, and in International Patent Application Number PCT/NL2009/050607, having International Publication Number WO 2011/043645A1, published on April 14, 2011, which are incorporated by reference herein in their entirety.

[0133] Computer stereo vision is the extraction of 3D information from digital images, such as obtained by a charge-coupled device camera. By comparing information about a scene from two vantage points, 3D information can be extracted by examination of the relative positions of objects in the two panels. In traditional stereo vision, two cameras, displaced horizontally from one another are used to obtain two differing views on a scene, in a manner similar to human binocular vision. By comparing these two images, the relative depth information can be obtained, in the form of disparities, which are inversely proportional to the differences in distance to the objects. To compare the images, the two views are superimposed in a stereoscopic device. In camera systems, several pre-processing steps are required. The image is removed of distortions, such as barrel distortion to ensure that the observed image is a pure projection. The image is projected back to a common plane to allow comparison of the image pairs, known as image rectification. An information measure which

compares the two images is minimized. This gives the best estimate of the position of features in the two images, and creates a disparity map. Optionally, the disparity as observed by the common projection, is converted back to a height map by inversion. Using a correct proportionality constant, the height map can be calibrated to provide precise distances. Active stereo vision is a form of stereo vision which actively employs a light, such as an infrared light source, to simplify the stereo matching problem. An examples of a stereo vision system and processing method is disclosed in U.S. Patent Number 8,208,716B2, issued on June 26, 2012, which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

[0134] Objects to be tracked, such as the testing tool 110, can be equipped with retro-reflective markers 1404 that reflect the incoming IR light back to the light sensors 1402. The IR reflections are detected by the light sensors 1402 and then internally processed by the optical tracking system 1400. The optical tracking system 1400 calculates the 2D marker position, in image coordinates, with high precision. Using at least two light sensors 1402, the 3D position of each marker 1404 can be derived, as described above. The 3D position can be measured by using a single marker 1404 in the measurement space; however, to be able to also measure the orientation of an object (or to track multiple objects simultaneously), multiple markers 1404 must be placed on each object. Such a configuration can be created by affixing markers 1404 randomly onto the object, making sure at least two markers 1404 can be seen from each angle of the object that the user desires to be detected. By establishing a model of the configuration of each object, the optical tracking system 1400 can distinguish between objects and can determine the 3D position and orientation of each object.

[0135] Optical tracking systems 1400 offer some advantages over other approaches to measure and determine the 3D position and orientation of an object in three-dimensional space. For example, optical tracking is less susceptible to noise from the environment, such as, for instance, ferromagnetic metal in the environment which can influence the accuracy of the measurements of magnetic tracking systems. Additionally, optical tracking does not suffer from drift problems experienced in, for instance, inertial sensors, which cause measurements to slowly deviate from actual values, for which compensation techniques must be applied. Optical tracking also allows for many objects to be

tracked simultaneously. Optically tracked devices can be lightweight and they do not require wires or power. As such, users are neither hampered by wires nor limited in their manipulation of the object.

[0136] Figure 14C illustrates a testing tool 110 configured with multiple markers 1404, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure. In an embodiment, an optical tracking system 1400 measures the 3D positions of markers 1404, such as, for example, retro-reflectors, affixed to the testing tool 110. The markers 1404 can be active or passive. Using this information, the optical tracking system 1400 can determine the position and orientation of the marked testing tool 110 within a specific field of view defined by the optical tracking system. The optical tracking system 1400 can be a self-contained, integrated system that does not require external processing or calibration components. The optical tracking system 1400 can be connected to the user interface/display device 140 via a wired or by a wireless communication scheme. The optical tracking system 1400 can deliver 3D position and orientation measurement of the testing tool 110 to the interface unit/display device 140. Advantageously, the disclosed optical tracking system 1400 delivers fully-processed position and orientation data to the user interface/display device 140, thereby freeing up the processing capability of the user interface/display device 140 for other computationally-intensive activities, such as, for example, processing and rendering of a digital model representative of the injection apparatus 105 and the testing tool 110 during injection training.

[0137] Figure 14D illustrates, among other things, aspects of the user interface/display device 140 according to an embodiment of the disclosed injection training system 100. Shown in magnified perspective are examples of how the user interface/display device 140 can graphically display, either during the injection training or afterwards, the location of the needle tip 233 as it penetrates the injection apparatus 105. The user interface/display device 140 illustrates portions of the anatomy in the vicinity of the injection site. In particular, vital tissue (VT), and muscle are represented digitally on the user interface/display device 140. Advantageously, the user can view a target site, a proximity to the target site, and nearby vital tissues or structures. In some embodiments, visual and/or aural signals are delivered to the trainee as indications of the needle tip's 233 proximity to the target site. During an injection,

for example, the display can graphically illustrate the different skin and tissue layers as the needle tip 233 penetrates each layer. For example, this can be done by graphically peeling back the layers as a new layer is penetrated. For training purposes, the different layers can be labeled or provided with different textures or colors to indicate a new layer is shown.

[0138] In an embodiment, a single optical tracking system 1400 can track the testing tool 110 in an injection training environment, as illustrated in Figure 15A. In an embodiment, multiple optical tracking systems 1400 can be coupled together to extend the workspace environment or to reduce issues due to the line-of-sight requirement of the optical tracking system 1400, as illustrated in Figure 15B. In an embodiment, the optical tracking system 1400 can be configured with different optics configurations to adapt the field of view and the performance characteristics of the optical tracking system 1400 to the intended environment and application. Illustratively, optics with a higher field of view result in a wider tracking area closer to the system, whereas optics with a lower field of view provide a narrower, but longer, tracking area.

[0139] The optical tracking system 1400 can use tangible, wireless devices for 3D interaction and 3D measurement, such as the testing tool 110. In an embodiment, the position and orientation (sometimes referred to as the “pose”) of the testing tool 110 can be reconstructed with millimeter accuracy. Advantageously, the optical tracking system 1400 can be based on infrared lighting, which can reduce the interference of visible light sources from the environment. This allows the optical tracking system 1400 to be used under normal, ambient working conditions without requiring controlled lighting. The testing tool 110, and the injection apparatus 105, can be tracked by applying retro-reflective markers 1404 to their external surfaces. The optical tracking system 1400 employs these markers to recognize different objects and to reconstruct their poses. In an embodiment, and by way of non-limiting illustration, the optical tracking system 1400 reconstructs the pose of the testing tool 110, and optionally, of the injection apparatus 105, at an adjustable sampling frequency with a maximum of 120 times per second. One skilled in the art will appreciate that other sampling frequencies can be used without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. The optical tracking system 1400 can be triggered externally, such that it can be synchronized to external clock sources.

This can, for instance, be used to prevent interference between the internal infrared flash and shutter glasses that are synchronized to a 3D monitor, such as the user interface/display device 140, using an infrared signal.

[0140] In an embodiment, tracking devices comprise physical objects, such as the testing tool 110 and the injection apparatus 105, that can be recognized by the optical tracking system 1400 and of which the 3D position and orientation can be measured. In an embodiment, such devices can be used to measure the spatial coordinates of objects, or for instance, to interact with virtual 3D objects in an application. Illustratively, just as a mouse can be used to position a pointer in two-dimensional space, so too can a tracking device be used to position an object in three-dimensional space, with six degrees of freedom. The 3D position and orientation (pose) of a tracking device, such as the testing tool 110, is optically tracked, ensuring wireless operation. Retro-reflective markers 1404 can be applied to objects, such as the testing tool 110 and the injection apparatus 105, to transform them into tracking devices. The tracking system uses these markers 1404 to recognize devices and to reconstruct each pose. In order for the optical tracking system 1400 to be able to determine the position and orientation of a tracking device, at least four markers 1404 need to be applied. The size of the markers 1404 helps to determine the optimal tracking distance. The optical tracking system 1400 supports flat retro-reflective markers 1404 for the construction of tracking devices. Such flat retro-reflective markers 1402 do not hamper manipulation.

[0141] In an embodiment, the markers 1404 are locatable by tracking systems, devices, and methods that can operate in the radio frequency (RF) range. The markers 1404 can be positioned on the interior of the testing tool 110 for tracking systems 1400 that operate through use of RF illumination, such as the technology known as radio-frequency identification (RFID). Advantageously, the RF energy is able to be transmitted through the tissue of the injector's hand, arm and other portions of the injector's body that may obstruct the required line-of-site view between an optical tracking system 1400 and the testing tool 110 during injection training, when implemented using optical tracking systems 1400 based on infrared illumination.

[0142] In an embodiment, the reflective markers 1404 comprise corner reflectors. Corner reflectors can operate in a wide range of electromagnetic frequencies including the infrared and the radio spectrums. A corner reflector is a retro-reflector comprising three mutually perpendicular, intersecting flat surfaces. The corner reflector reflects waves back directly towards the source, but shifted (translated). The three intersecting surfaces often have square shapes. Optical corner reflectors, called corner cubes, made of three-sided glass prisms, are used in surveying and laser range-finding. The incoming ray is reflected three times, once by each surface, which results in a reversal of direction. The three corresponding normal vectors of the corner's perpendicular sides can be considered to form a basis (a rectangular coordinate system) (x, y, z) in which to represent the direction of an arbitrary incoming ray, $[a, b, c]$. When the ray reflects from the first side, say x , the ray's x component, a , is reversed to $-a$ while the y and z components are unchanged, resulting in a direction of $[-a, b, c]$. Similarly, when reflected from side y and finally from side z , the b and c components are reversed. So the ray direction goes from $[a, b, c]$ to $[-a, b, c]$ to $[-a, -b, c]$ to $[-a, -b, -c]$ and it leaves the corner reflector with all three components of direction exactly reversed. The distance traveled, relative to a plane normal to the direction of the rays, is also equal for any ray entering the reflector, regardless of the location where it first reflects.

[0143] In an embodiment, the optical tracking system 1400 views the testing tool 110 and the needle tip 233 as it approaches and penetrates the injection apparatus 105. The optical tracking system 1400 can operate in the visual and infrared spectrums. For optical tracking systems 1400 using the infrared spectrum, an improvement in resolution and differentiation is available by altering the temperature of the testing tool 110 and/or the needle tip 233 to be different (hotter or colder) than ambient temperature. Infrared thermography (IRT), thermal imaging, and thermal video are examples of infrared imaging science. Thermographic cameras detect radiation in the infrared range of the electromagnetic spectrum (roughly 9,000–14,000 nanometers or 9–14 μm) and produce images of that radiation, called thermograms. Since infrared radiation is emitted by all objects above absolute zero according to the black body radiation law, thermography makes it possible to see one's environment with or without visible illumination. The amount of radiation emitted by an object increases with

temperature; therefore, thermography allows one to see variations in temperature. When viewed through a thermal imaging camera, warm objects stand out well against cooler backgrounds.

[0144] The testing tool 110 and needle tip 233 can be clearly resolved against the ambient temperature background when using thermal imaging. In an embodiment, the 3D sensor(s) 502 from the interior of the injection apparatus 105 can be configured to sense both light emitting from the testing tool 110 and thermal energy emitted from the testing tool 110 and/or needle tip 233 by use of infrared, or other forms of thermal imaging. Multiple methods for achieving temperature variation of the testing tool 110 relative to ambient temperature can be used, including, without limitation, resistive heating on the testing tool 110 interior with conductive heat transfer to the hollow needle 232, and routing gas of a controlled temperature through a tube into the testing tool 110 interior and exhausting the gas through the needle tip 233. In an embodiment, thermal imaging is available by including temperature markers on the injection apparatus 105 to be viewable by a the optical tracking system 1400, which can support accurate resolution of the testing tool's 110 position relative to the injection apparatus 105. In an embodiment, the depth of penetration of the needle tip 233 into the injection apparatus 105 can be determined by measuring the length of the needle 232 remaining exterior to the injection apparatus 105, thereby exposed to the view of the optical tracking system 1400. By knowing the orientation and position of the testing tool 110 relative to the injection apparatus 105, along with the measured length of the needle 232 remaining exterior to the injection apparatus 105, the depth of penetration of the needle tip 233 in the injection apparatus 105 may be determined.

[0145] In an embodiment, position information provided by the 3D sensor(s) 502 and the optical tracking system 1400 can be combined to determine the position and orientation of the testing tool 110 and the needle tip 233 relative to the injection apparatus 105 during injection training. Combination of position data corresponding to the light emitting needle tip 233 as the needle tip 233 passes through the opaque layer of artificial skin, as sensed by the 3D sensor(s) 502 from the interior of the injection apparatus 105, with the length of the needle 232 remaining exterior to the injection apparatus 105, as sensed by the optical tracking system 1400, can be combined to determine the position and

orientation of the testing tool 110 and the needle tip 233 relative to the injection apparatus 105.

[0146] An injection training system has been disclosed in detail in connection with various embodiments. These embodiments are disclosed by way of examples only and are not to limit the scope of the claims that follow. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate from the disclosure herein any variations and modifications.

TERMINOLOGY / ADDITIONAL EMBODIMENTS

[0147] The term “injection” as used herein includes its usual and customary meaning of an injection, but is also to be interpreted broad enough to encompass, for example, the insertion of a catheter device or the use of simple needles, such as would be used in an acupuncture therapy. The techniques involved, particularly a camera embedded in a model of a living subject and a tool with a light emitter can be applied to any therapeutic procedure. For example, the tool can be a catheter and the procedure can be a minimally invasive procedure requiring the catheter to be located in a particular location.

[0148] Conditional language used herein, such as, among others, “can,” “could,” “might,” “may,” “e.g.,” and the like, unless specifically stated otherwise, or otherwise understood within the context as used, is generally intended to convey that certain embodiments include, while other embodiments do not include, certain features, elements and/or states. Thus, such conditional language is not generally intended to imply that features, elements and/or states are in any way required for one or more embodiments or that one or more embodiments necessarily include logic for deciding, with or without author input or prompting, whether these features, elements and/or states are included or are to be performed in any particular embodiment.

[0149] Depending on the embodiment, certain acts, events, or functions of any of the methods described herein can be performed in a different sequence, can be added, merged, or left out altogether (e.g., not all described acts or events are necessary for the practice of the method). Moreover, in certain embodiments, acts or events can be performed concurrently, e.g., through multi-threaded processing, interrupt processing, or multiple processors or processor cores, rather than sequentially.

[0150] The various illustrative logical blocks, modules, circuits, and algorithm steps described in connection with the embodiments disclosed herein can be implemented as electronic hardware, computer software, or combinations of both. To clearly illustrate this interchangeability of hardware and software, various illustrative components, blocks, modules, circuits, and steps have been described above generally in terms of their functionality. Whether such functionality is implemented as hardware or software depends upon the particular application and design constraints imposed on the overall system. The described functionality can be implemented in varying ways for each particular application, but such embodiment decisions should not be interpreted as causing a departure from the scope of the disclosure.

[0151] The various illustrative logical blocks, modules, and circuits described in connection with the embodiments disclosed herein can be implemented or performed with a general purpose processor, a digital signal processor (DSP), an application specific integrated circuit (ASIC), a field programmable gate array (FPGA) or other programmable logic device, discrete gate or transistor logic, discrete hardware components, or any combination thereof designed to perform the functions described herein. A general purpose processor can be a microprocessor, but in the alternative, the processor can be any conventional processor, controller, microcontroller, or state machine. A processor can also be implemented as a combination of computing devices, e.g., a combination of a DSP and a microprocessor, a plurality of microprocessors, one or more microprocessors in conjunction with a DSP core, or any other such configuration.

[0152] The blocks of the methods and algorithms described in connection with the embodiments disclosed herein can be embodied directly in hardware, in a software module executed by a processor, or in a combination of the two. A software module can reside in RAM memory, flash memory, ROM memory, EPROM memory, EEPROM memory, registers, a hard disk, a removable disk, a CD-ROM, or any other form of computer-readable storage medium known in the art. An exemplary storage medium is coupled to a processor such that the processor can read information from, and write information to, the storage medium. In the alternative, the storage medium can be

integral to the processor. The processor and the storage medium can reside in an ASIC. The ASIC can reside in a user terminal. In the alternative, the processor and the storage medium can reside as discrete components in a user terminal.

[0153] While the above detailed description has shown, described, and pointed out novel features as applied to various embodiments, it will be understood that various omissions, substitutions, and changes in the form and details of the devices or algorithms illustrated can be made without departing from the spirit of the disclosure. As will be recognized, certain embodiments of the disclosures described herein can be embodied within a form that does not provide all of the features and benefits set forth herein, as some features can be used or practiced separately from others. The scope of certain disclosures disclosed herein is indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

CLAIMSWHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An injection training system comprising:
a testing tool having a needle and a position sensor, the position sensor configured to obtain position information of the testing tool;
an injection apparatus configured to receive a simulated injection by the testing tool; and
a display device configured to receive the position information and to display position data reflective of the position information, wherein the display device comprises a processor and a memory device.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein the position sensor is further configured to obtain multiple measurements of position information of the testing tool over time.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the position sensor comprises an inertial measurement unit.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein the position sensor includes a first sensor configured to measure angular velocity information, a second sensor configured to measure linear acceleration information, and a third sensor configured to measure magnetic field information.
5. The system of claim 4, wherein the first sensor measures angular velocity information in three dimensions, the second sensor measures linear acceleration information in three dimensions, and the third sensor measures magnetic field information in three dimensions.
6. The system of claim 4, wherein the first sensor comprises a gyroscope, the second sensor comprises an accelerometer, and the third sensor comprises a magnetometer.
7. The system of claim 5, wherein the processor is further configured to process the measured nine dimensions of information to determine an estimate of position of the testing tool in 3D space.
8. The system of claim 1, wherein the processor further comprises a sensor fusion processing component configured to process the position information of the testing tool to compute a 3D estimate of a position and orientation of the testing tool.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the position sensor is further configured to communicate the position information of the testing tool to the display device.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the position sensor is further configured to process the position information to determine an estimate of the position of the testing tool and to communicate the estimate of the position of the testing tool to the display device.

11. The system of claim 5, wherein the position sensor is further configured to process the measured nine dimensions of information to determine an estimate of position of the testing tool and to communicate the estimate to the display device.

12. The system of claim 1 further comprising a resting cradle positioned adjacent to the injection apparatus.

13. The system of claim 1, further comprising a signal processing and display interface coupled to the testing tool and to the display device.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the signal processing and display interface is wirelessly coupled to the testing tool and to the display device.

15. The system of claim 1, wherein the processor is configured to determine a location of the needle with respect to an injection site on the injection apparatus and to display the location on the display device.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the displayed location of the needle is an animated depiction of the needle passing through the injection site.

17. The system of claim 16, where the animated depiction is a stored video recording of the needle passing through the injection site.

18. The system of claim 16, wherein the animated depiction is generated based on a stored plurality of locations for the needle.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the animated depiction is further generated based on a display point of view that identifies a virtual location in space from which to view the animated depiction.

20. The system of claim 1, wherein the position data comprises an image representative of the injection apparatus and the display device is configured to display injection measurement data comprising one or more of a location of the simulated injection, a depth of the simulated injection, an angle of the simulated injection, or a pressure of the simulated injection.

21. The system of claim 1, wherein the processor is configured to determine an accuracy of the simulated injection.

22. The system of claim 1, wherein the position sensor comprises a processor.

23. The system of claim 1, wherein the position sensor comprises a data transmission component.

24. The system of claim 1, wherein the testing tool further comprises a plunger, the plunger having a second position sensor configured to obtain position information of the plunger.

25. A method of tracking the position of a testing tool used in an injection training system, the method comprising:

obtaining, through electrical communications, position information of the testing tool from one or more sensors included on the testing tool;

determining, using a hardware processor, an estimate of the position of the testing tool;

transmitting, through electrical communications, to a display device, data reflective of the estimate of the position of the testing tool; and

displaying, on the display device, the data reflective of the estimate of the position of the testing tool.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein obtaining position information from one or more sensors further comprises obtaining angular velocity information, obtaining linear acceleration information, and obtaining magnetic field information.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the angular velocity information is obtained in three dimensions, the linear acceleration information is obtained in three dimensions, and the magnetic field information is obtained in three dimensions.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein determining an estimate of the position of the testing tool further comprises:

representing the angular velocity information as a first estimate of the position of the testing tool; and

adjusting the first estimate, based on the linear acceleration information and the magnetic field information, to represent an adjusted estimate of the position of the testing tool.

