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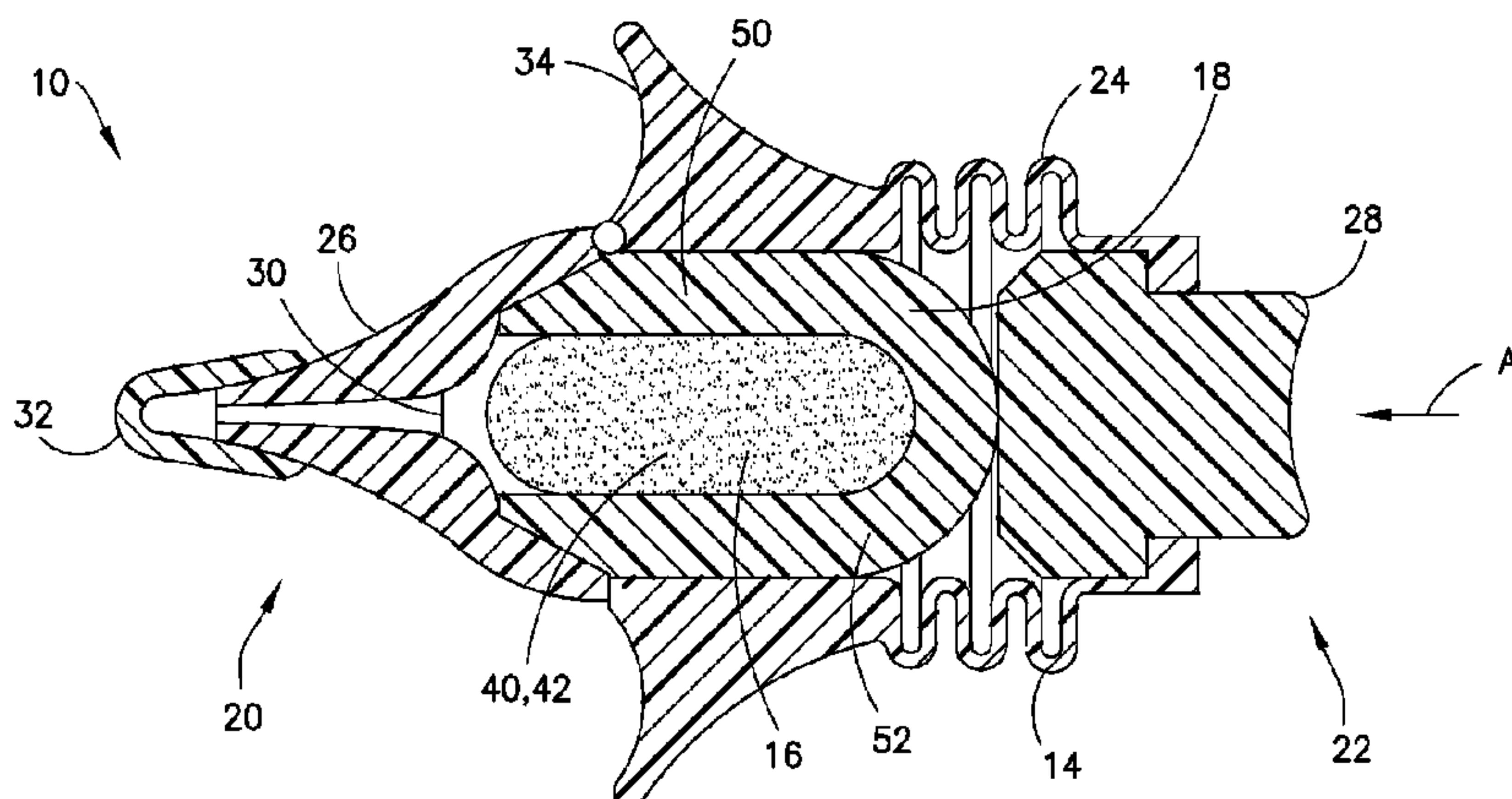
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(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A specimen transfer device (10) adapted to receive a blood sample is disclosed. The specimen transfer device includes a housing (14) and an actuation member (28). A deformable material (16) is disposed within the housing and is deformable from an initial position in which the material is adapted to hold the sample to a deformed position in which at least a portion of the sample is released from the material. A viscoelastic member (18) is disposed within the housing between the material and the housing and between the material and the actuation member. The viscoelastic member is engaged with the actuation member and the material such that movement of the actuation member from a first position to a second position deforms the material from the initial position to the deformed position.

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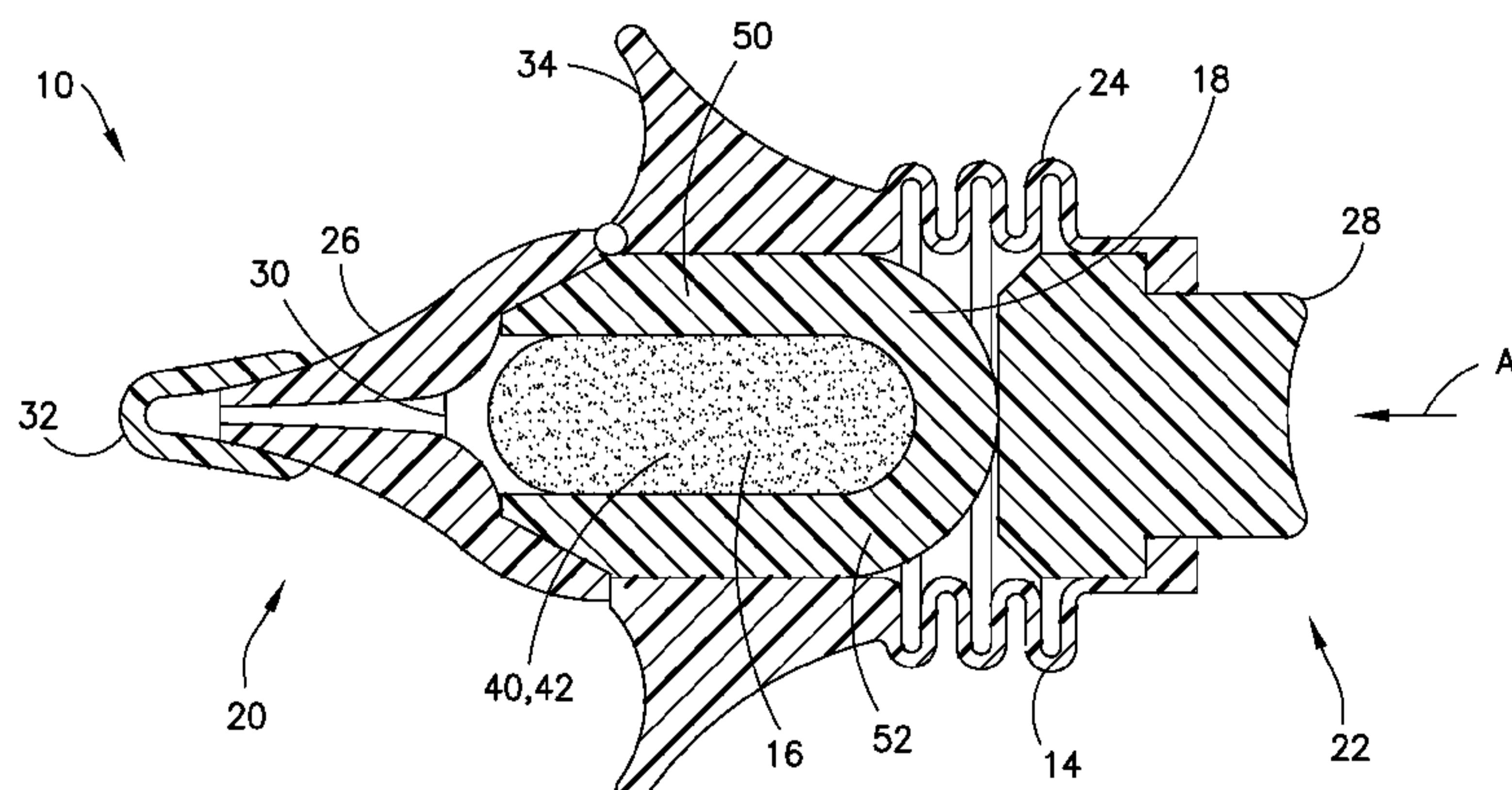


FIG.2

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(57) Abstract: A specimen transfer device (10) adapted to receive a blood sample is disclosed. The specimen transfer device includes a housing (14) and an actuation member (28). A deformable material (16) is disposed within the housing and is deformable from an initial position in which the material is adapted to hold the sample to a deformed position in which at least a portion of the sample is released from the material. A viscoelastic member (18) is disposed within the housing between the material and the housing and between the material and the actuation member. The viscoelastic member is engaged with the actuation member and the material such that movement of the actuation member from a first position to a second position deforms the material from the initial position to the deformed position.