29. The method of claim 28, further comprising:
converting the adjusted representation of the position of the testing tool to position data capable of being displayed on a display device.
30. The method of claim 25, further comprising placing the testing tool in a resting cradle to establish a known position and orientation of the testing tool.
31. The method of claim 25, further comprising placing a needle of the testing tool in a calibration point to establish a known position and orientation of the testing tool.
32. A method of tracking the position of a plunger of a testing tool used in an injection training system, the method comprising:
Obtaining, through electronic communications, position information of the plunger from one or more sensors on a testing tool;
determining an estimate of the position of the plunger;
transmitting, to a display device, data reflective of the estimate of the position of the plunger; and
displaying, on the display device, the data reflective of the estimate of the position of the plunger.
33. The method of claim 32, wherein obtaining position information from one or more sensors further comprises obtaining angular velocity information, obtaining linear acceleration information, and obtaining magnetic field information.
34. The method of claim 32, wherein the angular velocity information is obtained in three dimensions, the linear acceleration information is obtained in three dimensions, and the magnetic field information is obtained in three dimensions.
35. The method of claim 32, wherein determining an estimate of the position of the plunger further comprises:
representing the angular velocity information as a first estimate of the position of the plunger; and
adjusting the first estimate, based the linear acceleration information and the magnetic field information, to represent an adjusted estimate of the position of the plunger.
36. The method of claim 35, further comprising:

converting the adjusted representation of the position of the plunger to position data capable of being displayed on a display device.

37. The method of claim 32, further comprising placing the testing tool in a resting cradle to establish a known position and orientation of the testing tool.

38. The method of claim 32, further comprising placing a needle of the testing tool in a calibration point to establish a known position and orientation of the testing tool.

39. An injection training system comprising:

a testing tool having a needle, a plunger, and a marker configured to reflect electromagnetic waves;

an injection apparatus configured to receive a simulated injection by the testing tool, the injection apparatus having a marker configured to reflect electromagnetic waves;

an optical tracking system having a field of view, the optical tracking system positioned such that the injection apparatus is in the field of view, and the optical tracking system is configured to obtain position information of the testing tool, and injection apparatus; and

a display device, configured to receive the position information and to display position data reflective of the position information, wherein the display device comprises a processor and a memory device.

40. The system of claim 39, wherein the optical tracking system is further configured to track multiple positions of the testing tool and the injection apparatus over time.

41. The system of claim 39, wherein the optical tracking system comprises a computer stereo vision to extract 3D information from digital images.

42. The system of claim 39, wherein the optical tracking system comprises at least two light sensors displaced horizontally from one another.

43. The system of claim 39, wherein the optical tracking system comprises a stereoscopic pair of cameras.

44. The system of claim 43, wherein the cameras comprise charge-coupled device cameras.

45. The system of claim 39, further comprising a plurality of optical tracking systems.

46. The system of claim 39, wherein the optical tracking system further comprises:

a light sensor;

an IR light source, positioned around the light sensor, configured to emit IR light;

an IR filter positioned in front of the light sensor configured to cause the light sensor to detect IR light emitted from the IR light source; and

a processor configured to periodically pulse on and off the IR light source, the processor also configured to process IR light, reflected from the markers and sensed by the light sensor, to determine a 3D position of the testing tool and the injection apparatus.

47. The system of claim 46, wherein the light sensor is a camera.

48. The system of claim 46, wherein the markers comprise retro-reflective markers configured to reflect IR light back to the IR light source.

49. The system of claim 39, wherein a plurality of markers are affixed to exterior surfaces of the testing tool, the plunger, the needle, and the injection apparatus.

50. The system of claim 49, wherein the optical tracking system is configured to obtain position and orientation information of the testing tool, the plunger, the needle, and the injection apparatus.

51. The system of claim 39, wherein the markers comprise corner reflectors configured to reflect IR light back to near the source from which the IR light was emitted.

52. The system of claim 39, wherein the optical tracking system further comprises:

an RF sensor;

an RF emitter, positioned proximate to the RF sensor, configured to emit an RF signal; and

a processor configured to periodically pulse on and off the RF emitter, the processor also configured to process RF signals reflected from the markers and sensed by the RF sensor, to determine a 3D position of the testing tool and the injection apparatus.

53. The system of claim 52, wherein the RF sensor and the RF emitter comprise an RF transceiver.

54. The system of claim 52, wherein a plurality of markers are affixed to the testing tool, the plunger, the needle, and the injection apparatus.

55. The system of claim 54, wherein the optical tracking system is configured to obtain position and orientation information of the testing tool, the plunger, the needle, and the injection apparatus.

56. The system of claim 39, further comprising a signal processing and display interface coupled to the optical tracking system and to the display device.

57. The system of claim 39, further comprising a signal processing and display interface configured to communicate wirelessly with the optical tracking system and the display device.

58. The system of claim 39, wherein the optical tracking system is configured to determine a location of the needle with respect to an injection site on the injection apparatus and to display the location on the display device.

59. The system of claim 58, wherein the displayed location of the needle is an animated depiction of the needle passing through the injection site.

60. The system of claim 59, where the animated depiction is a stored video recording of the needle passing through the injection site.

61. The system of claim 59, wherein the animated depiction is generated based on a stored plurality of locations for the needle.

62. The system of claim 61, wherein the animated depiction is further generated based on a display point of view that identifies a virtual location in space from which to view the animated depiction.

63. The system of claim 39, wherein the position data comprises an image representative of the injection apparatus and the display device is configured to display injection measurement data comprising one or more of a location of the simulated injection, a depth of the simulated injection, an angle of the simulated injection, or a pressure of the simulated injection.

64. A method of tracking the position of a testing tool used in an injection training system, the method comprising:

affixing to the testing tool a marker configured to reflect electromagnetic waves;

emitting periodically, by an optical tracking system, electromagnetic waves directed at the testing tool;

detecting, by the optical tracking system, electromagnetic waves reflected from the marker;

generating, by the optical tracking system, 3D position information of the testing tool, based on the detected reflected electromagnetic waves;

transmitting, from the optical tracking system to a display device, data reflective of the position information of the testing tool; and

displaying, on the display device, the data reflective of the position of the testing tool.

65. The method of claim 64, wherein affixing to the testing tool a marker configured to reflect electromagnetic waves further comprises affixing the marker to an exterior surface of the testing tool.

66. The method of claim 64, wherein affixing to the testing tool a marker configured to reflect electromagnetic waves further comprises affixing a plurality of markers to an exterior surface of the testing tool.

67. The method of claim 64, further comprising affixing a marker to a plunger of the testing tool and to a needle of the testing tool.

68. The method of claim 64, further comprising affixing a plurality of markers to the testing tool, a plurality of markers to a plunger of the testing tool, and a plurality of markers to the needle of the testing tool.

69. The method of claim 64, wherein emitting periodically, by an optical tracking system, electromagnetic waves directed at the testing tool further comprises emitting the electromagnetic waves at a frequency ranging between 60 times per second and 120 times per second.

70. The method of claim 64, wherein generating, by the optical tracking system, 3D position information of the testing tool, based on the detected reflected electromagnetic waves further comprises:

obtaining at least two images of the testing tool, from different positions;

removing distortions from the images;

projecting the images to a common plane;

comparing the images to obtain relative depth information; and

determining, from the relative depth information, the 3D position information.

71. The method of claim 64, wherein emitting periodically, by an optical tracking system, electromagnetic waves directed at the testing tool further comprises emitting IR electromagnetic waves.

72. The method of claim 64, wherein emitting periodically, by an optical tracking system, electromagnetic waves directed at the testing tool further comprises emitting RF electromagnetic waves.

73. The method of claim 72, wherein the marker is configured to reflect emitted RF electromagnetic waves.

74. The method of claim 68, further comprising:

detecting, by the optical tracking system, electromagnetic waves reflected from the markers;

generating, by the optical tracking system, 3D position information of the plunger and the needle, based on the detected reflected electromagnetic waves;

transmitting, from the optical tracking system to a display device, data reflective of the position information of the plunger and the needle; and

displaying, on the display device, the data reflective of the position of the plunger and the needle.

75. The method of claim 64, further comprising:

affixing to an injection apparatus a marker configured to reflect electromagnetic waves;

generating, by the optical tracking system, 3D position information of the injection apparatus, based on the detected reflected electromagnetic waves;

transmitting, from the optical tracking system to a display device, data reflective of the position information of the injection apparatus; and

displaying, on the display device, the data reflective of the position of the injection apparatus.

76. An anatomically shaped injection training apparatus comprising:

an at least partially hollow base configured to provide structural support;

a clear layer of elastomer coating at least partially covering the base;

an opaque layer at least partially covering the clear layer, wherein the base, clear layer, and opaque layer form an anatomical shape; and

a three-dimensional (3D) tracking system positioned inside the base and configured to determine a location of a needle inserted into the clear layer of elastomer.

77. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein a light is emitted from a tip of the needle.

78. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the 3D tracking system is further configured to track multiple locations of the needle overtime.

79. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the 3D tracking system comprises a camera.

80. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the 3D tracking system comprises a stereoscopic pair of cameras.

81. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the 3D tracking system comprises an array of light sensors.

82. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the 3D tracking system is configured to determine the location of the needle based on a measurement of one or more characteristics of an emission from the needle.

83. The apparatus of claim 82, wherein the emission is light, and wherein the characteristics include intensity, angle, dispersion, brightness, color, and duration of the light.

84. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the location of the needle with respect to an injection site on the apparatus is transmitted for display via an electronic display.

85. The apparatus of claim 84, wherein the electronic display is configured to display the indication of the detected light from the light detector.

86. The apparatus of claim 85, wherein the indication of the detected light is an image.

87. The apparatus of claim 85, wherein the indication of the detected light is an animated depiction of the needle passing through the injection site.

88. The apparatus of claim 87, wherein the animated depiction is a stored video of the needle passing through the injection site.

89. The apparatus of claim 87, wherein the animated depiction is generated based on a stored plurality of locations for the needle.

90. The apparatus of claim 89, wherein the animated depiction is further generated based on a display point of view, the display point of view identifying a virtual location in space from which to view the animated depiction.

91. The apparatus of claim 84, wherein the electronic display is configured to display injection measurement data.

92. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the opaque layer is configured to represent one or more of different ages, ethnicities, races, textures, or thicknesses of human skin.

93. A method of manufacturing an anatomically shaped injection training apparatus, the method comprising:

forming an at least partially hollow based configured to provide structural support for a target injection test area;

coating at least a portion of the base with a clear layer of elastomer;

coating at least a portion of the clear layer with an opaque layer, wherein the base, clear layer, and opaque layer form an anatomical shape; and

affixing a three-dimensional (3D) tracking system within a hollowed portion of the base, wherein the three-dimensional tracking system provides a field of view of the clear layer covering the target injection test area.

94. The method of claim 93, wherein affixing the 3D tracking system comprises affixing a 3D camera within the hollowed portion of the base.

95. The method of claim 93, wherein affixing the 3D tracking system comprises affixing a first camera and a second camera within the hollowed portion of the base, wherein a center point of said first camera is aligned with a center point of said second camera, and said first camera and said second camera are configured as a stereoscopic camera pair.

96. The method of claim 93, further comprising coupling the 3D tracking system with a location processor configured to provide location information for a light source inserted into the clear layer, said location information identifying a three-dimensional location of the light source relative to the injection training apparatus.

97. The method of claim 93, wherein the anatomical shape comprises a human skull shape.

98. A method of three-dimensional (3D) injection training, the method comprising:

calibrating at least one of a light source and a three-dimensional tracking system;

detecting, by the three-dimensional tracking system, a characteristic of light emitted from the light source during an injection of a an injection training apparatus, wherein said detecting comprises:

obtaining, by the three-dimensional tracking system, at least two images of the light source, from different positions;

removing distortions from the images;

projecting the images to a common plane;

comparing the images to obtain relative depth information;

and

generating, from the relative depth information, three-dimensional location information of the light source based on the detected characteristics and said calibrating.

99. The method of claim 98, wherein said calibrating comprises obtaining calibration information from a memory.

100. The method of claim 99, wherein said calibrating comprises:

receiving, at the three-dimensional tracking system, light from the light source from a predetermined location;

generating calibration information; and

storing said calibration information in a memory.

101. The method of claim 98, wherein said detecting comprises receiving a plurality of measurements from an array of light sensors included in the three-dimensional tracking system.

102. The method of claim 101, wherein said detecting is based on which sensors in the array of sensors received measurable light.

103. The method of claim 98, wherein said characteristic of the light emitted comprises intensity, angle, dispersion, brightness, color, and duration of the light.

104. The method of claim 98, further comprising:

obtaining a three-dimensional model of a site for the injection; and
generating an injection training result based on the location
information for the light and the three-dimensional model of the site.

105. The method of claim 104, wherein the injection training results
includes an animated depiction of the injection at the site.

106. The method of claim 105, further comprising receiving a display
point of view, the display point of view identifying a virtual location in space from
which to view the animated depiction, and wherein said generating the injection
training result is further based on the display point of view.

107. The method of claim 105, further comprising detecting a plurality of
locations for the injection over time, and wherein said generating the injection
training result includes generating a trajectory path for the injection.

108. An anatomically shaped injection apparatus comprising:
an at least partially hollow base configured to provide structural
support;
a clear layer of elastomer coating at least partially covering the
base;
an opaque layer at least partially covering the clear layer, wherein
the base, clear layer, and opaque layer form an anatomical shape; and
a three-dimensional (3D) tracking system, positioned inside the
base and configured to determine a location of a needle, attached to a
testing tool, the needle inserted into the clear layer of elastomer, the 3D
tracking system further configured to sense visible light and thermal
energy, wherein a light is emitted from a tip of the needle, and wherein
thermal energy is emitted from the tip of the needle, and wherein the
needle is configured to achieve a temperature substantially different than
an ambient temperature.

109. The apparatus of claim 108, wherein the needle is configured to
achieve a temperature of at least five degrees Celsius higher than the ambient
temperature.

110. The apparatus of claim 108, wherein the needle is configured to
achieve a temperature of at least five degrees Celsius lower than the ambient
temperature.

111. The apparatus of claim 108, wherein the testing tool comprises a resistive heating element coupled to the needle.

112. The apparatus of claim 108, wherein the testing tool comprises a tube configured to route gas of a controlled temperature through an interior of the testing tool and to exhaust the gas through a tip of the needle.

113. The apparatus of claim 108, further comprising a sensor configured to sense visible light and thermal energy, the sensor positioned external to the base and configured to determine a location of the needle relative to the injection training apparatus as the needle is inserted into the clear layer of elastomer, wherein the sensor is further configured to measure a portion of the needle external to the injection apparatus.

114. The apparatus of claim 113, wherein the sensor is a camera.

115. The apparatus of claim 113, wherein the injection apparatus includes a plurality of markers configured to be viewed by the sensor.

116. A testing tool for use in an injection training system, the testing tool comprising:

- a barrel having a fitting at a distal end of the barrel, the fitting having a portal, and the barrel having an opening and a finger grip at a proximal end of the barrel;

- a plunger configured to fit in the opening of the barrel to apply a force directed axially toward the distal end of the barrel;

- an electronics assembly having a light source at a distal end of the electronics assembly and a force sensor at a proximal end of the electronics assembly, the electronics assembly configured to fit inside the barrel with the light source positioned at the portal of the fitting, and with the force sensor positioned near the proximal end of the barrel, the force sensor configured to sense the force applied by the plunger; and

- a needle assembly attached to the fitting of the barrel, the needle assembly having a hollow needle, a fiber bundle extending axially through the hollow needle, a hub configured to secure the hollow needle and to attach to the needle assembly to the fitting of the barrel such that the fiber bundle within the hollow needle is in close-fitting relation with the light source.

117. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the plunger is configured to be collapsible.

118. The testing tool of claim 117, wherein the plunger is further configured to measure the plunger's motion of contraction as it collapses.

119. The testing tool of claim 117, wherein the plunger further comprises a position sensor configured to determine the position of the plunger in three-dimensional space.

120. The testing tool of claim 119, wherein the position sensor is further configured to communicate the determined position of the plunger to a display device and/or to a light detector.

121. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the plunger further comprises a resistive device configured to apply a resistive force in response to the force directed axially toward the distal end of the barrel.

122. The testing tool of claim 121, wherein the resistive device comprises a hydraulic valve.

123. The testing tool of claim 121, wherein the resistive device comprises a spring.

124. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the plunger further comprises a cylindrical shaft configured to fit in close-fitting relation with an inner wall of the barrel.

125. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the barrel further comprises a plurality of bores, and the electronics assembly further comprises a battery and a plurality of connector pins, wherein the bores are configured to receive the connector pins to enable charging of the battery from an energy source external to the testing tool.

126. The testing tool of claim 125, further comprising a docking station comprising a port configured to access electrical power, the port coupled to a plurality of contact pins configured to make electrical contact with the connector pins when the testing tool is positioned in the docking station.

127. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the barrel further comprises a threaded portion at the distal end of the barrel configured to receive the fitting.

128. The testing tool of claim 127, wherein the fitting includes a portal configured to pass light emitted from the light source.

129. The testing tool of claim 128, wherein the fitting comprises a male-taper fitting, including a Luer fitting.

130. The testing tool of claim 128, wherein the fitting is not tapered.

131. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the hub of the needle assembly is configured to connect directly to the fitting of the barrel to eliminate the need for an adapter.

132. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the hollow needle comprises hypodermic tubing.

133. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the hollow needle comprises stainless steel.

134. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the fiber bundle is secured within the hollow needle by an optical epoxy adhesive.

135. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the electronics assembly is further configured to emit light from a light source, measure position information, in three-dimensional space, of the electronics assembly, and measure force information, applied to a force sensor.

136. The testing tool of claim 135, wherein the electronics assembly is further configured to communicate the measured position information and the measured force information to a user interface device, a display device, or a light detector.

137. The testing tool of claim 136, wherein the electronics assembly further comprises a wireless communication device configured to communicate the measured position and force information.

138. The testing tool of claim 136, wherein the electronics assembly is further configured to communicate the measured position and force information by way of a wired communication scheme.

139. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the electronics assembly further comprises a battery, a power management controller, a voltage regulator, a position sensor, a radio, a data acquisition system, at least one processor, a light source driver, a power port, and a communication port.

140. The testing tool of claim 139, wherein the battery is rechargeable and wherein the power management controller is configured to communicate with an external battery-charging power port.

141. The testing tool of claim 139, wherein the external battery-charging power port includes a universal serial bus port.

142. The testing tool of claim 139, wherein the batter further comprises a lithium polymer cell.

143. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode.

144. The testing tool of claim 143, wherein the light emitting diode emits a low infrared light.

145. The testing tool of claim 144, wherein the light emitting diode emits a wavelength of 810 nanometers.

146. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the light source comprises a laser.

147. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the light source comprises a laser that emits low infrared light at a wavelength of 850 nanometers.

148. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the light source has a narrow emission angle of twenty degrees or less.

149. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode having a flat polished emitting surface configured to make intimate contact with a proximal end of the fiber bundle and the light source when the testing tool is assembled.

150. The testing tool of claim 116, further comprising a lens, a reflector, or a fiber optic taper coupled to the light source.

151. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the electronics assembly is configured to regulate the intensity of light emitted by the light source in proportion to an amount of pressure applied to the plunger.

152. The testing tool of claim 139, wherein the position sensor comprises an inertial measurement unit.

153. The testing tool of claim 139, wherein the position sensor includes a first sensor configured to measure angular velocity information, a second sensor configured to measure linear acceleration information, and a third sensor configured to measure magnetic field information.

154. The testing tool of claim 153, wherein the first sensor measures angular velocity information in three dimensions, the second sensor measures

linear acceleration information in three dimensions, and the third sensor measures magnetic field information in three dimensions.

155. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the electronics assembly further comprises a force sensor subassembly configured to sense axial force applied in the distal direction of the testing tool by the plunger.

156. The testing tool of claim 116, wherein the plunger comprises a cylindrical shaft having an outer diameter slightly less than an inner diameter of the barrel, wherein the plunger shaft is configured to slide around the electronics assembly positioned in the barrel.

157. The testing tool of claim 116, where the electronics assembly is configured to fit within a shaft of the plunger.

158. The testing tool of claim 157, wherein the light source is positioned at the distal end of the barrel, and the electronics assembly further comprises a flexible connector connected to the light source.

159. The testing tool of claim 157, where in the flexible connector is extendable and retractable.

160. A method of simulating an injection into a synthetic anatomical structure, the synthetic anatomical structure configured to attenuate light emitted into it and to detect the attenuated light, the method comprising:

providing a testing tool to simulate a syringe, the testing tool configured to emit light through a needle at a distal end of the testing tool; and

inserting the needle into the synthetic anatomical structure such that the light emitted through the needle is attenuated and detected by the synthetic anatomical structure.

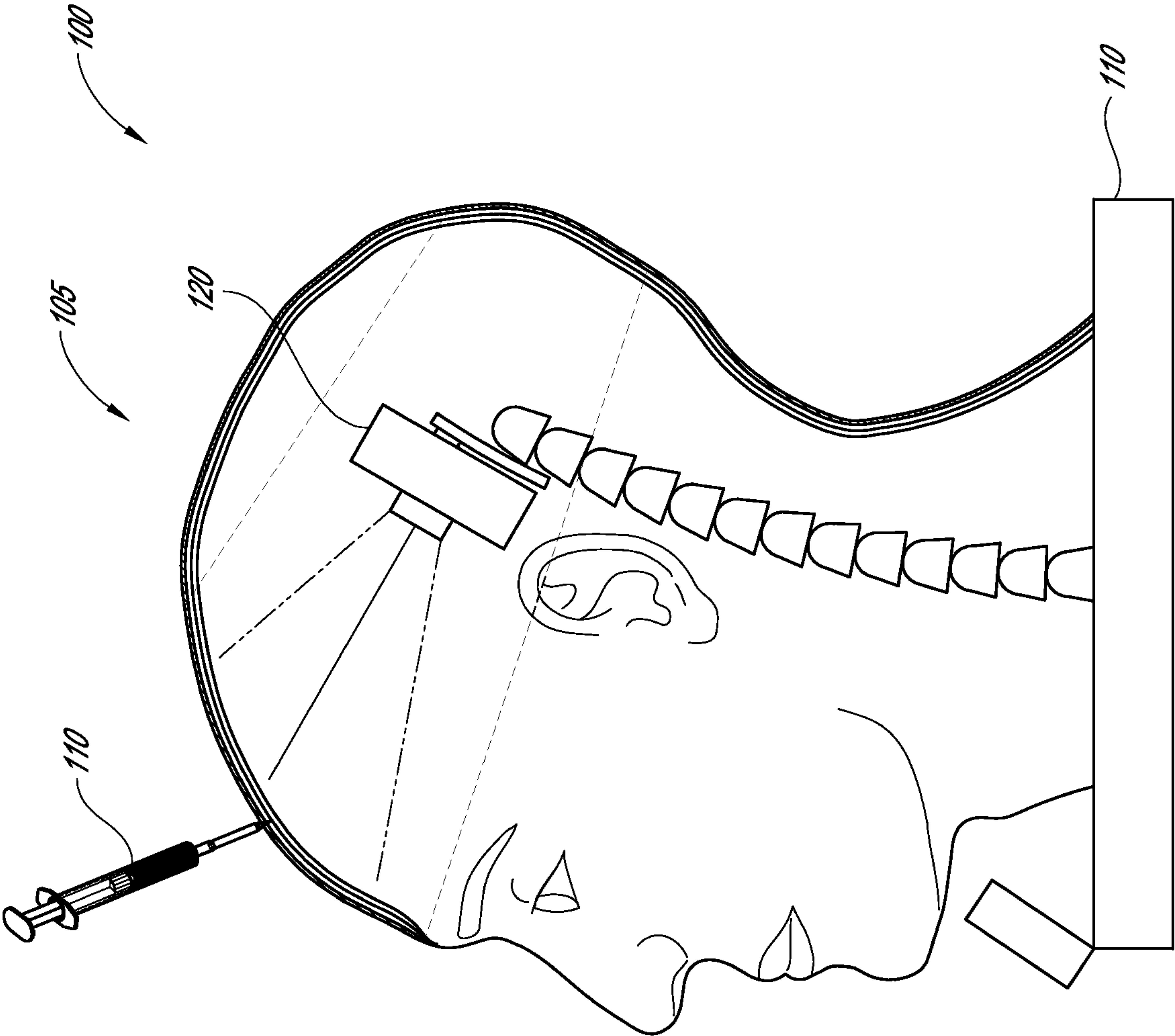
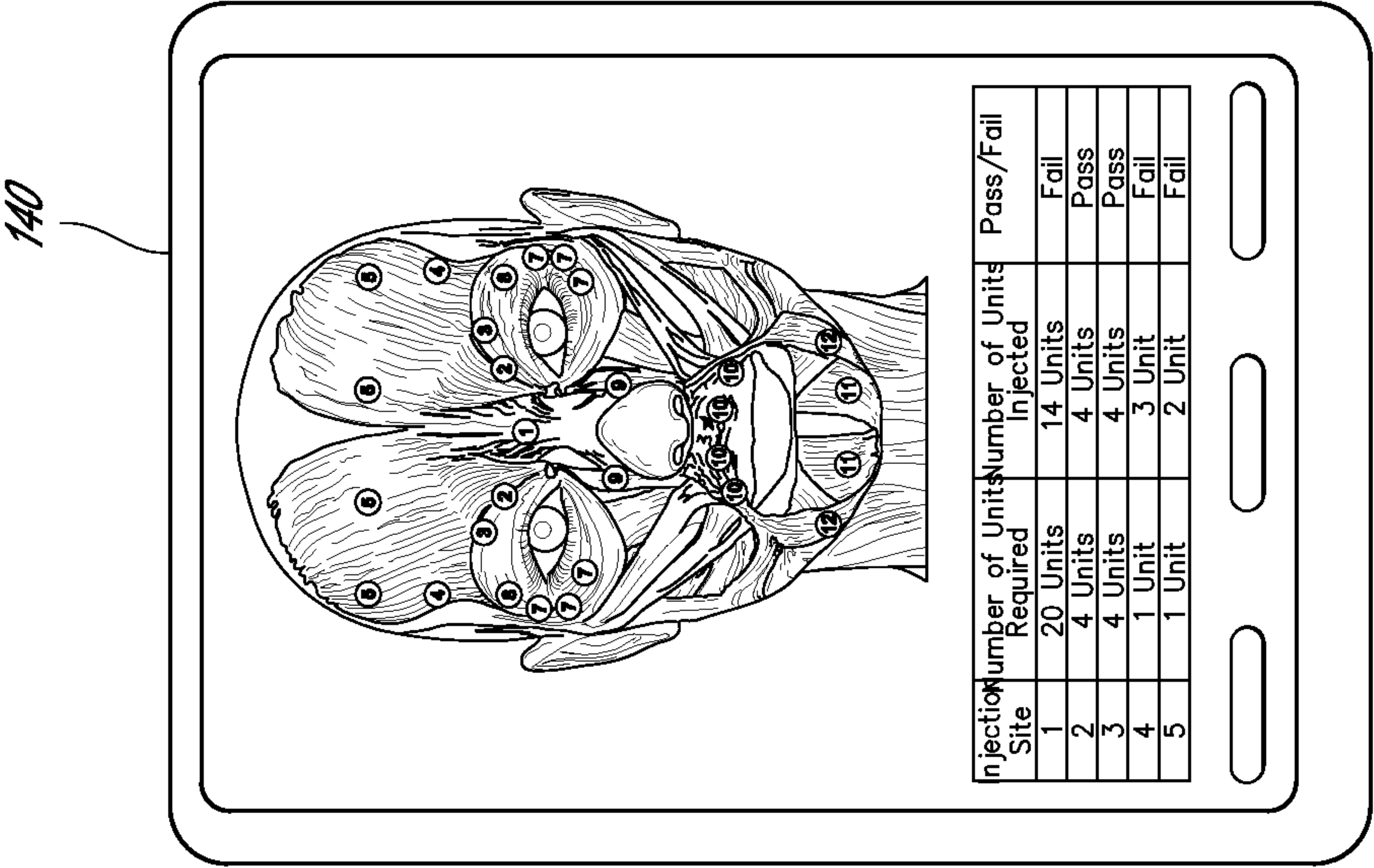
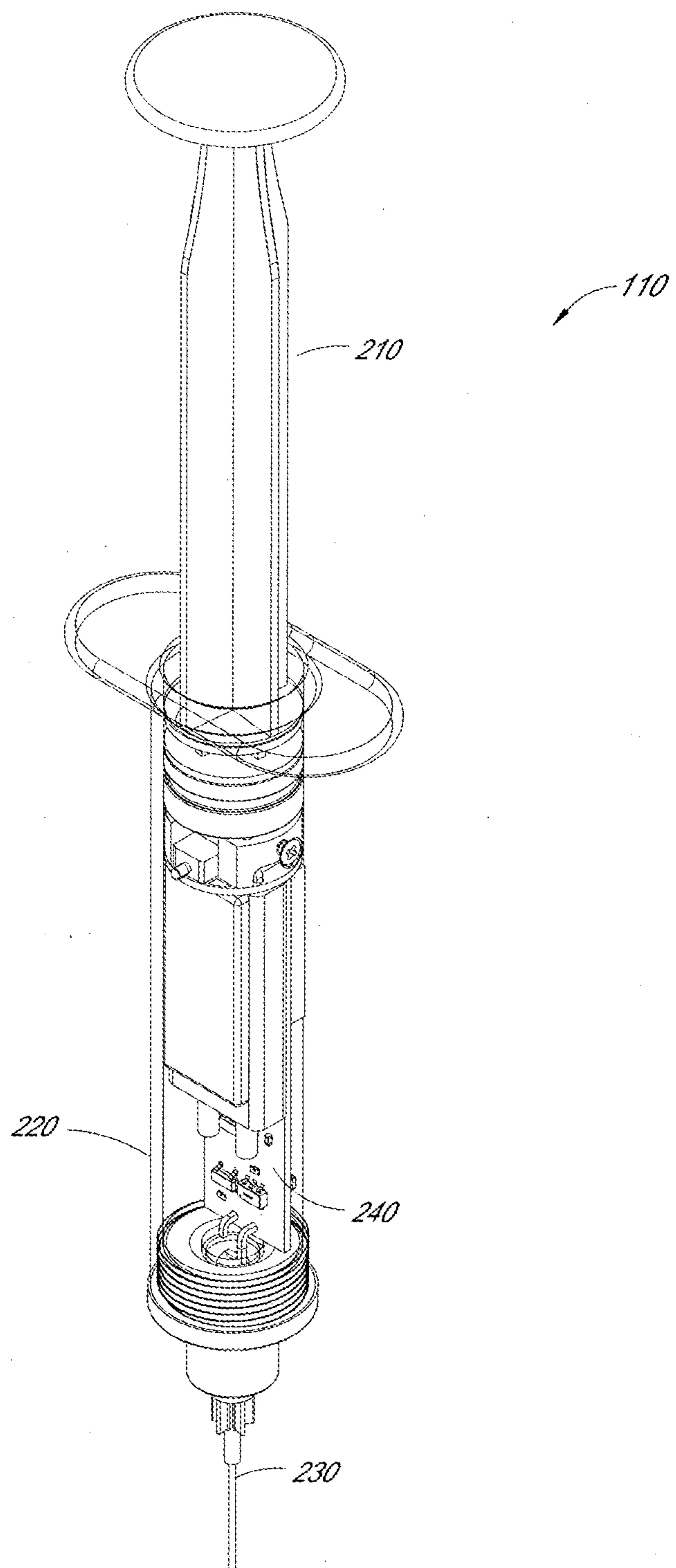


FIG. 1



*FIG. 2A*

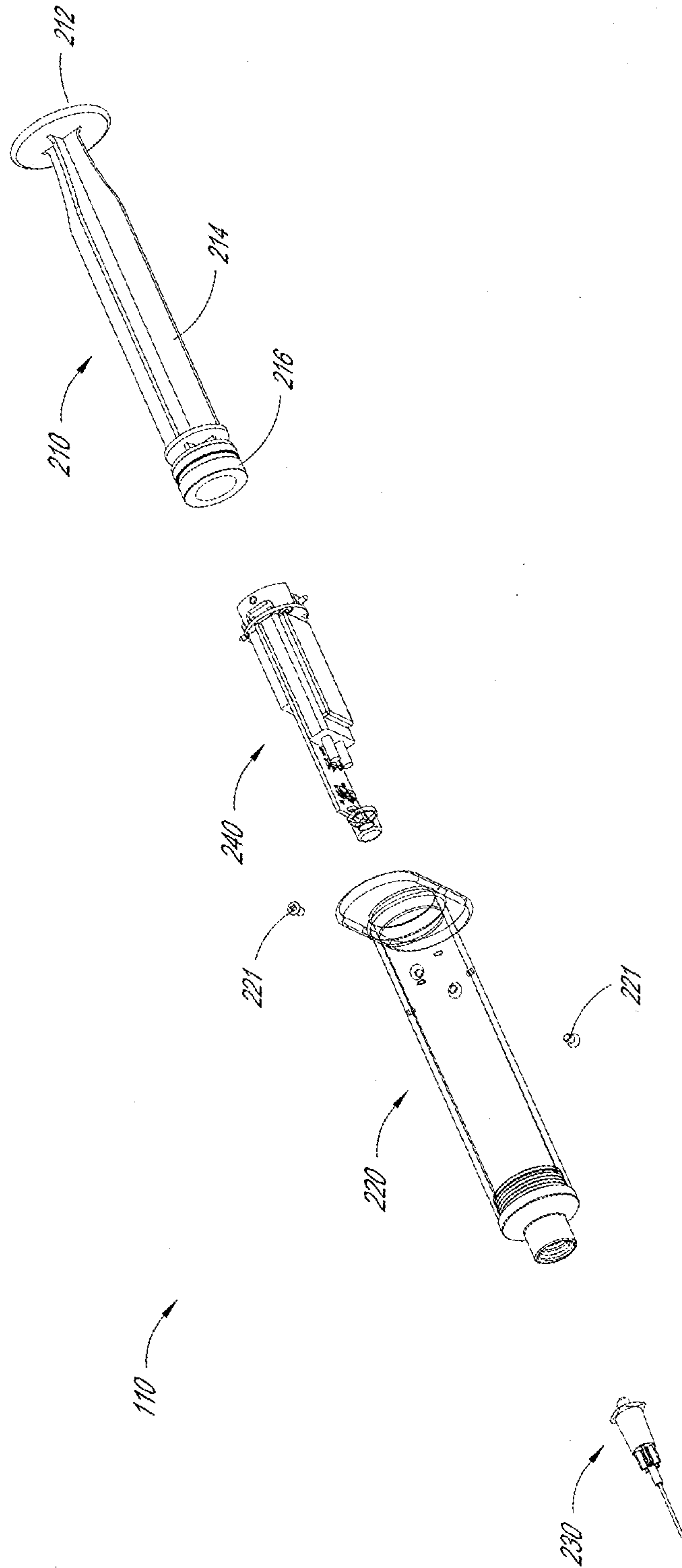
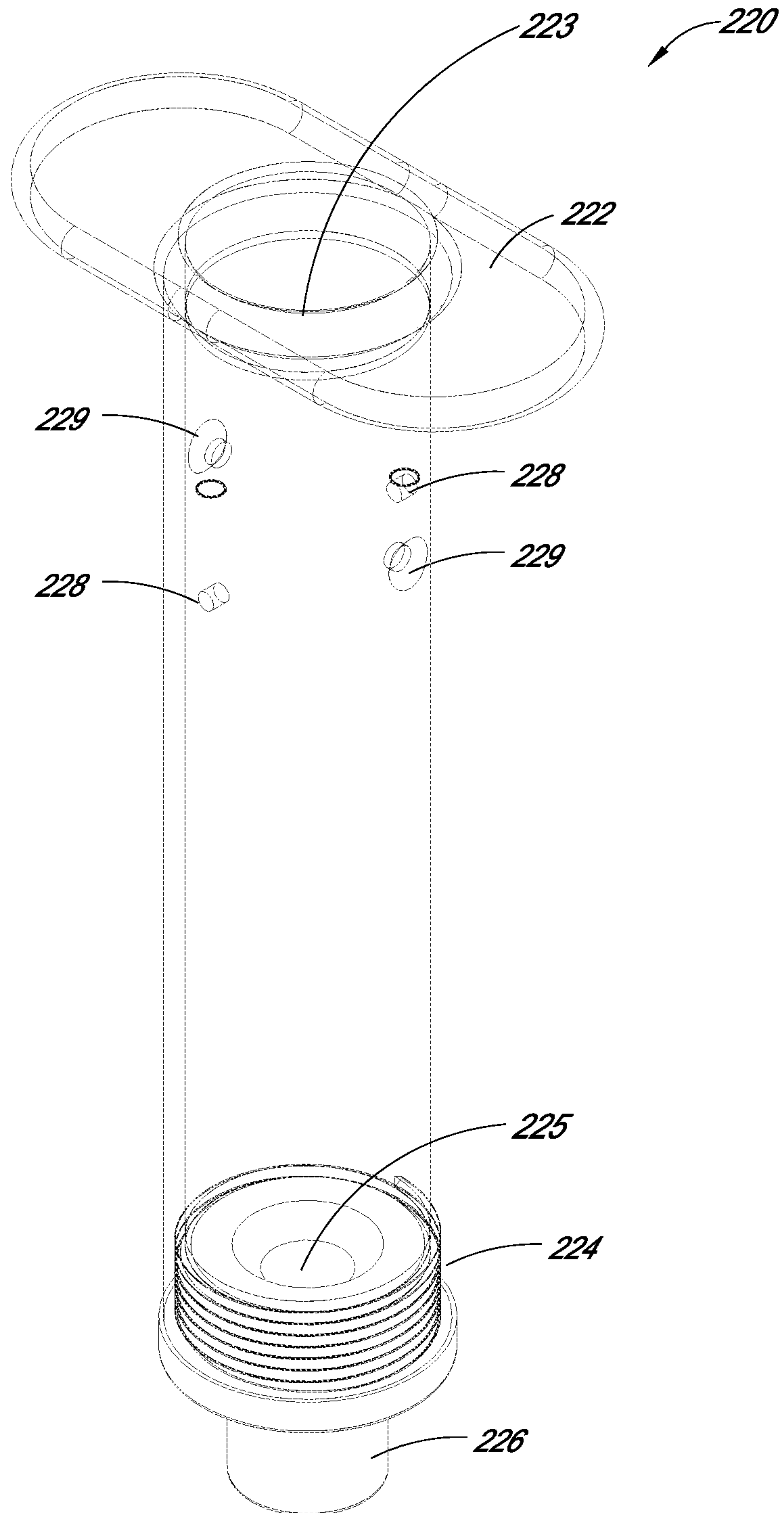