BLOOD SAMPLE MANAGEMENT USING OPEN CELL FOAM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Disclosure

[0001] The present disclosure relates generally to a blood transfer device. More particularly, the present disclosure relates to a blood transfer device, a blood transfer and testing system, a lancet and blood transfer device, and a method of loading an anticoagulant.

2. Description of the Related Art

[0002] Blood sampling is a common health care procedure involving the withdrawal of at least a drop of blood from a patient. Blood samples are commonly taken from hospitalized, homecare, and emergency room patients either by finger stick, heel stick, or venipuncture. Once collected, blood samples may be analyzed to obtain medically useful information including, for example, chemical composition, hematology, and coagulation.

[0003] Blood tests determine the physiological and biochemical states of the patient, such as disease, mineral content, drug effectiveness, and organ function. Blood tests may be performed in a clinical laboratory or at the point-of-care near the patient.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] The present disclosure provides a blood transfer device adapted to receive a blood sample. The blood transfer device includes a housing having a first end, a second end, a sidewall extending therebetween, and an actuation member movable between a first position and a second position. A deformable material is disposed within the housing and is deformable from an initial position in which the material is adapted to hold the blood sample to a deformed position in which a portion of the blood sample is released from the material. A viscoelastic member is disposed within the housing between the material and the sidewall of the housing and between the material and the actuation member. The viscoelastic member is engaged with the actuation member and the material such that movement of the actuation member from the first position to the second position exerts a force on the viscoelastic member which redistributes the force evenly over the material and deforms the material from the initial position to the deformed position.

[0005] In accordance with an embodiment of the present invention, a specimen transfer device adapted to receive a sample includes a housing having a first end, a second end, a sidewall extending therebetween, and an actuation member movable between a first position and a second position. The device further includes a deformable material disposed within the

housing, in which the material is deformable from an initial position in which the material is adapted to contain the sample, to a deformed position in which at least a portion of the sample is released from the material. The device also includes a viscoelastic member disposed within the housing between the material and the sidewall of the housing and between the material and the actuation member. The viscoelastic member is engaged with the actuation member and the material such that movement of the actuation member from the first position to the second position exerts a force on the viscoelastic member which deforms the material from the initial position to the deformed position.

[0006] In certain configurations, the deformable material includes pores. The device may also include a dry anticoagulant powder disposed within the pores of the material. The housing may also include a dispensing tip at the first end. Optimally, the housing includes a valve disposed within the dispensing tip, with the valve being transitionable between a closed position and an open position. With the material in the deformed position and the valve in the open position, the at least a portion of the sample may be released from the material and may flow through the dispensing tip.

[0007] In certain configurations, the viscoelastic member has a viscoelastic member hardness. The actuation member may also have an actuation member hardness. In certain configurations, the viscoelastic member hardness is less than the actuation member hardness. The actuation member may be located at the second end of the housing. Optionally, the actuation member may be a push button, and the sample may be blood.

[0008] In accordance with another embodiment of the present invention, a specimen transfer and testing system may include a specimen transfer device adapted to receive a sample. The specimen transfer device may include a housing having a first end, a second end, a sidewall extending therebetween, a dispensing tip at the first end, an actuation member at the second end, and a valve disposed within the dispensing tip. The actuation member may be movable between a first position and a second position, and the valve may be transitionable between a closed position and an open position. The specimen transfer device may also include a deformable material having pores and disposed within the housing, with the material deformable from an initial position in which the material is adapted to contain the sample to a deformed position in which at least a portion of the sample is released from the material. The specimen transfer device may also include a viscoelastic member disposed within the housing between the material and the sidewall of the housing and between the material and the actuation member. The viscoelastic member may be engaged with the actuation member and the material such that movement of the actuation member from the

first position to the second position exerts a force on the viscoelastic member which deforms the material from the initial position to the deformed position. With the material in the deformed position and the valve in the open position, the portion of the sample released from the material may flow through the dispensing tip. The specimen transfer and testing system may also include a sample testing device having a receiving port adapted to receive the dispensing tip of the specimen transfer device for closed transfer of at least a portion of the sample from the specimen transfer device to the sample testing device.