FIG. 2B

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*FIG. 2C*

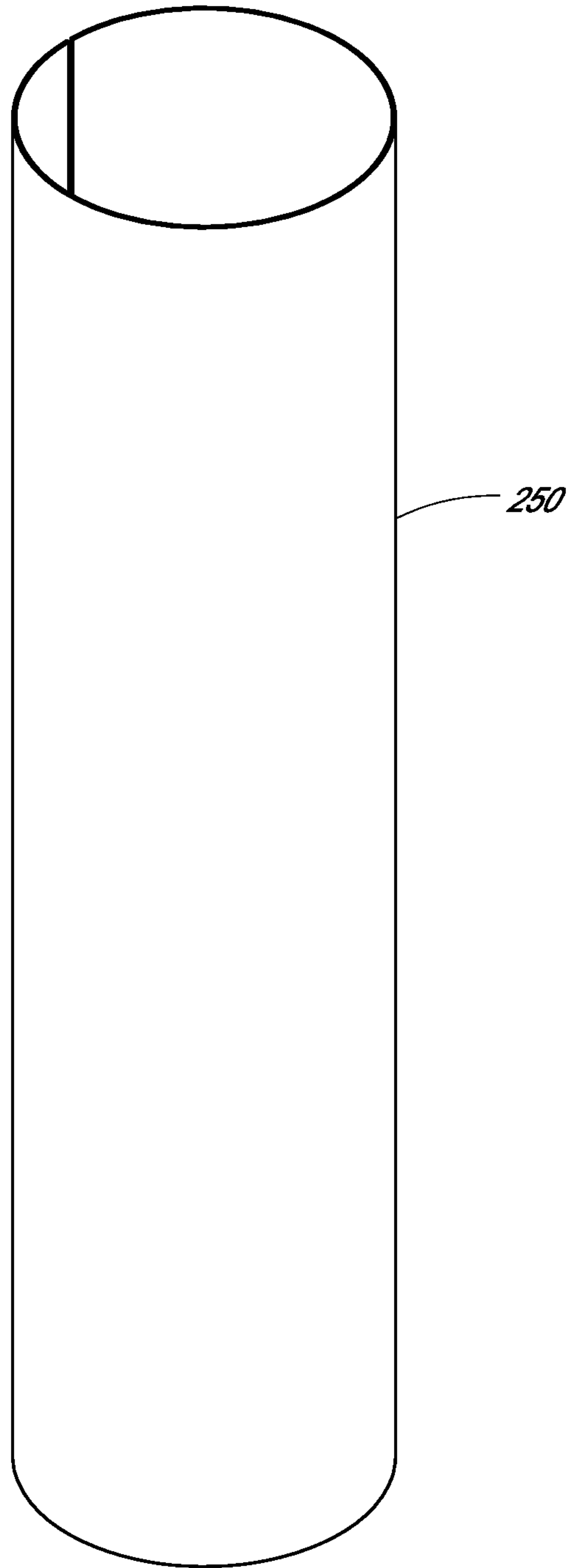
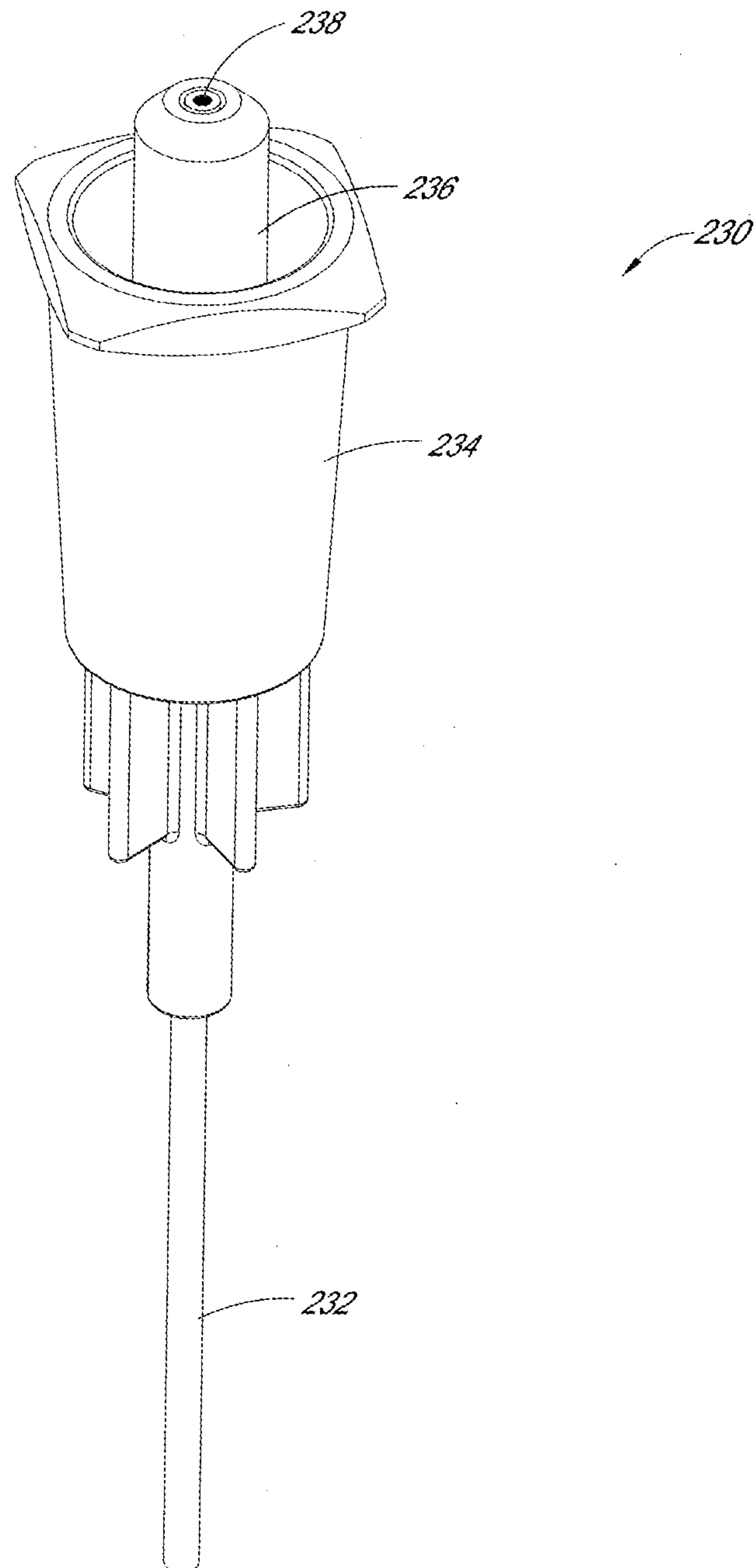
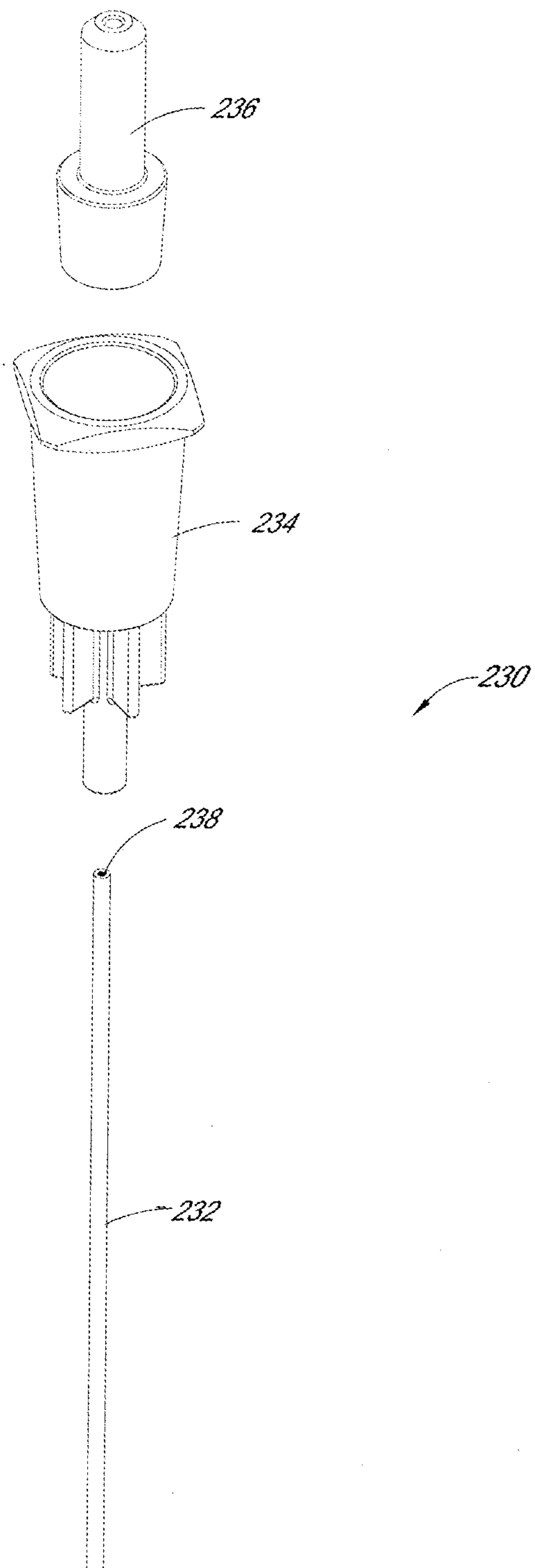


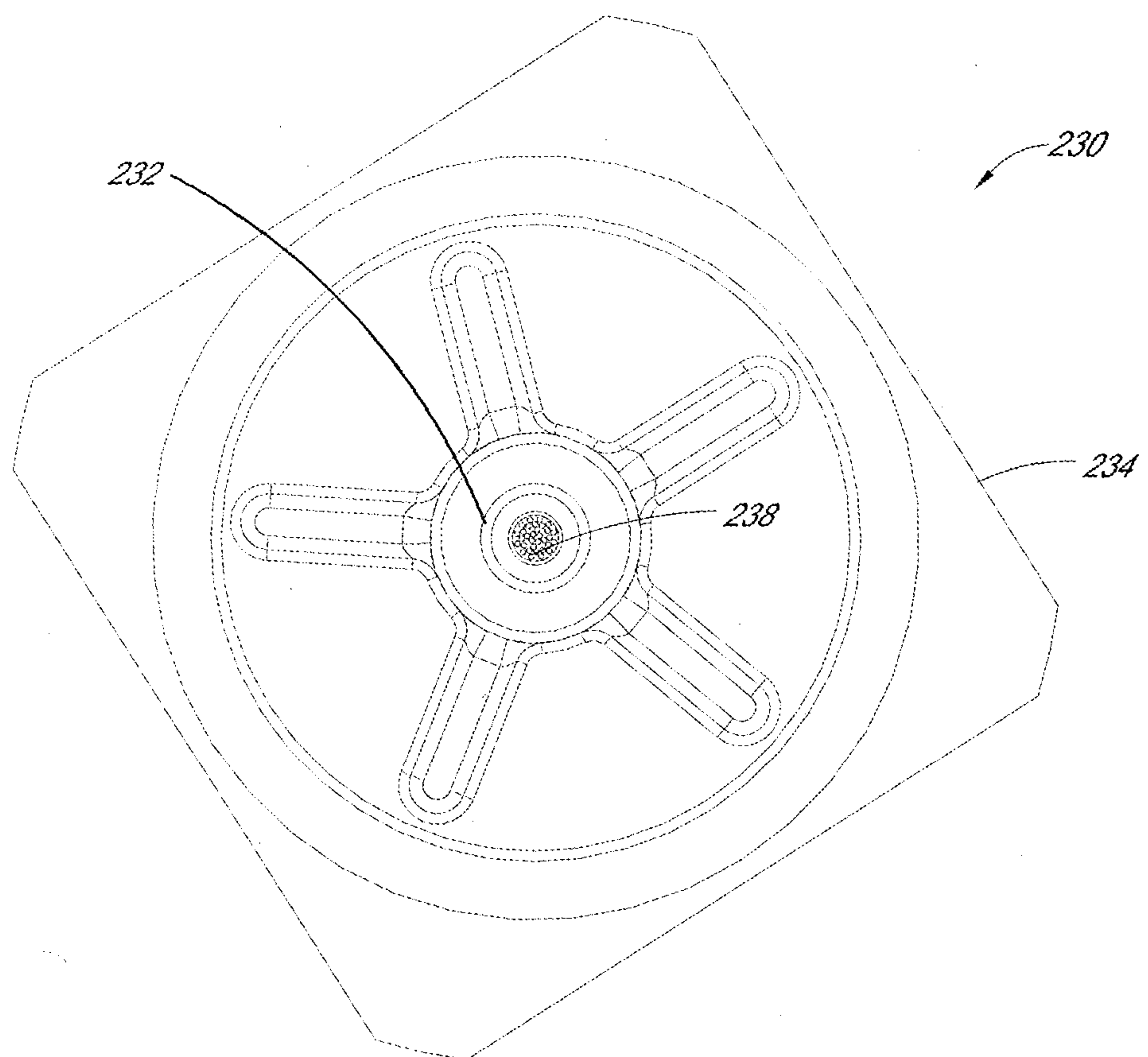
FIG. 2D

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*FIG. 2E*

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*FIG. 2F*

*FIG. 2G*

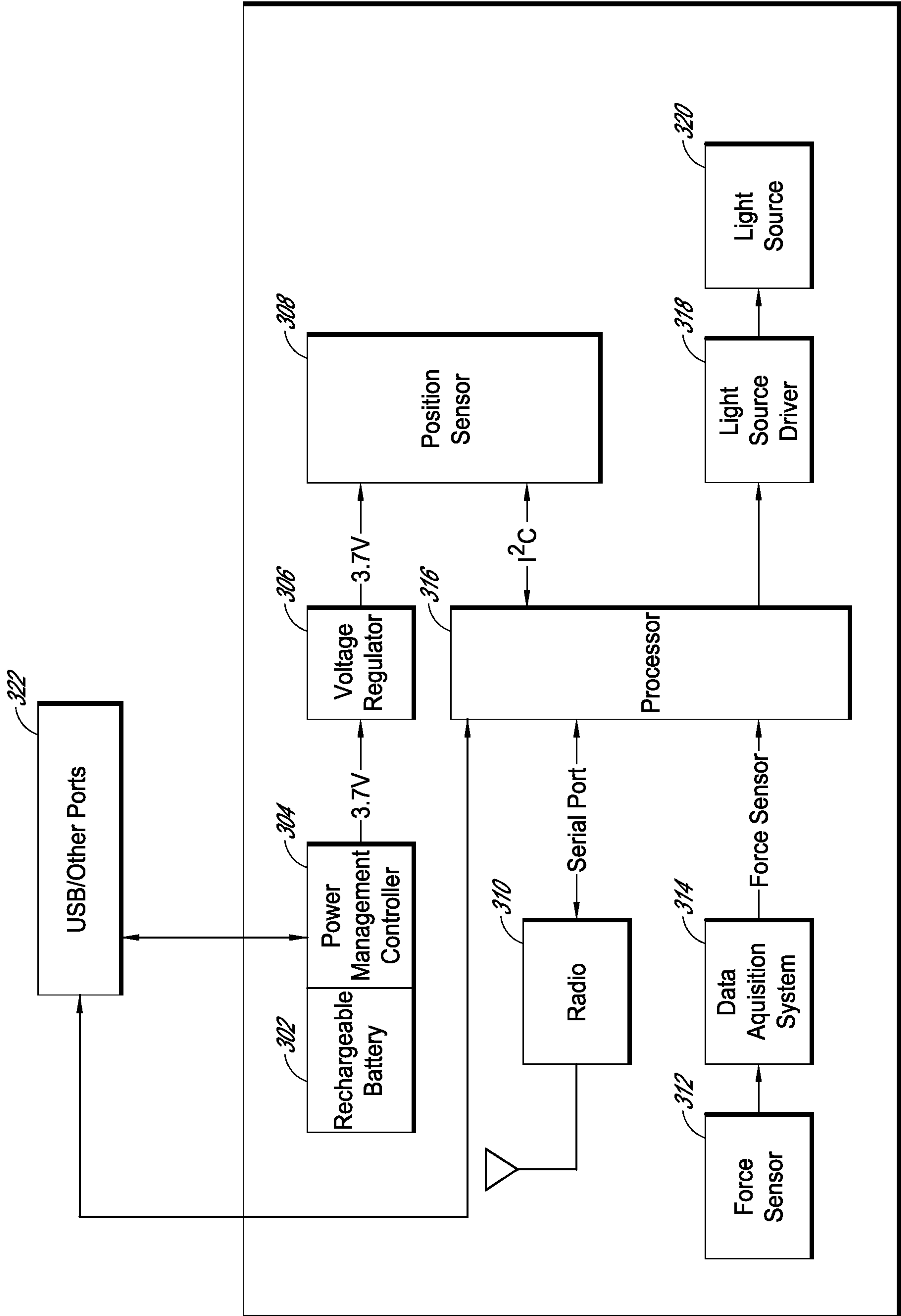
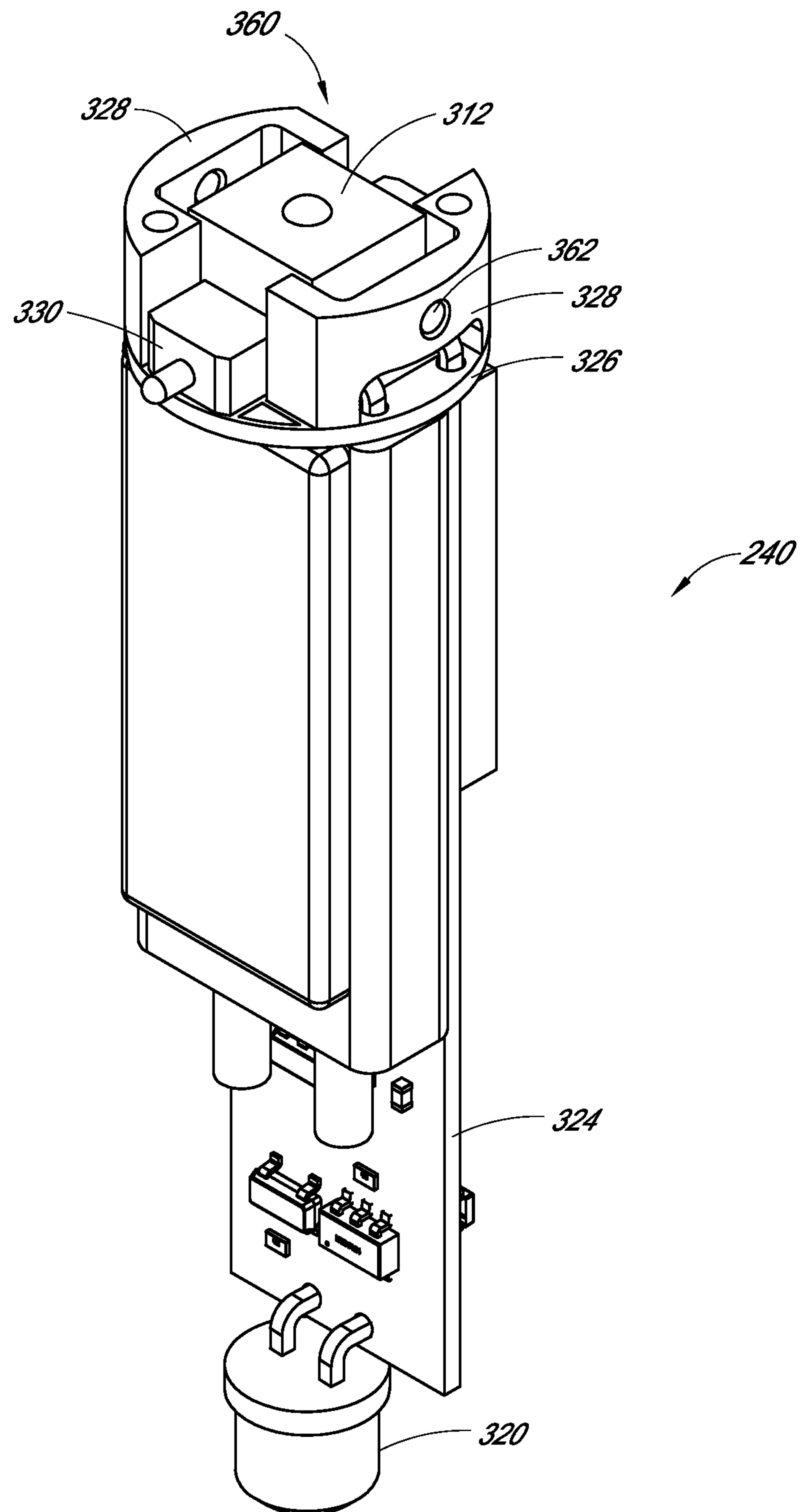
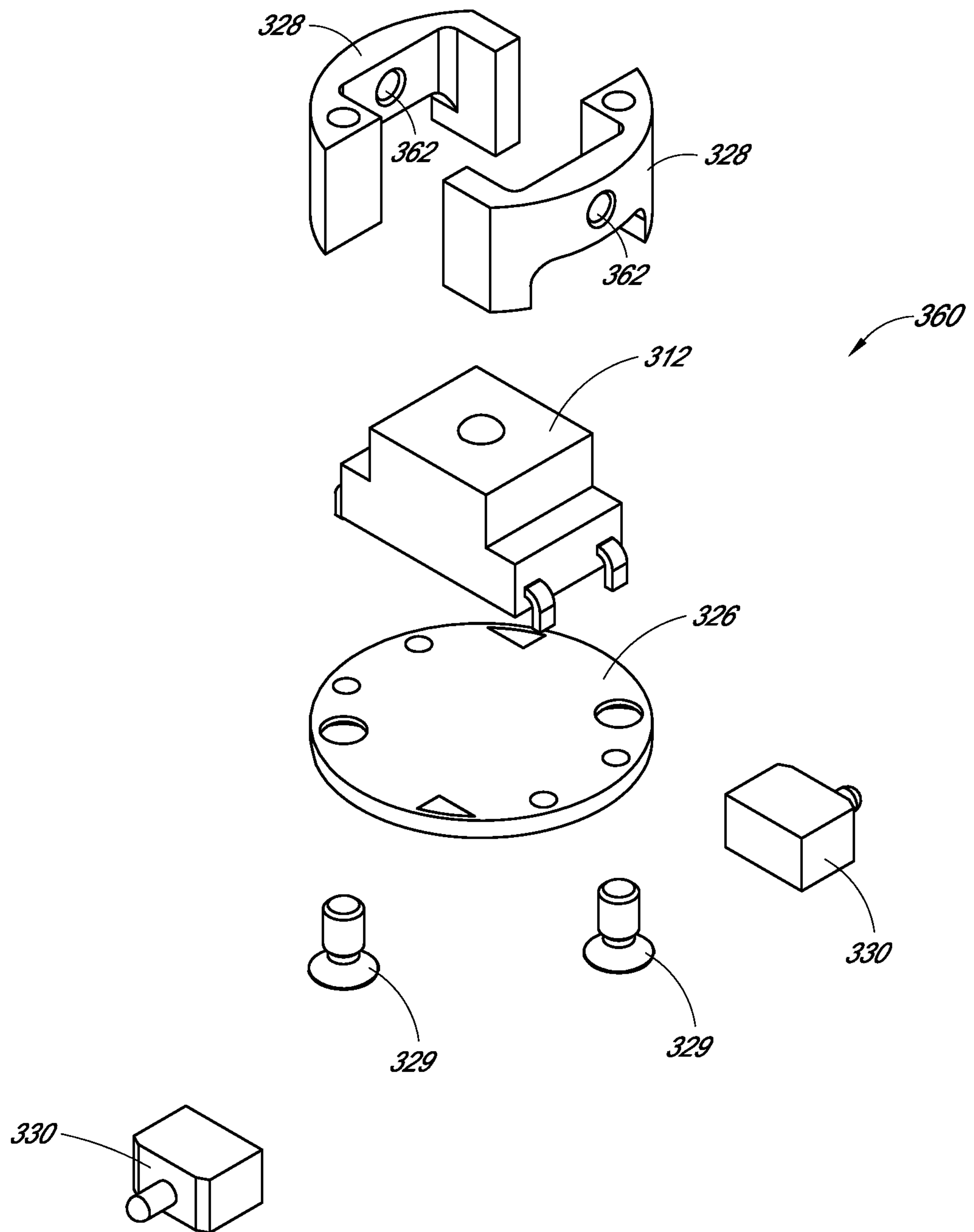