[0009] In certain configurations, the specimen transfer device further includes a dry anticoagulant powder within the pores of the material. The viscoelastic member may have a viscoelastic member hardness, the actuation member may have an actuation member hardness, and the viscoelastic member hardness may be less than the actuation member hardness. In certain configurations, the actuation member is a push button. In other configurations, the specimen is blood.

[0010] In accordance with yet another embodiment of the present invention, a lancet and specimen transfer device includes a lancet housing having a forward end, a rearward end, and a puncturing element, the puncturing element at least partially disposed within the lancet housing and adapted for movement between a pre-actuated position wherein the puncturing element is retained within the lancet housing and a puncturing position wherein at least a portion of the puncturing element extends through the forward end of the lancet housing. The lancet and specimen transfer device further includes a specimen transfer device engageable with the rearward end of the lancet housing.

[0011] In accordance with another embodiment of the present invention, a blood transfer device adapted to receive a blood sample includes a housing having a first end, a second end, and an actuation member transitionable between a first position and a second position. The blood transfer device further includes an open cell foam material disposed within the housing and having a dry anticoagulant powder therein.

[0012] In certain configurations, the blood transfer device also includes a capillary tube in fluid communication with the open cell foam material. The housing may also include a lid movable between a closed position in which the open cell foam material is sealed within the housing and an open position in which a portion of the open cell foam material is exposed. The capillary tube may be adapted to receive the blood sample after the blood sample is mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder within the open cell foam material. The capillary tube may include a dispensing tip.

[0013] Movement of the actuation member from the first position to the second position may dispense the blood sample through the dispensing tip of the capillary tube. The first capillary tube may be disposed between the first end of the housing and the open cell foam material. The device may also include a second capillary tube in fluid communication with the open cell foam material, with the second capillary tube disposed between the second end of the housing and the open cell foam material. The second capillary tube may be adapted to receive the blood sample after the blood sample is mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder within the open cell foam material. Movement of the actuation member from the first position to the second position may dispense the blood sample through a dispensing tip of the second capillary tube. At least one of an internal surface of the first capillary tube and an internal surface of the second capillary tube may include an anticoagulant coating. The first capillary tube and the second capillary tube may have different lengths. Optionally, the first capillary tube and the second capillary tube may have different internal diameters.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] The above-mentioned and other features and advantages of this disclosure, and the manner of attaining them, will become more apparent and the disclosure itself will be better understood by reference to the following descriptions of embodiments of the disclosure taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0015] **Fig. 1A** is a schematic representation of a deformable material of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0016] **Fig. 1B** is a schematic representation of a deformable material of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0017] **Fig. 1C** is a schematic representation of a deformable material of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0018] **Fig. 1D** is a schematic representation of a deformable material and a viscoelastic member of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0019] **Fig. 1E** is a schematic representation of a deformable material and a viscoelastic member of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0020] **Fig. 2** is a cross-sectional front view of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0021] **Fig. 3A** is a front view of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0022] **Fig. 3B** is a perspective front view of the blood transfer device of **Fig. 3A** during a step of use in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0023] **Fig. 3C** is a front view of the blood transfer device of **Fig. 3A** during a step of use in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0024] **Fig. 4A** is a front view of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0025] **Fig. 4B** is a perspective view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 4A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0026] **Fig. 4C** is a perspective view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 4A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0027] **Fig. 4D** is a perspective view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 4A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0028] **Fig. 4E** is a perspective view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 4A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0029] **Fig. 5A** is a front view of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0030] **Fig. 5B** is a perspective view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 5A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0031] **Fig. 5C** is a perspective view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 5A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0032] **Fig. 5D** is a perspective view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 5A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0033] **Fig. 6A** is a front view of a lancet and blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0034] **Fig. 6B** is a perspective view of a step of using the lancet and blood transfer device of **Fig. 6A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0035] **Fig. 6C** is a perspective view of a step of using the lancet and blood transfer device of **Fig. 6A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0036] **Fig. 6D** is a perspective view of a step of using the lancet and blood transfer device of **Fig. 6A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0037] **Fig. 7A** is a front view of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0038] **Fig. 7B** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 7A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0039] **Fig. 7C** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 7A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0040] **Fig. 7D** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 7A** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0041] **Fig. 8** is a top view of a blood transfer device kit in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0042] **Fig. 9** is a cross-sectional front view of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0043] **Fig. 10** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 9** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0044] **Fig. 11** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 9** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0045] **Fig. 12** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 9** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0046] **Fig. 13** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 9** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0047] **Fig. 14** is a cross-sectional front view of a blood transfer device in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0048] **Fig. 15** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 14** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0049] **Fig. 16** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 14** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0050] **Fig. 17** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 14** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0051] **Fig. 18** is a front view of a step of using the blood transfer device of **Fig. 14** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0052] **Fig. 19** is a perspective view of a syringe assembly in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0053] **Fig. 20** is a close-up partial perspective view of the syringe assembly of **Fig. 19** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0054] Corresponding reference characters indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views. The exemplifications set out herein illustrate exemplary embodiments of the

disclosure, and such exemplifications are not to be construed as limiting the scope of the disclosure in any manner.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0055] The following description is provided to enable those skilled in the art to make and use the described embodiments contemplated for carrying out the invention. Various modifications, equivalents, variations, and alternatives, however, will remain readily apparent to those skilled in the art. Any and all such modifications, variations, equivalents, and alternatives are intended to fall within the spirit and scope of the present invention.

[0056] For purposes of the description hereinafter, the terms “upper”, “lower”, “right”, “left”, “vertical”, “horizontal”, “top”, “bottom”, “lateral”, “longitudinal”, and derivatives thereof shall relate to the invention as it is oriented in the drawing figures. However, it is to be understood that the invention may assume various alternative variations, except where expressly specified to the contrary. It is also to be understood that the specific devices illustrated in the attached drawings, and described in the following specification, are simply exemplary embodiments of the invention. Hence, specific dimensions and other physical characteristics related to the embodiments disclosed herein are not to be considered as limiting.

[0057] **Fig. 2** illustrates an exemplary embodiment of a blood transfer device of the present disclosure. Referring to **Fig. 2**, a blood transfer device **10** adapted to receive a blood sample **12** (**Fig. 3B**) includes a housing or body **14**, a deformable material **16**, and a viscoelastic member **18**.

[0058] In one embodiment, housing **14** includes a first end **20**, a second end **22**, a sidewall **24** extending therebetween, a dispensing tip **26** at the first end **20**, an actuation member **28** at the second end **22**, a valve **30**, a cap **32**, and a finger flange **34**.

[0059] The blood transfer device **10** may include an actuation member **28** that is movable between a first position and a second position. In one embodiment, the actuation member **28** is located at the second end **22** of the housing **14**. In one embodiment, the actuation member **28** is a push button. The actuation member has an actuation member hardness.

[0060] The blood transfer device **10** may include a cap **32** for protectively covering the blood transfer device **10** prior to use thereof. In one embodiment, the cap **32** protectively covers the dispensing tip **26** of the blood transfer device **10** prior to use thereof.

[0061] The blood transfer device **10** may include a valve **30** that is transitional between a closed position and an open position. In one embodiment, the valve **30** is disposed within the dispensing tip **26**. With the valve **30** in an open position, a portion of the blood sample **12**

that is released from the material **16** is able to flow through the dispensing tip **26**. In one embodiment, a portion of the blood sample **12** that is released from the material **16** is able to flow through the dispensing tip **26** to a blood testing device **60**. With the valve **30** in a closed position, no portion of the blood sample **12** is able to flow from the blood transfer device **10**.

[0062] Referring to **Figs. 3A-7D**, a blood testing device **60** includes a receiving port **62** adapted to receive the dispensing tip **26** of the blood transfer device **10**. The blood testing device **60** is adapted to receive the dispensing tip **26** of the blood transfer device **10** for closed transfer of a portion of the blood sample **12** (**Fig. 3C**) from the material **16** of the blood transfer device **10** to the blood testing device **60**. The blood testing device **60** is adapted to receive the blood sample **12** to analyze the blood sample and obtain test results. In one embodiment, the blood testing device **60** is a point-of-care testing device.

[0063] In one embodiment, material **16** includes pores **40** (**Fig. 2**) and is disposed within the housing **14** of the blood transfer device **10**. The material **16** is deformable from an initial position in which the material **16** is adapted to hold the blood sample **12** to a deformed position in which a portion of the blood sample **12** is released from the material **16**. In one embodiment, the material **16** includes a dry anticoagulant powder **42** within the pores **40** of the material **16**. A method of loading an anticoagulant to a material **16** having pores **40** is described in more detail below.