FIG. 3A

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*FIG. 3B*

*FIG. 3C*

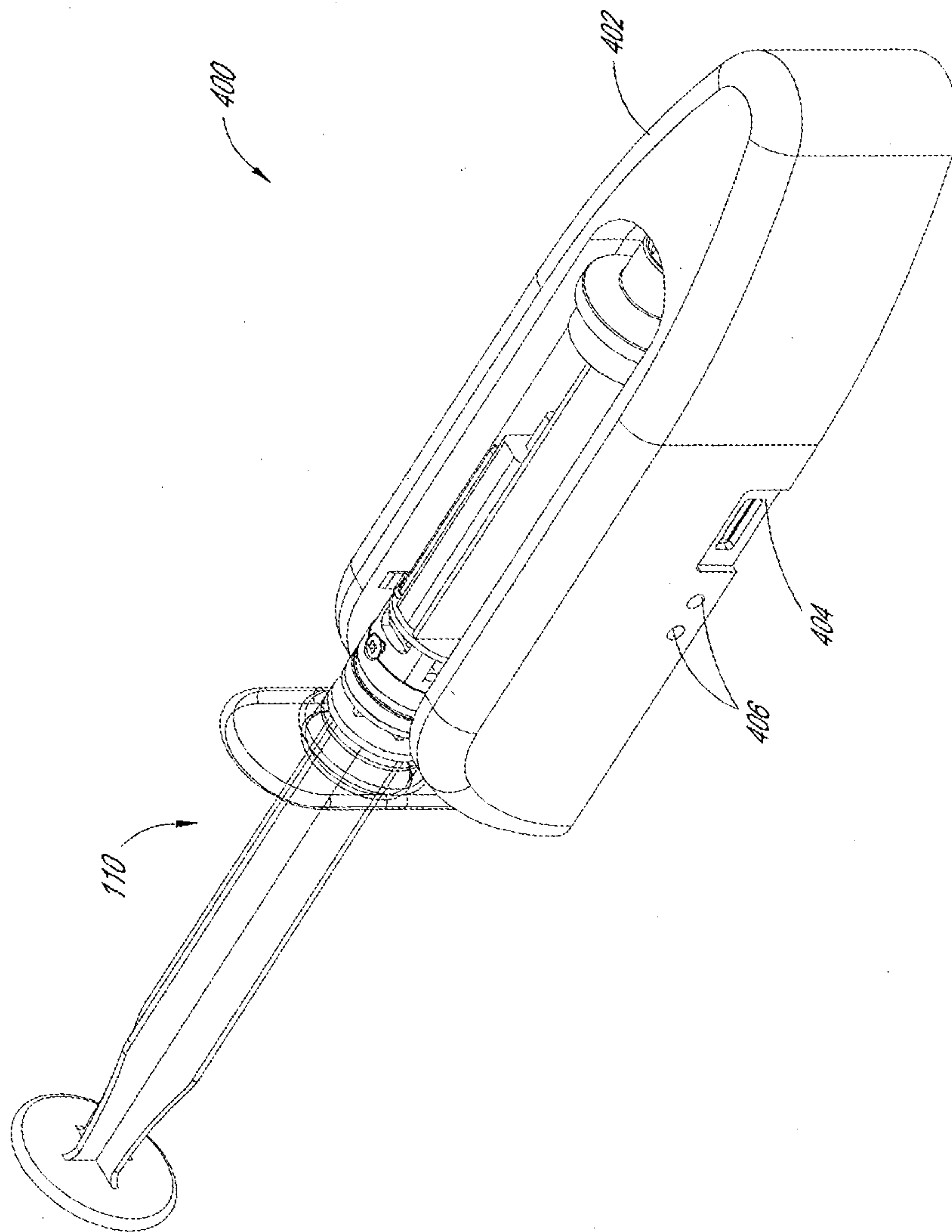
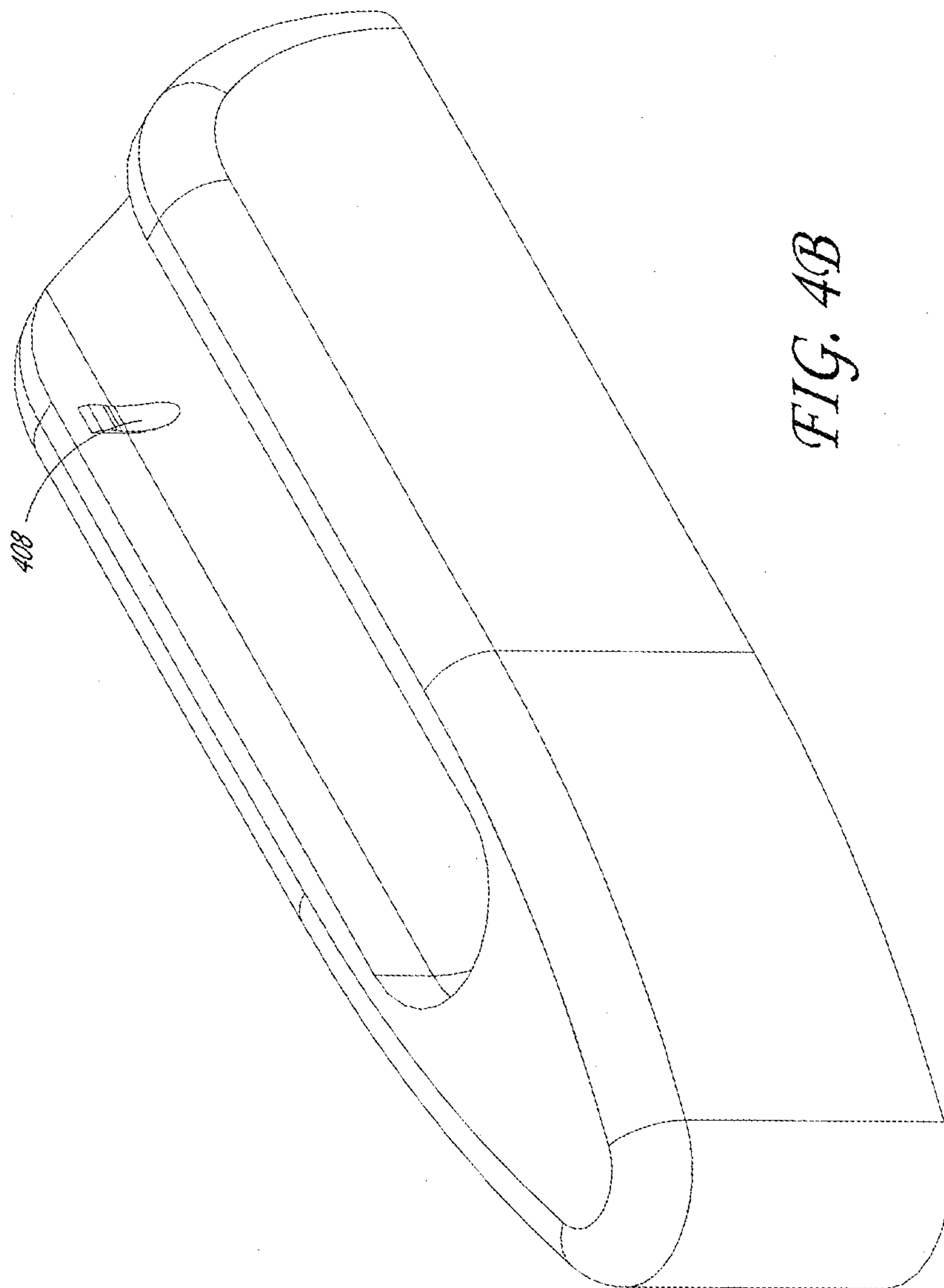
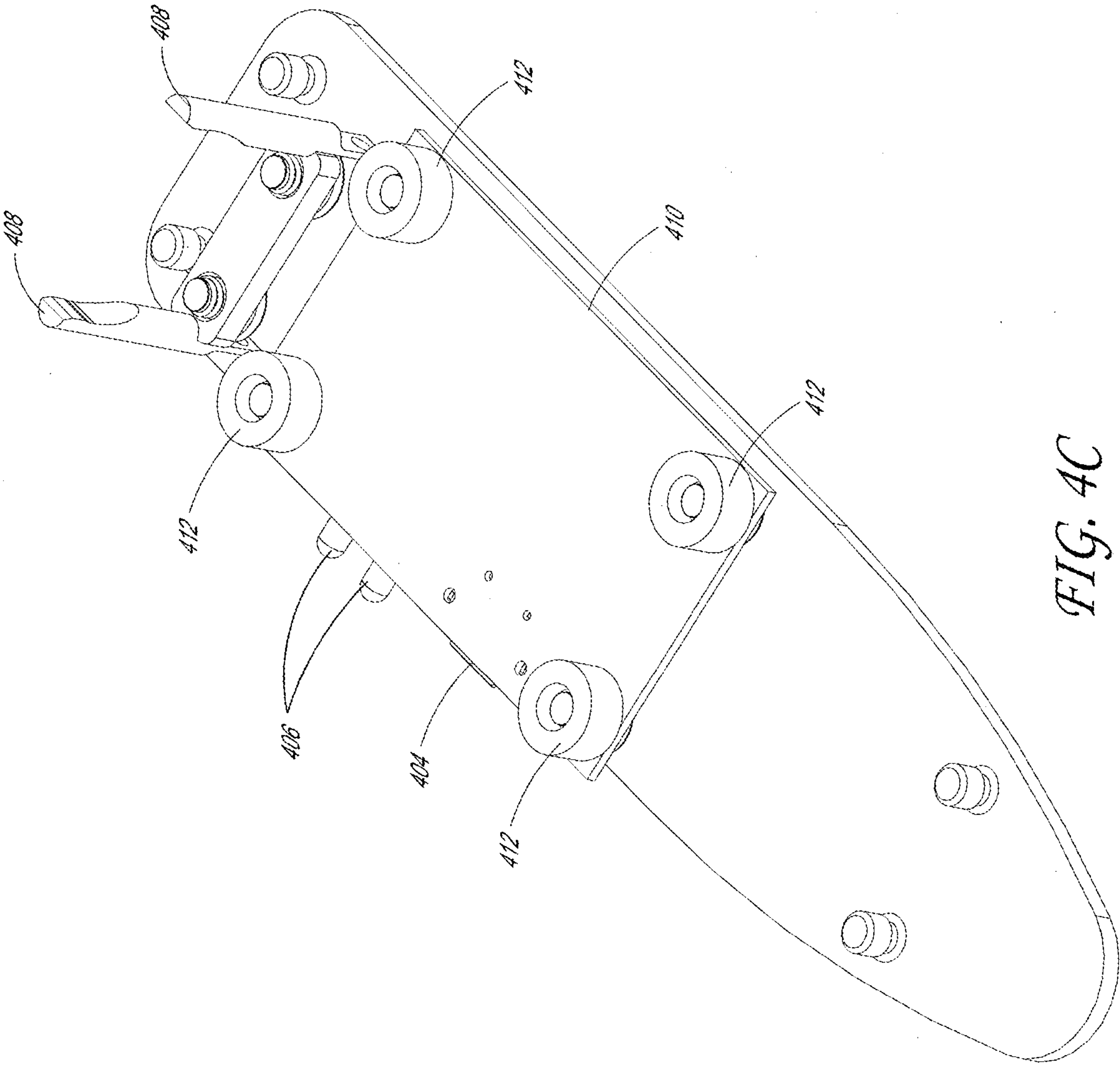
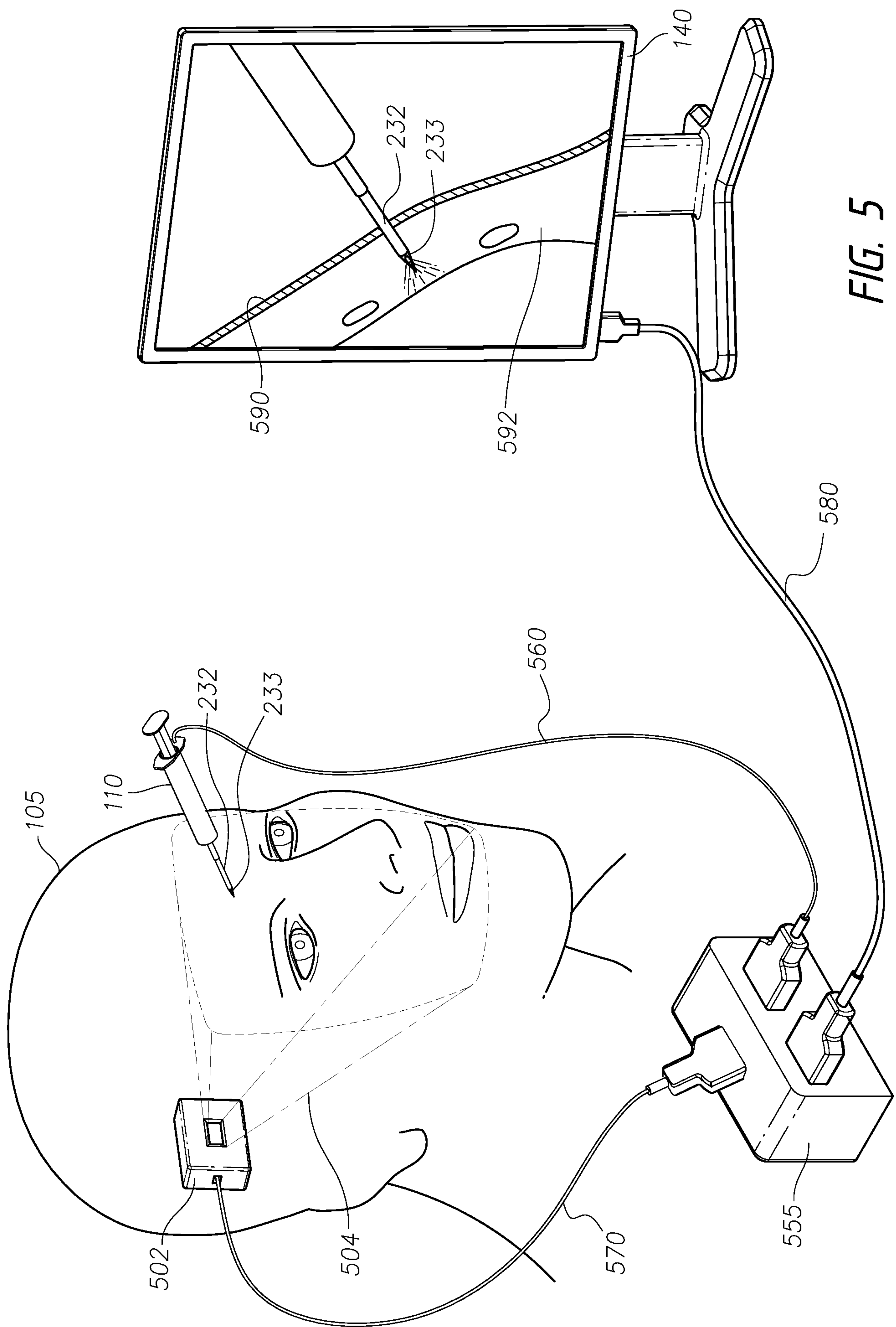
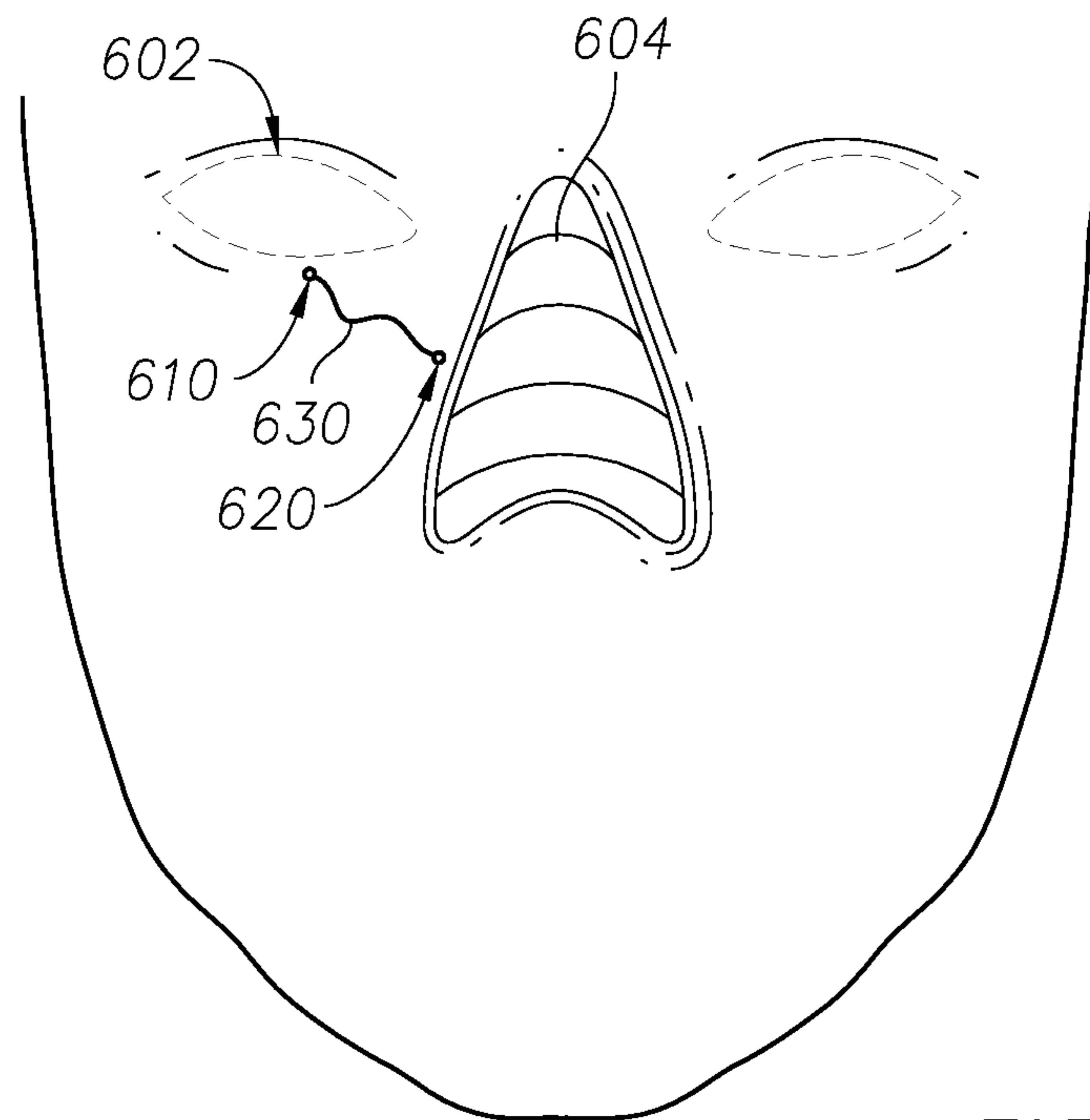
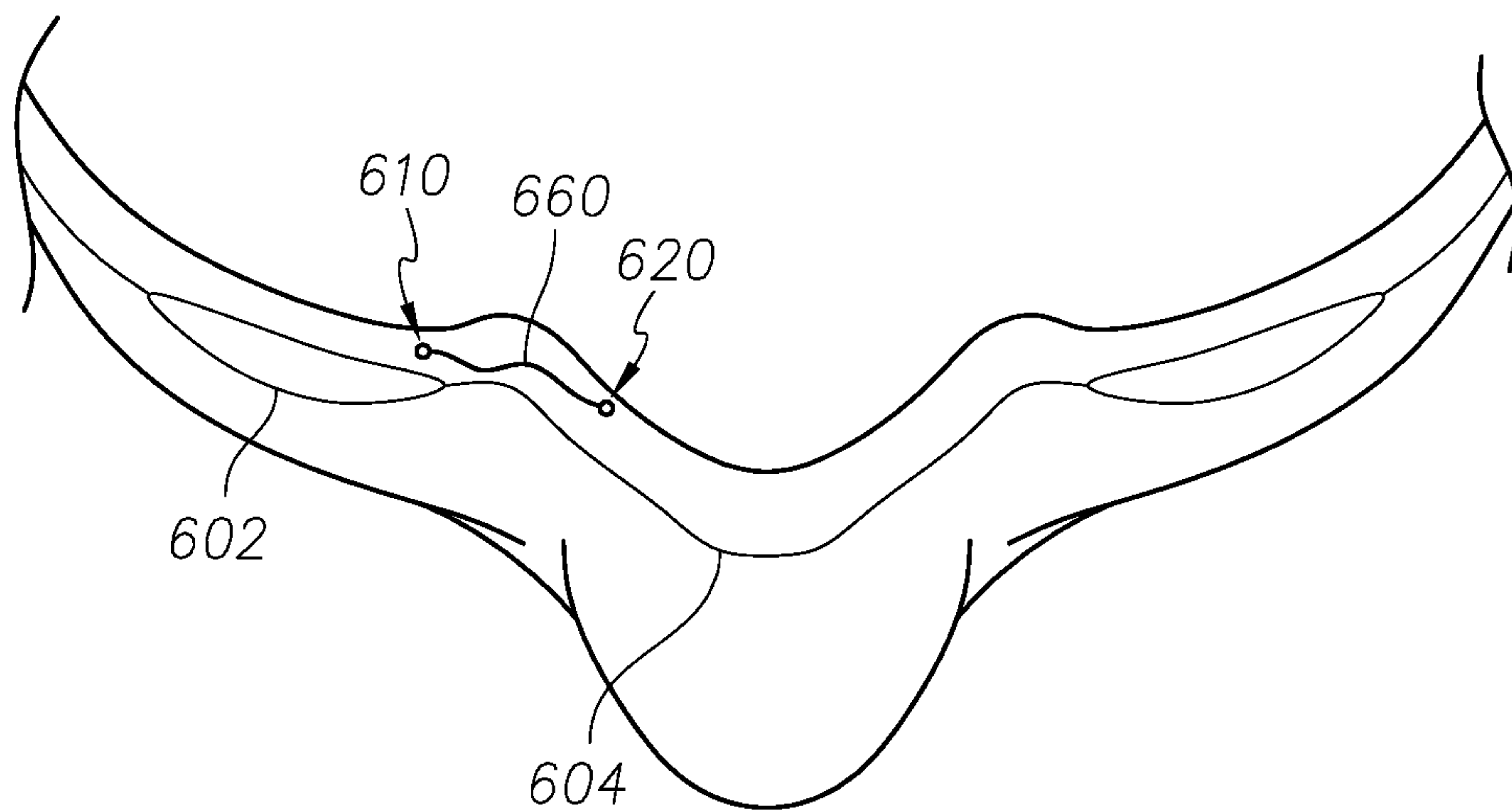


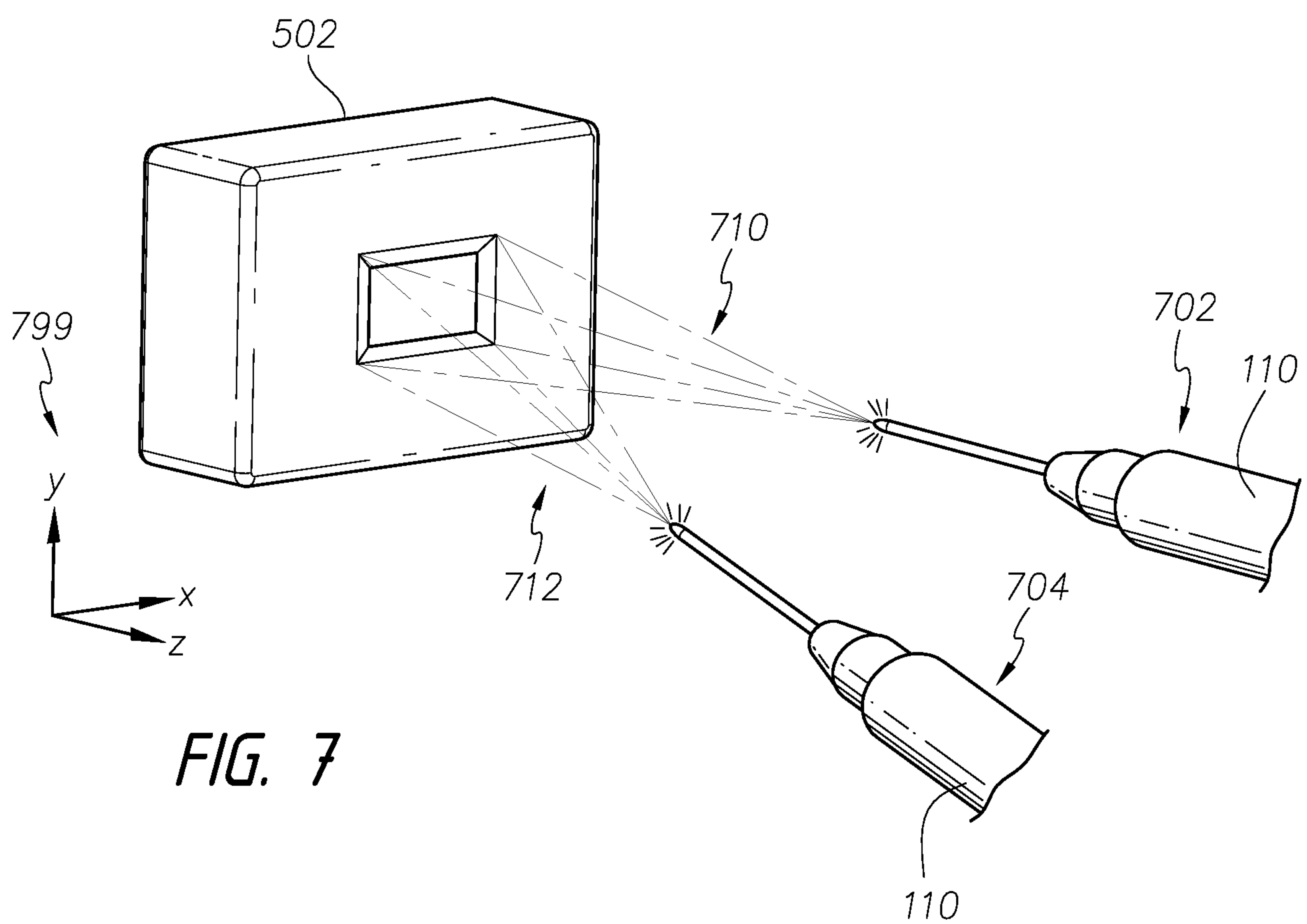
FIG. 4A







*FIG. 6A**FIG. 6B*



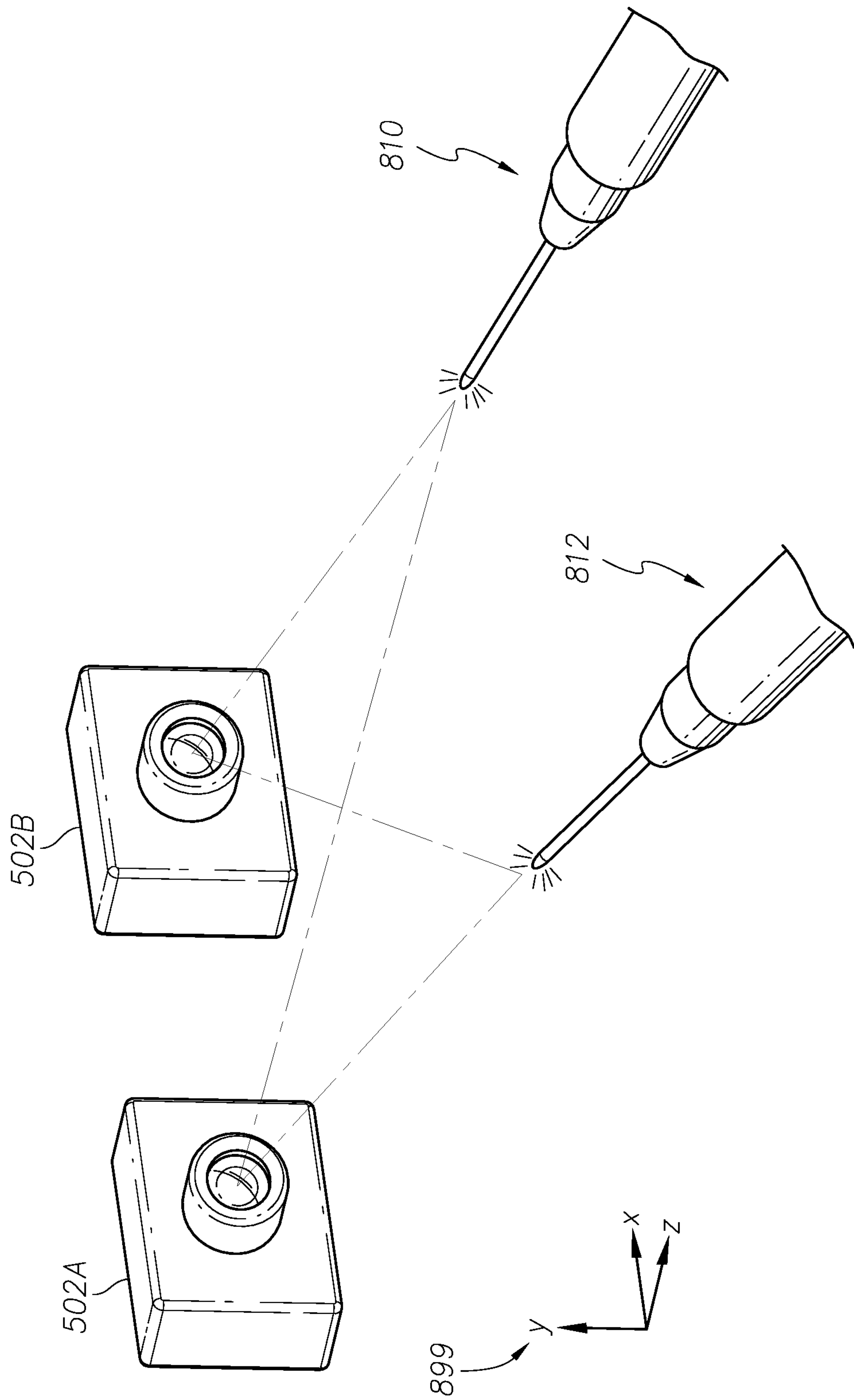
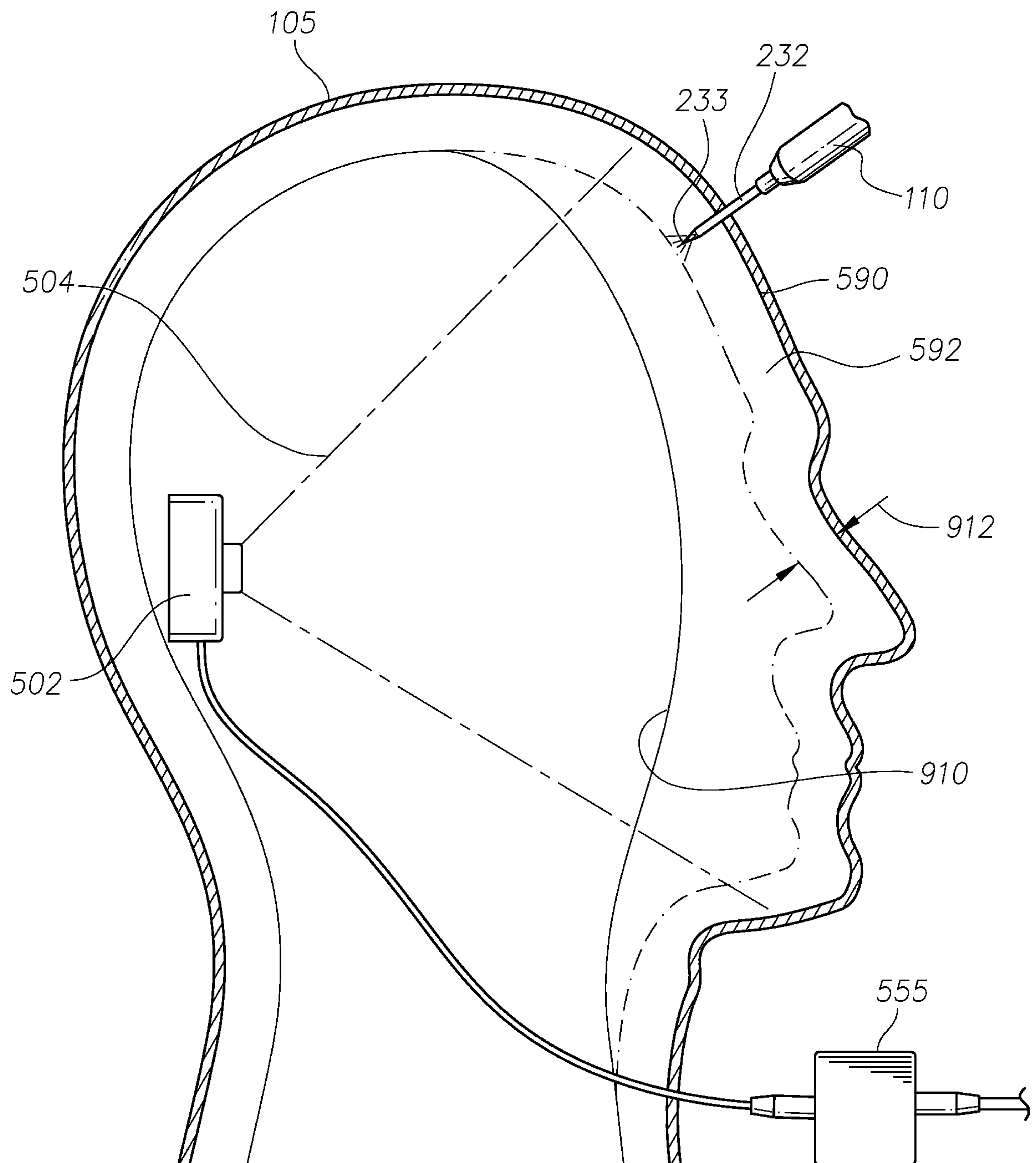
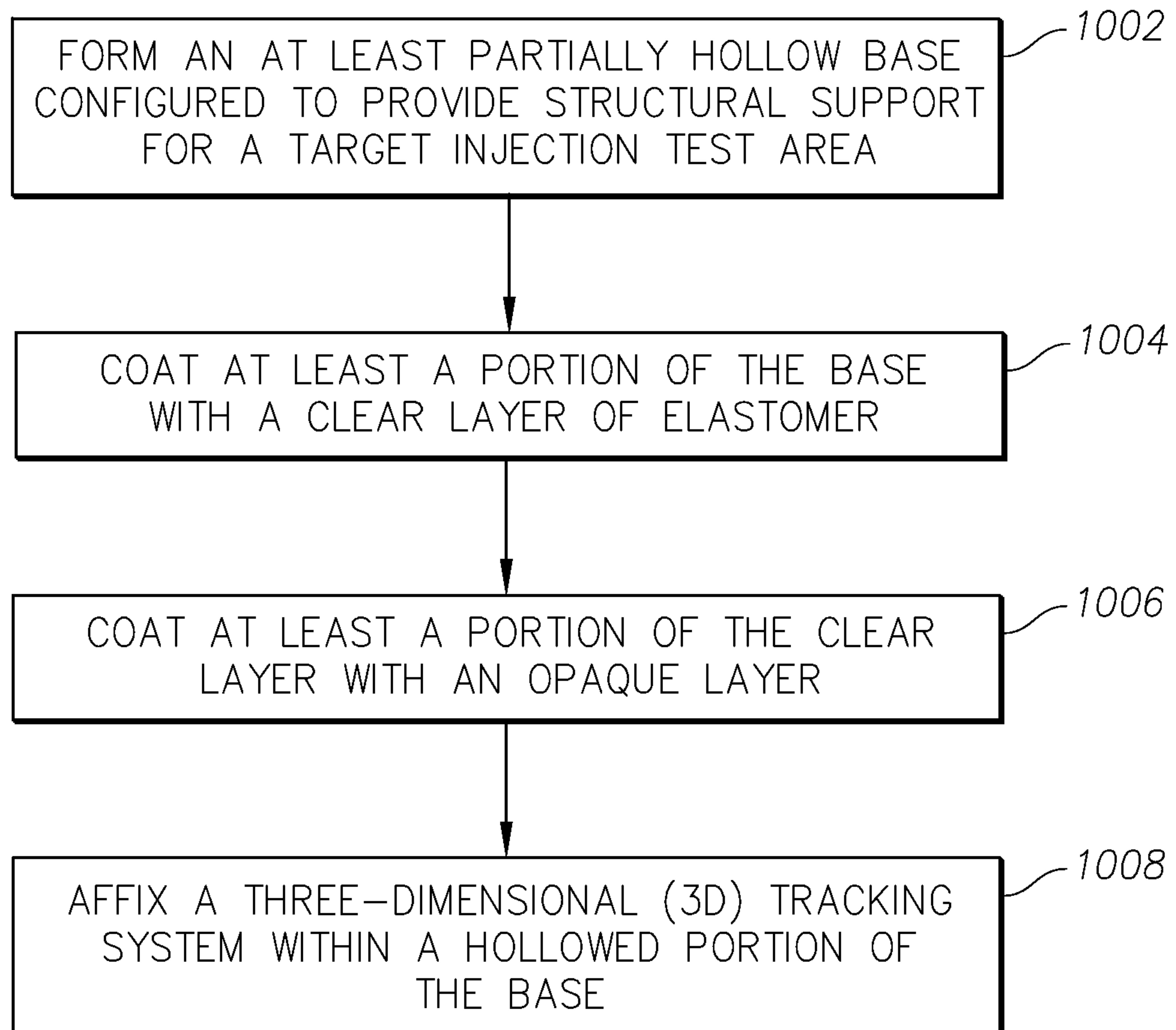
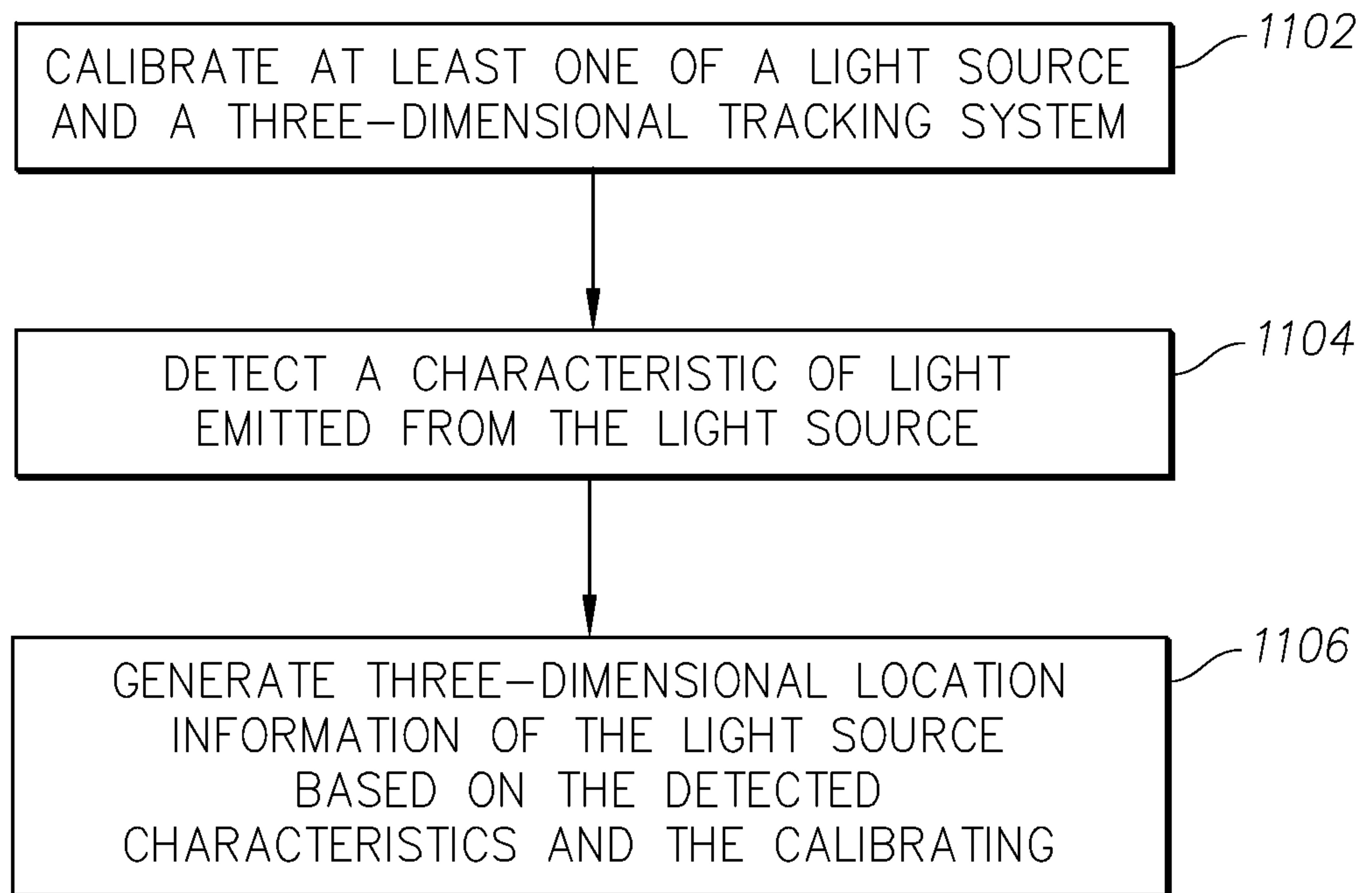
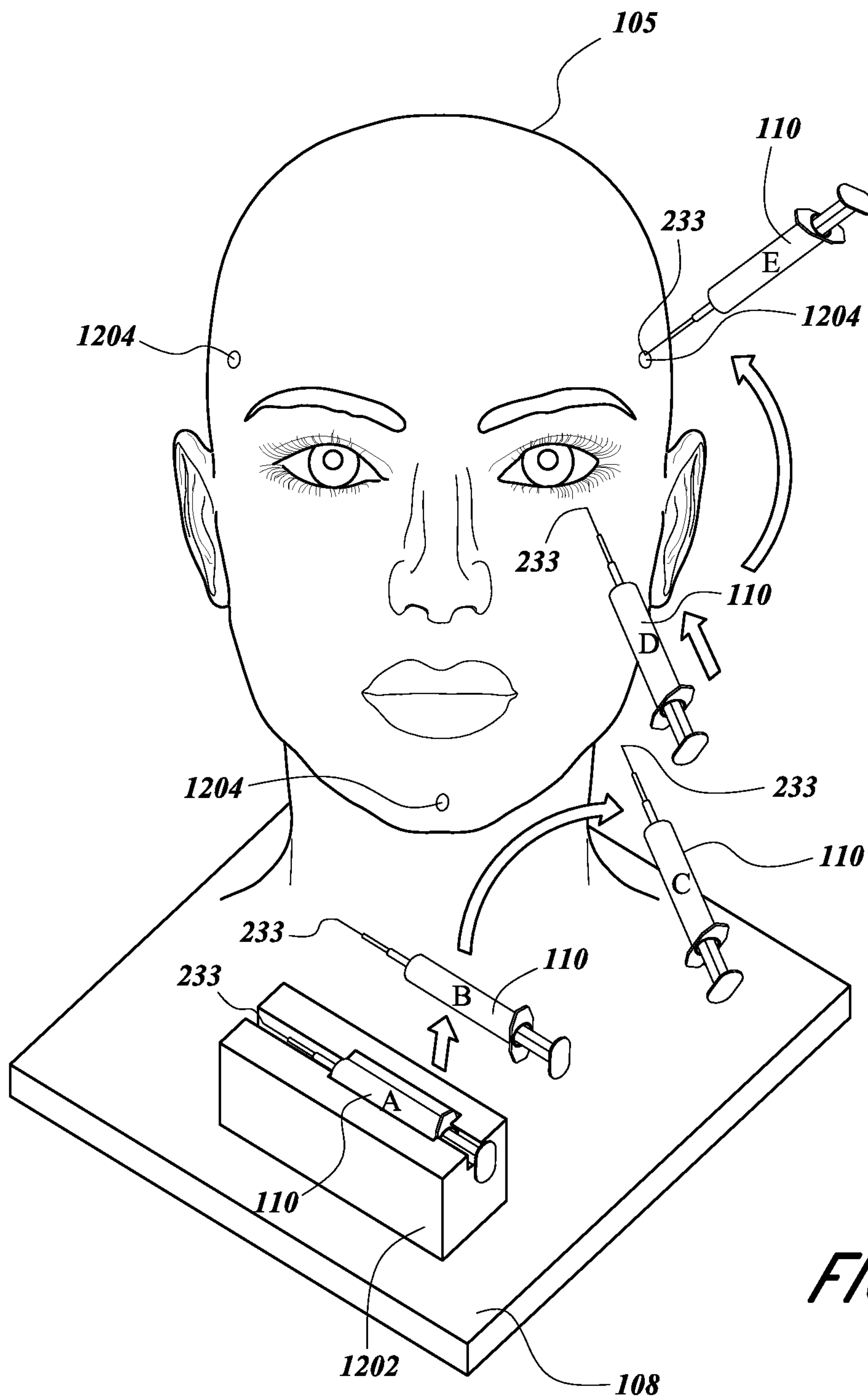