[0064] In one embodiment, the material **16** is a sponge material. In one embodiment, the material **16** is an open cell foam. In one embodiment, the open cell foam is treated with an anticoagulant, as described in detail below, to form a dry anticoagulant powder finely distributed throughout the pores **40** of the material **16**. The open cell foam may be loaded with a blood sample. The blood gets soaked into the open cell foam based on capillary principles. As the blood is loaded into the open cell foam, the blood is exposed to the anticoagulant powder throughout the internal micro pore structure of the open cell foam. Once the open cell foam is loaded with the blood, the open cell foam may be deformed, e.g., compressed, to squeeze-out a stabilized blood sample. In one embodiment, the stabilized blood sample may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device, a point-of-care testing device, or similar analytical device.

[0065] In one embodiment, the material **16** is a soft deformable open cell foam that is inert to blood. In one embodiment, the open cell foam may be a melamine foam, such as Basotect® foam commercially available from BASF. In another embodiment, the open cell foam may consist of a formaldehyde-melamine-sodium bisulfite copolymer. The open cell

foam may be a flexible, hydrophilic open cell foam that is resistant to heat and many organic solvents. In one embodiment, the open cell foam may be a sponge material.

[0066] A method of loading an anticoagulant to a material **16** having pores **40** will now be discussed. In one embodiment, the method includes soaking the material **16** in a liquid solution of the anticoagulant and water; evaporating the water of the liquid solution; and forming a dry anticoagulant powder **42** within the pores **40** of the material **16**.

[0067] The method of the present disclosure enables precisely controlled loading of an anticoagulant into the material **16** by soaking it with an anticoagulant and water solution and then drying the material **16** to form a finely distributed dry anticoagulant powder **42** throughout the pores **40** of the material **16**.

[0068] Anticoagulants such as Heparin or EDTA (Ethylene Diamine Tetra Acetic Acid) as well as other blood stabilization agents could be introduced into the material **16** as a liquid solution by soaking the material **16** in the liquid solution of a desired concentration. After evaporating the liquid phase, e.g., evaporating the water from a water and Heparin solution, a dry anticoagulant powder may be formed and finely distributed throughout the internal structure of the material **16**. For example, the dry anticoagulant powder may be finely distributed throughout the pores **40** of the material **16**. In a similar manner, the material **16** could be treated to provide a hydrophobic, hydrophilic, or reactive internal pore surface.

[0069] In one embodiment, the viscoelastic member **18** is disposed within the housing **14** of the blood transfer device **10** between the material **16** and the sidewall **24** of the housing **14** and between the material **16** and the actuation member **28**. For example, referring to **Fig. 2**, the viscoelastic member **18** includes a first portion **50** that is disposed between the material **16** and the sidewall **24** of the housing **14** and a second portion **52** that is disposed between the material **16** and the actuation member **28**.

[0070] Viscoelastic member **18** of an exemplary embodiment is preferably made of a pliable material, such as a soft elastomer, for example. In one exemplary embodiment, viscoelastic member **18** is made from a viscoelastic material such as silicone or a thermoplastic elastomer (TPE). The viscoelastic member **18** serves as an intermediate member between the material **16** and the rigid surrounding components, e.g., the sidewall **24** of the housing **14** and the actuation member **28**. In one embodiment, the viscoelastic member **18** serves as a damper or a soft viscoelastic damper. The viscoelastic member **18** uniformly redistributes the external imposed strain to the material **16** via the actuation member **28** as described below. In this manner, the viscoelastic member **18** minimizes blood hemolysis due to localized excessive deformation of the material **16**. Additionally, the viscoelastic member

18 controls the speed of the deformation of the material **16** and mitigates the rate of the force applied to deform the material **16** via the actuation member **28**.

[0071] The viscoelastic member **18** has a viscoelastic member hardness. The viscoelastic member hardness is less than the actuation member hardness. In one embodiment, the viscoelastic member hardness of the material that forms viscoelastic member **18** may have a hardness value on the Shore Durometer scale in the type A range for soft elastomers. In one exemplary embodiment, viscoelastic member **18** has a hardness of approximately Shore A 5.

[0072] The blood transfer device **10** may include a finger flange **34**. When it is desired to expel or deliver a portion of the blood sample **12** from the material **16**, the blood transfer device **10** is grasped with the user's thumb on the actuation member **28** and with the user's fingers extending around the finger flange **34**. In this manner, the blood transfer device **10** is grasped by a user in a well-known and well recognized manner similar to the operation of a conventional hypodermic syringe. Next, the user effects a squeezing movement between the thumb on the actuation member **28** and the fingers grasping the finger flange **34**, thereby causing the actuation member **28** to move in a direction generally along arrow **A** (Fig. 2) from a first position to a second position.