FIG. 8

**FIG. 9**

*FIG. 10*

*FIG. 11*



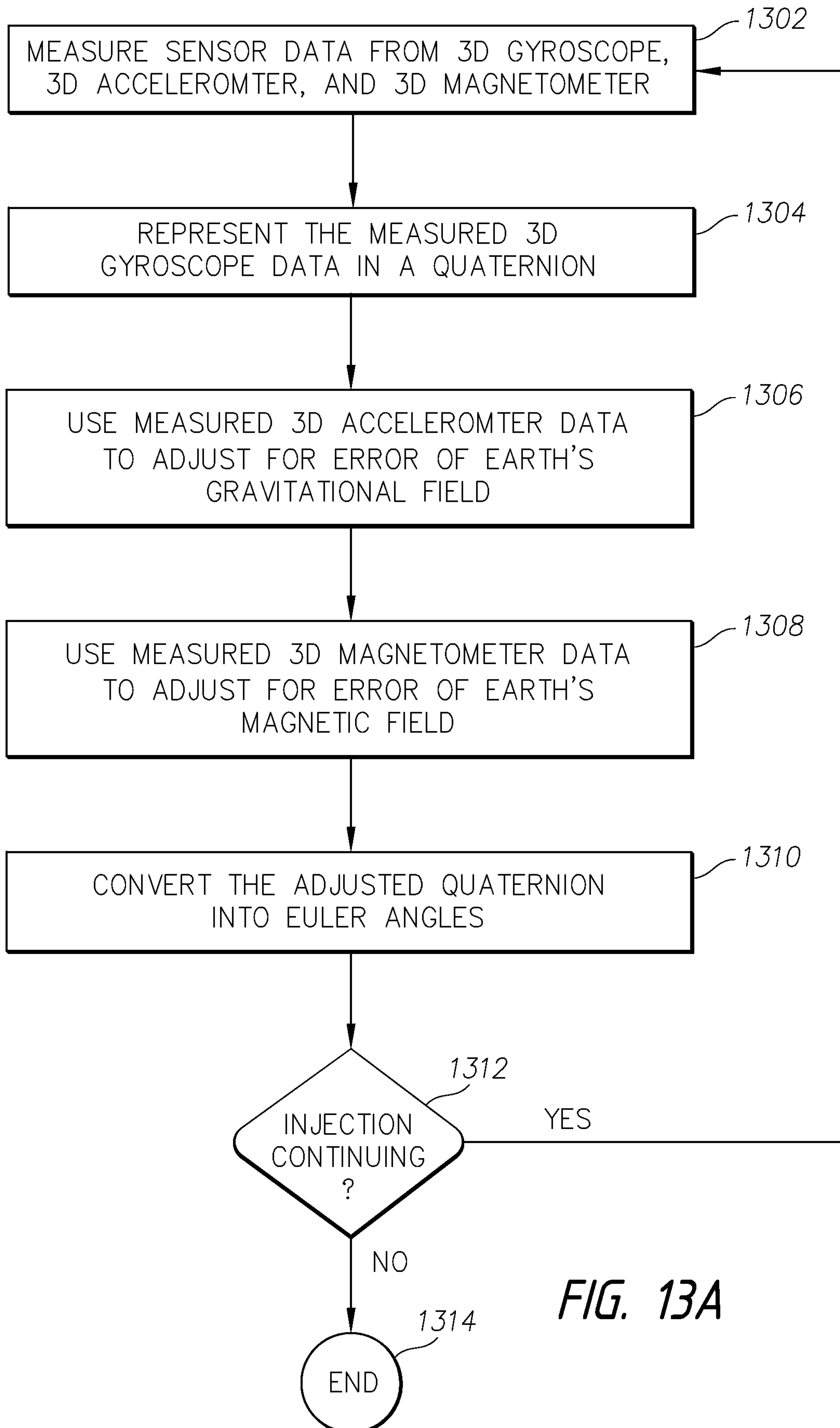
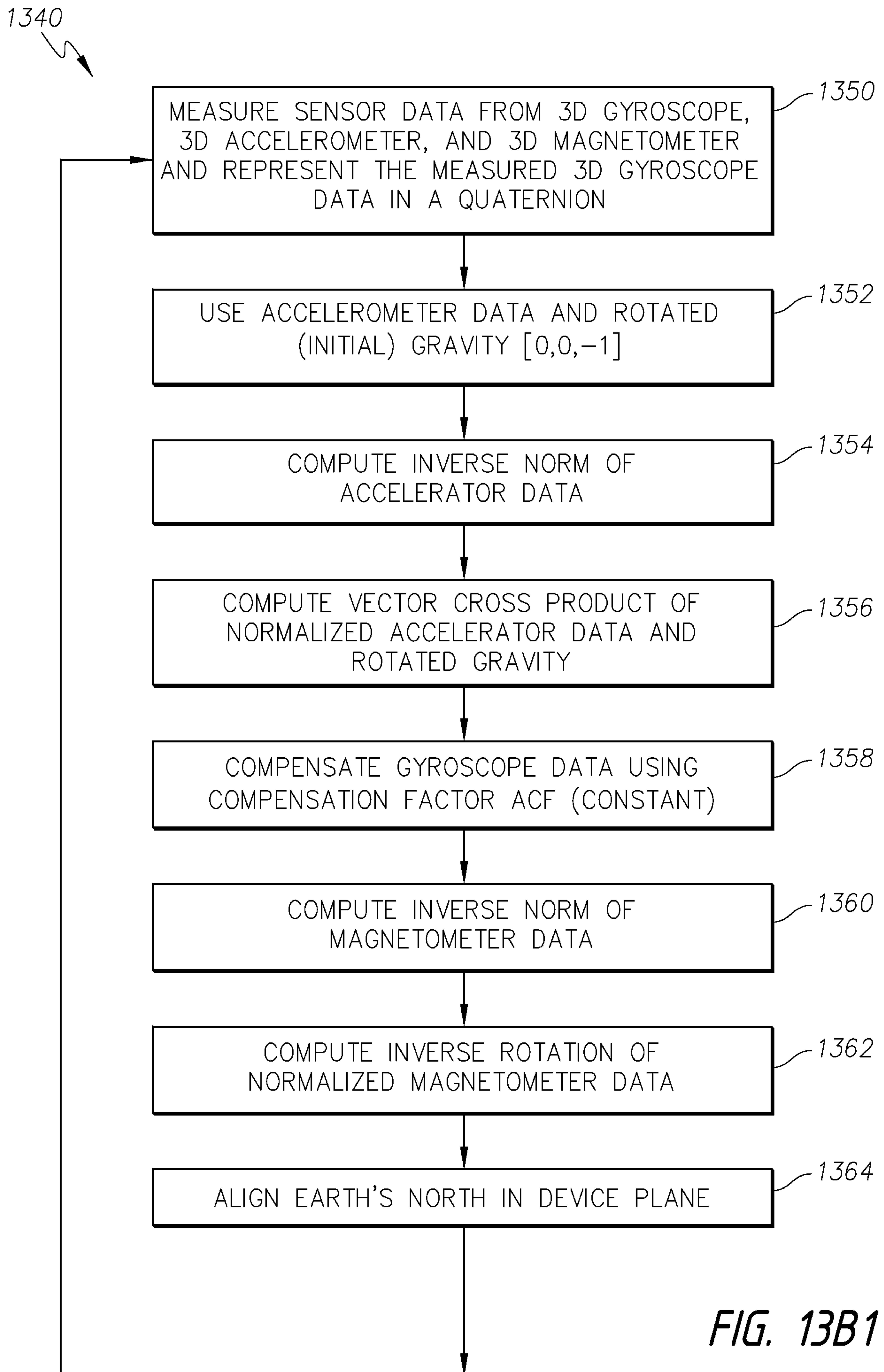


FIG. 13A

FIG. 13B1

FIG. 13B2

FIG. 13B



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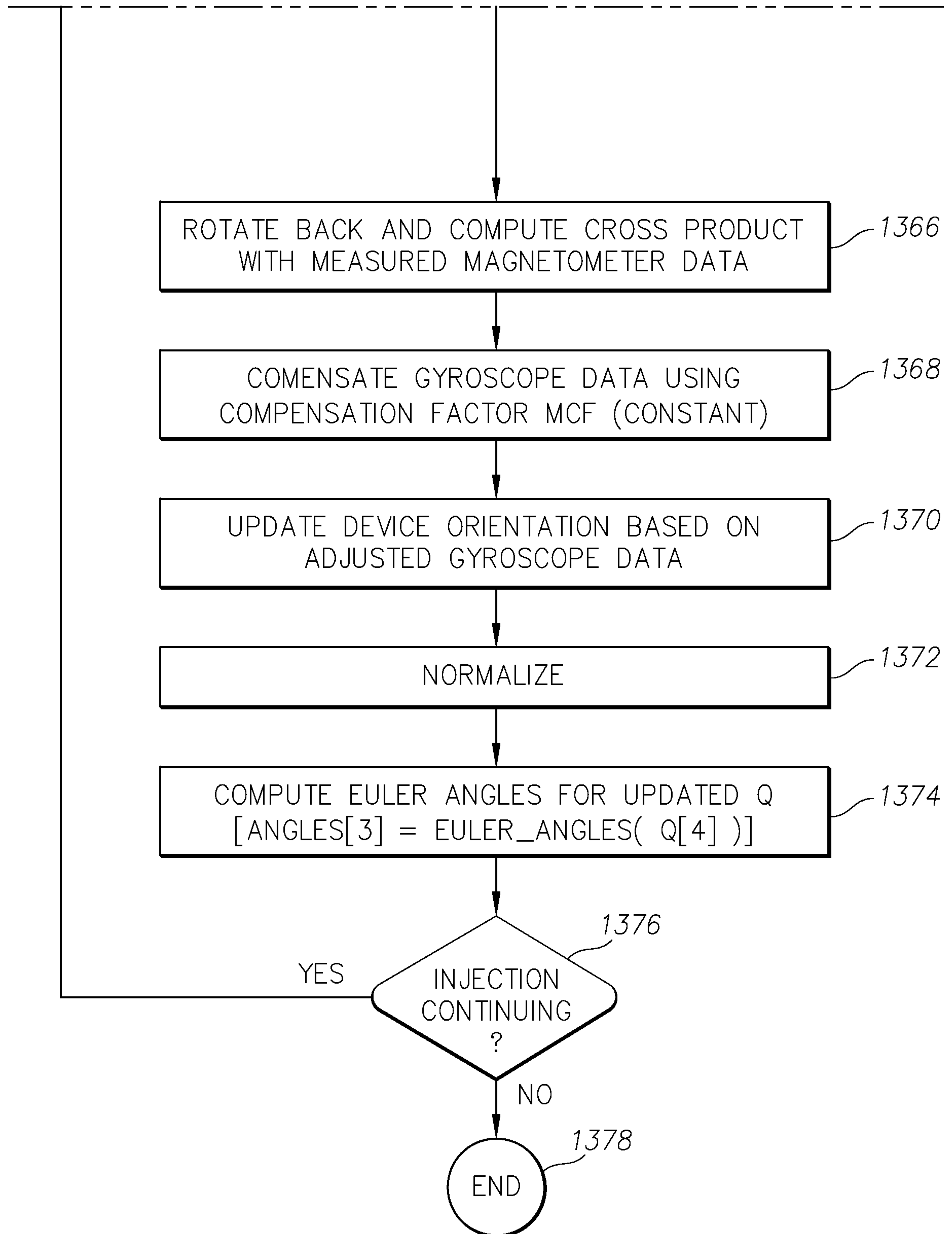