[0073] The viscoelastic member **18** is engaged with the actuation member **28** and the material **16** such that movement of the actuation member **28** from the first position to the second position exerts a force on the viscoelastic member **18** which redistributes the force evenly over the material **16** and deforms the material **16** from the initial position to the deformed position. In this manner, the viscoelastic member **18** minimizes blood hemolysis due to localized excessive deformation of the material **16**. Additionally, the viscoelastic member **18** controls the speed of the deformation of the material **16** and mitigates the rate of the force applied to deform the material **16** via the actuation member **28**.

[0074] With the material **16** in the deformed position and the valve **30** of the housing **14** in the open position, the portion of the blood sample **12** released from the material **16** is able to flow through the dispensing tip **26**.

[0075] Figs. 3A–7D illustrate other exemplary embodiments. The embodiment illustrated in Figs. 3A–3C includes similar components to the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 2, and the similar components are denoted by a reference number followed by the letter **A**. The embodiment illustrated in Figs. 4A–4E also includes similar components to the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 2, and the similar components are denoted by a reference number followed by the letter **B**. The embodiment illustrated in Figs. 5A–5D also includes similar components to the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 2, and the similar components are denoted by a

reference number followed by the letter **C**. The embodiment illustrated in **Figs. 6A-6D** also includes similar components to the embodiment illustrated in **Fig. 2**, and the similar components are denoted by a reference number followed by the letter **D**. The embodiment illustrated in **Figs. 7A-7D** also includes similar components to the embodiment illustrated in **Fig. 2**, and the similar components are denoted by a reference number followed by the letter **E**. For the sake of brevity, these similar components and the similar steps of using blood transfer devices **10A-10E** (**Figs. 3A-7D**) will not all be discussed in conjunction with the embodiments illustrated in **Figs. 3A-7D**.

[0076] Referring to **Figs. 3A-3C**, in one embodiment, blood transfer device **10A** includes a body or bellows **70** and a cap **72** that is transitionable between an open position and a closed position. In one embodiment, the cap **72** is connected to the bellows **70** via a hinged portion **74**.

[0077] During the use of blood transfer device **10A**, a lancet device can be used to lance a skin surface **S** of a patient. Next, the cap **72** is moved to the open position to expose the material **16A**. The blood transfer device **10A** is then positioned such that the material **16A** is placed adjacent a punctured skin surface **S** of a patient so that the blood sample **12** can be transferred to the material **16A**. For example, the material **16A** may touch the punctured skin surface **S** to soak up the blood sample **12**. As the blood **12** is loaded into the material **16A**, the blood **12** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder throughout the internal micro pore structure of the material **16A**. Once the material **16A** is loaded with the blood **12**, the cap **72** is moved to the closed position and the material **16A** is deformed, e.g., compressed, to squeeze out a stabilized blood sample **12**. In one embodiment, the stabilized blood sample **12** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device **60A**.

[0078] Referring to **Figs. 4A-4E**, in one embodiment, blood transfer device **10B** includes a first body portion **80**, a second body portion **82** connected to the first body portion **80** via a hinged portion **84**, a chamber **86** within the first body portion **80** for receiving a material **16B**, a protruding element **88** extending into the second body portion **82** towards the first body portion **80**, and a sterile cap **89** in fluid communication with the chamber **86**. The blood transfer device **10B** is transitionable between an open position and a closed position.

[0079] During the use of blood transfer device **10B**, a lancet device **100** can be used to lance a skin surface **S** of a patient. Next, the blood transfer device **10B** is moved to the open position to expose the material **16B** within the chamber **86**. The blood transfer device **10B** is then positioned such that the material **16B** is placed adjacent a punctured skin surface **S** of a patient so that the blood sample **12** can be transferred to the material **16B**. For example, the

material **16B** may touch the punctured skin surface **S** to soak up the blood sample **12**. As the blood **12** is loaded into the material **16B**, the blood **12** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder throughout the internal micro pore structure of the material **16B**. Once the material **16B** is loaded with the blood **12**, the blood transfer device **10B** is moved to the closed position and the material **16B** is deformed, e.g., compressed, to squeeze out a stabilized blood sample **12**. For example, the blood transfer device **10B** can be squeezed so that the protruding element **88** deforms the material **16B** thereby squeezing a stabilized blood sample **12** through the sterile cap **89**. In one embodiment, the stabilized blood sample **12** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device **60B**.