FIG. 13B2

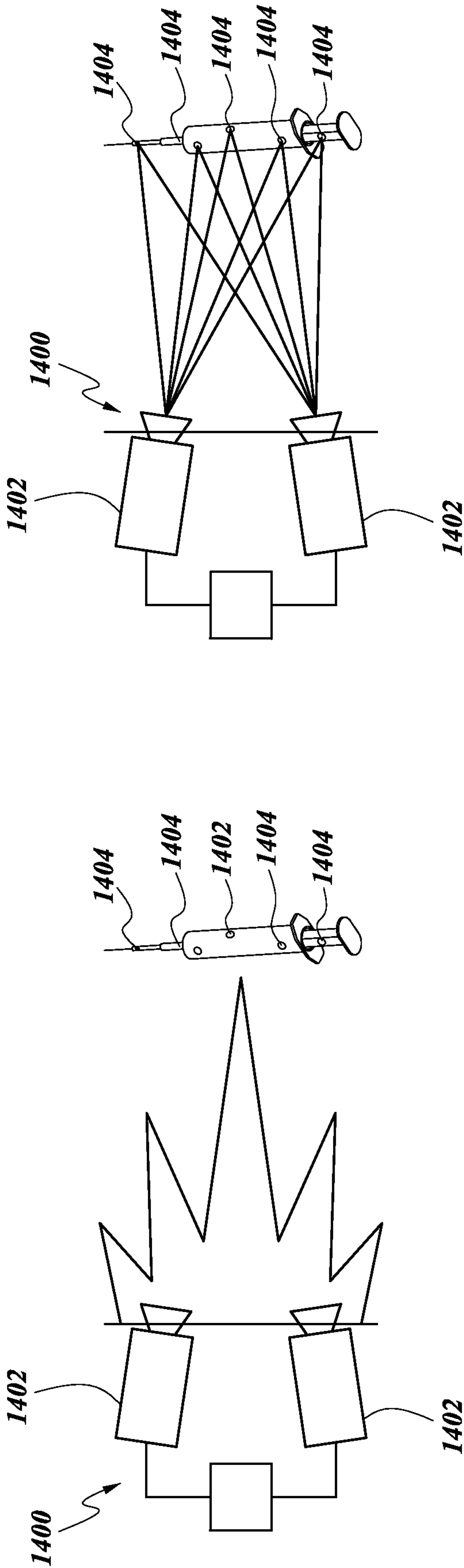


FIG. 14B

FIG. 14A

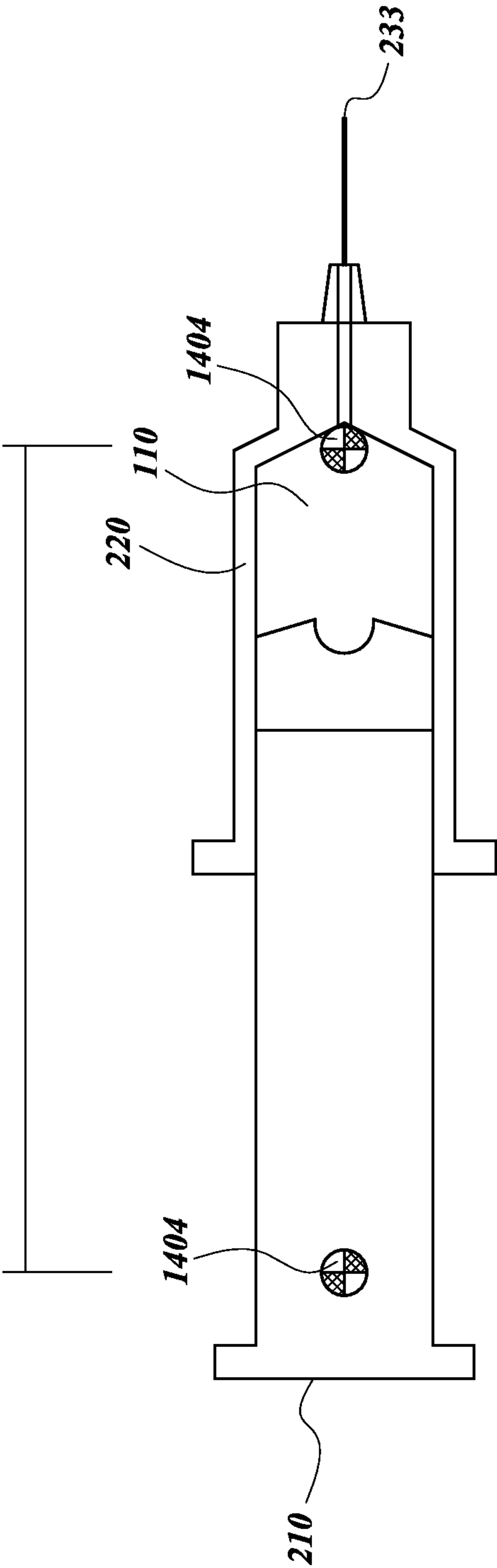
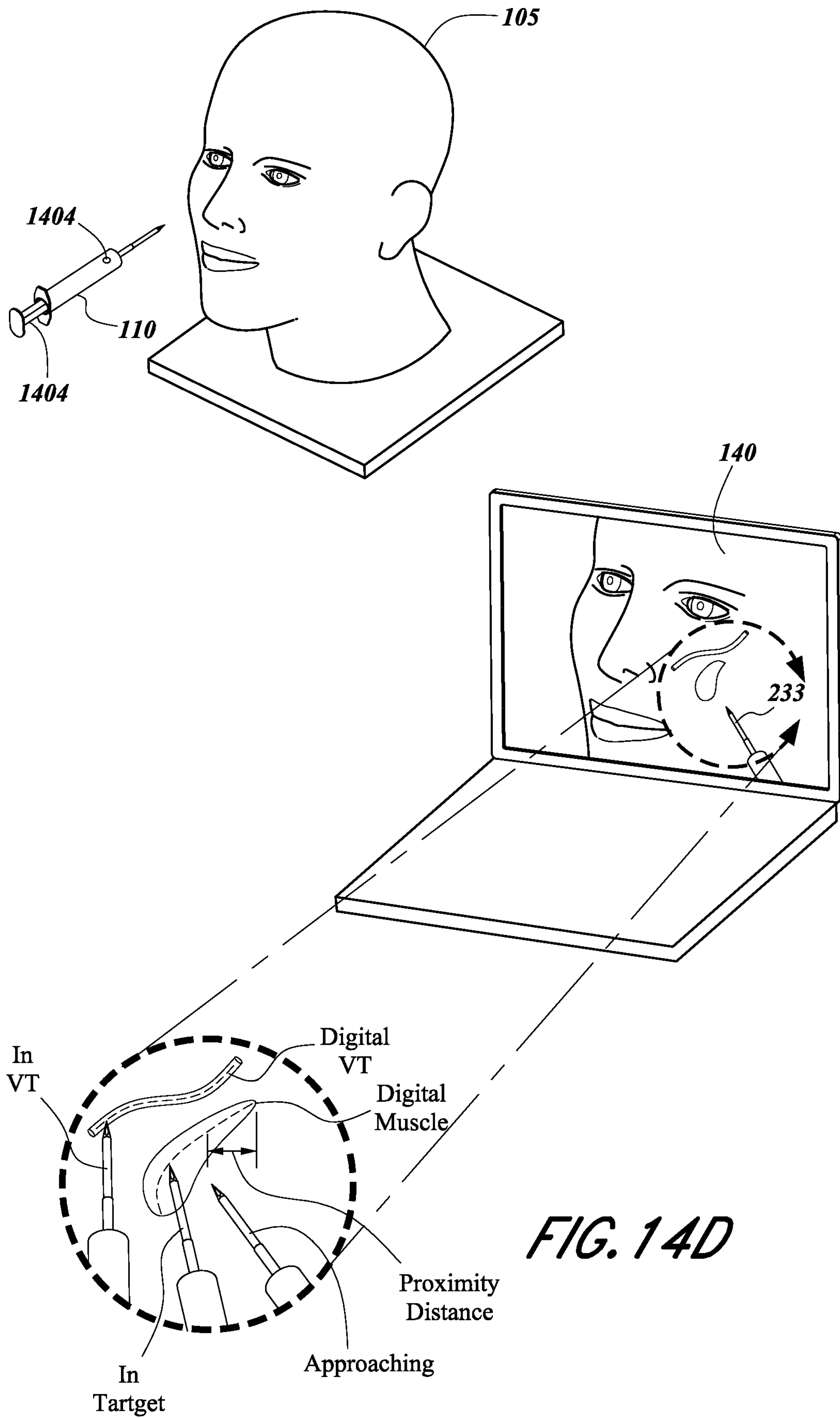
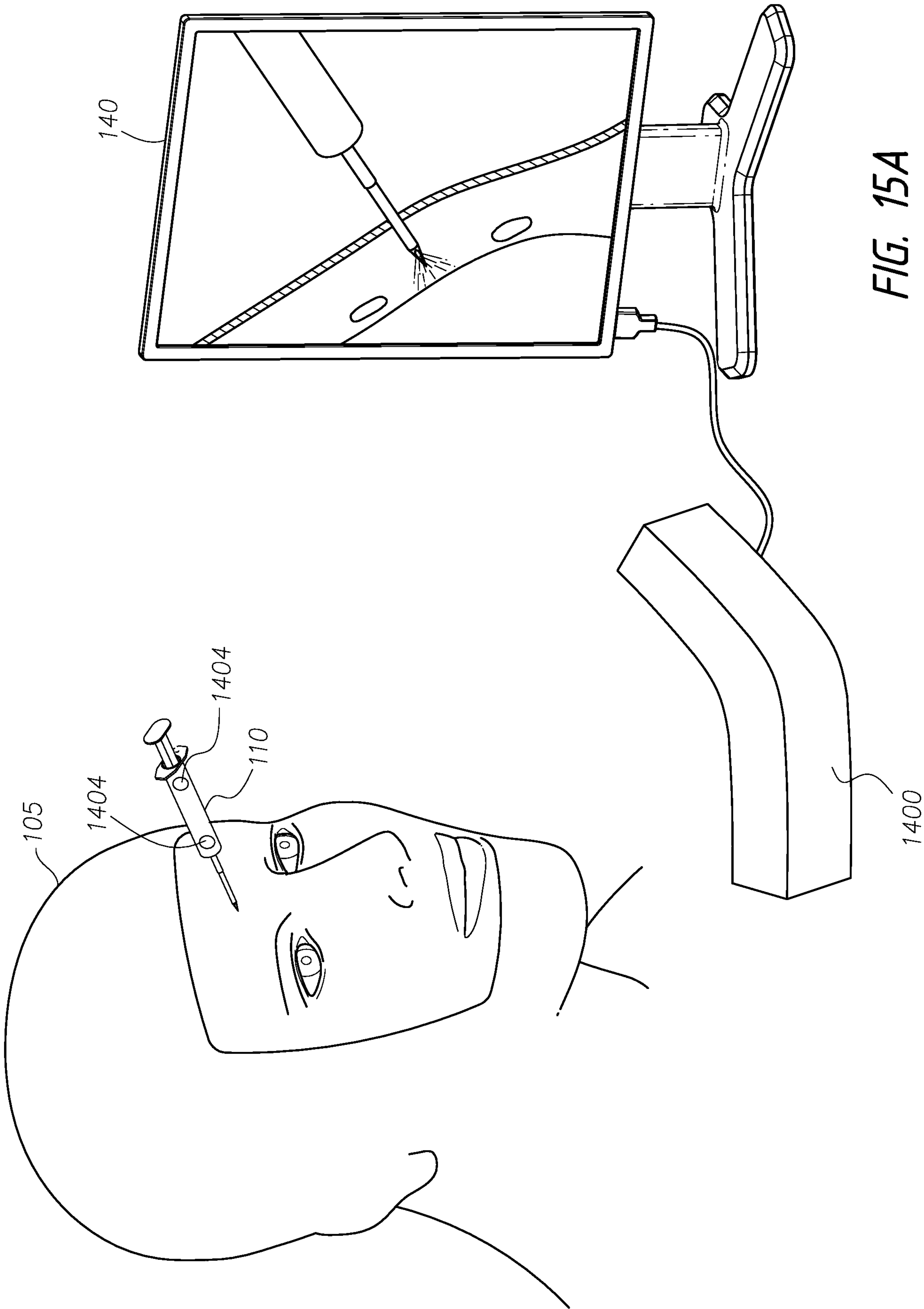
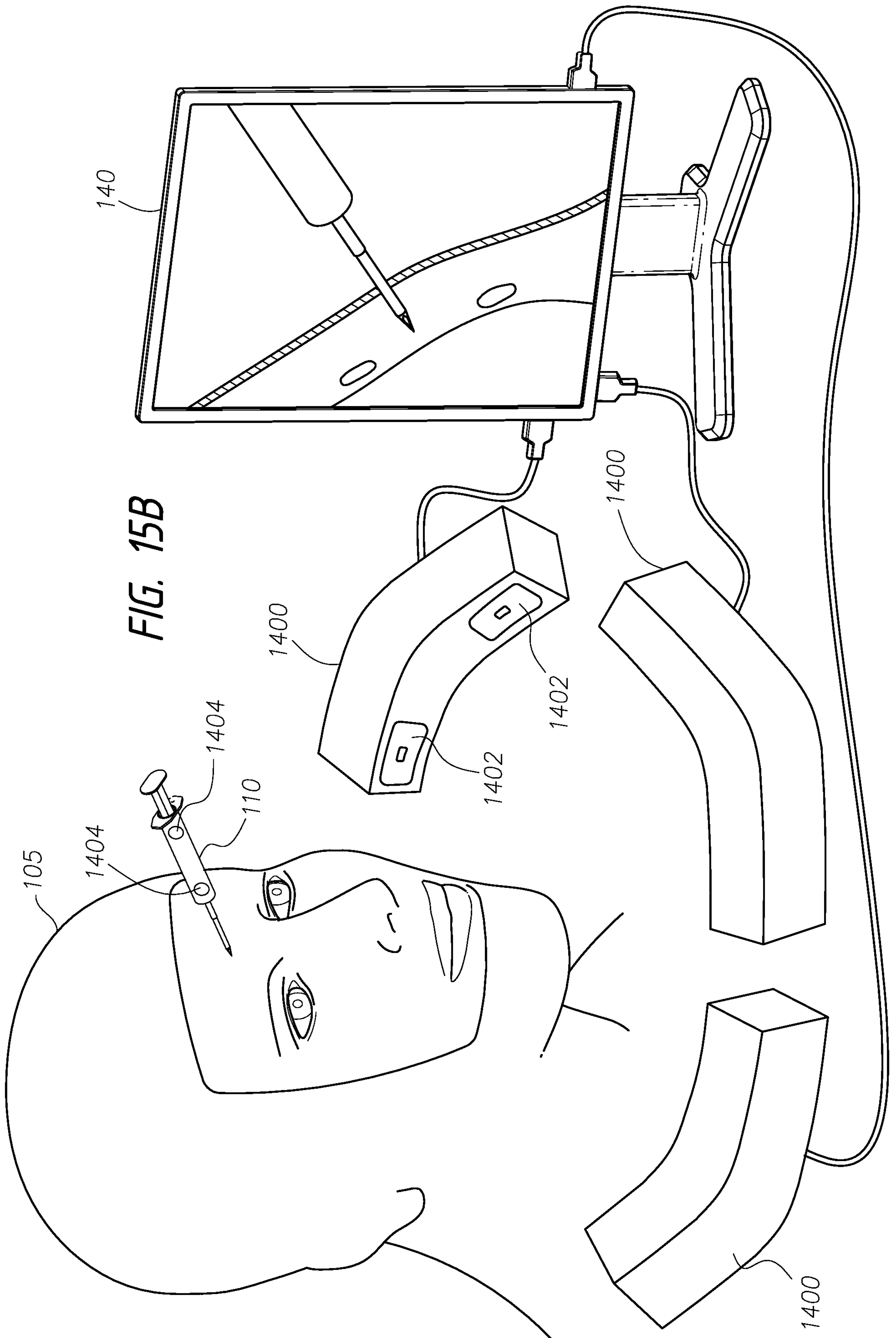


FIG. 14C







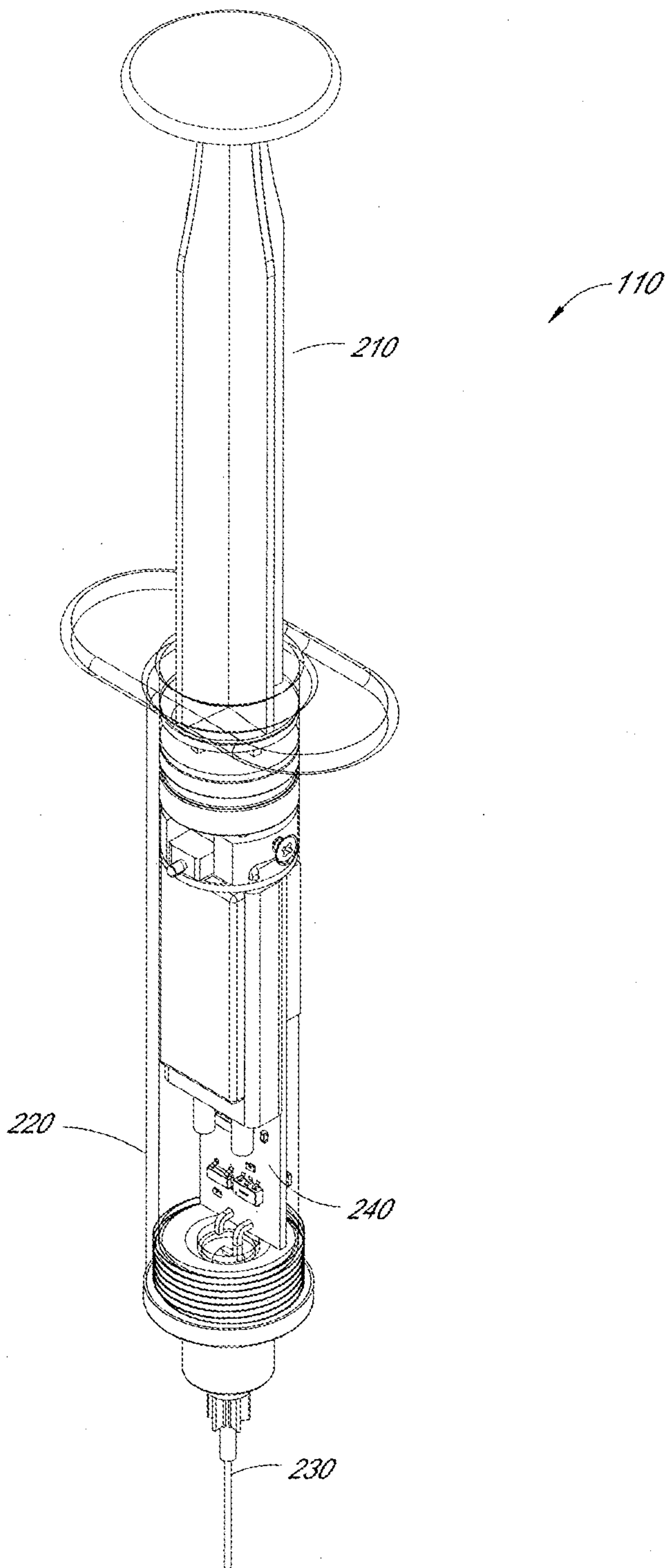


FIG. 2A