[0080] Referring to **Figs. 5A-5D**, in one embodiment, blood transfer device **10C** includes a first body portion **90**, a second body portion **92** removably connected to the first body portion **90**, a chamber **94** within the first body portion **90** for receiving a material **16C**, and a slide button **96** movably positioned within the second body portion **92**. The blood transfer device **10C** is transitional between an open position and a closed position. The slide button **96** is transitional between a first position and a second position.

[0081] During the use of blood transfer device **10C**, a lancet device can be used to lance a skin surface **S** of a patient. Next, the second body portion **92** is removed from the first body portion **90** to open the blood transfer device **10C** and expose the material **16C** within the chamber **94**. The blood transfer device **10C** is then positioned such that the material **16C** is placed adjacent a punctured skin surface **S** of a patient so that the blood sample **12** can be transferred to the material **16C**. For example, the material **16C** may touch the punctured skin surface **S** to soak up the blood sample **12**. As the blood **12** is loaded into the material **16C**, the blood **12** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder throughout the internal micro pore structure of the material **16C**. Once the material **16C** is loaded with the blood **12**, the second body portion **92** is connected to the first body portion **90** to close the blood transfer device **10C** and the material **16C** is deformed, e.g., compressed, to squeeze out a stabilized blood sample **12**. For example, the slide button **96** can be moved from the first position to the second position to compress the material **16C** and squeeze a stabilized blood sample **12** through the dispensing tip **26C**. In one embodiment, the stabilized blood sample **12** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device **60C**, as shown in **Fig. 5D**.

[0082] **Figs. 6A-6D** illustrate another exemplary embodiment of the present disclosure. Referring to **Figs. 6A-6D**, a lancet and blood transfer device **110** includes a lancet device **120** and a blood transfer device **10D**.

[0083] In one embodiment, lancet device **120** includes a lancet housing **122** having a forward end **124** and a rearward end **126**, a lancet structure **128** having a puncturing element **130**, a protective cover **132**, and a grip portion **134**. In one embodiment, the lancet device **120** is a contact activated lancet device. The lancet device **120** may include the protective cover **132** for protectively covering the lancet device **120** prior to use thereof. The lancet housing **122** may include the grip portion **134** to generally improve the grip between the lancet housing **122** and the user's fingertips.

[0084] The lancet structure **128** is at least partially disposed within the lancet housing **122** and is adapted for movement between a pre-actuated position wherein the puncturing element **130** is retained within the lancet housing **122** and a puncturing position wherein at least a portion of the puncturing element **130** extends through the forward end **124** of the lancet housing **122**.

[0085] Referring to **Figs. 6A-6D**, in one embodiment, blood transfer device **10D** includes a chamber **140** within the blood transfer device **10D** for receiving a material **16D**, a push button **142** transitional between a first position and a second position, and a sterile cap **144** transitional between an open position and a closed position. In one embodiment, the cap **144** is connected to the blood transfer device **10D** via a hinged portion **146**. In one embodiment, the blood transfer device **10D** is connected to the rearward end **126** of the lancet housing **122** as shown in **Figs. 6A-6D**.

[0086] During the use of lancet and blood transfer device **110**, the lancet device **120** can be used to lance a skin surface **S** of a patient. Next, the cap **144** of the blood transfer device **10D** is moved to the open position to expose the material **16D** within the chamber **140**.

[0087] The lancet and blood transfer device **110** is then positioned such that the material **16D** is placed adjacent a punctured skin surface **S** of a patient so that the blood sample **12** can be transferred to the material **16D**. For example, the material **16D** may touch the punctured skin surface **S** to soak up the blood sample **12**. As the blood **12** is loaded into the material **16D**, the blood **12** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder throughout the internal micro pore structure of the material **16D**. Once the material **16D** is loaded with the blood **12**, the cap **144** is moved to the closed position to close the blood transfer device **10D** and the material **16D** is deformed, e.g., compressed, to squeeze out a stabilized blood sample **12**. For example, the push button **142** can be moved from the first position to the second position to compress the material **16D** and squeeze a stabilized blood sample **12** through the dispensing tip **26D**. In one embodiment, the stabilized blood sample **12** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device **60D**.

[0088] Referring to **Figs. 7A-7D**, in one embodiment, blood transfer device **10E** includes a first end **150**, a second end **152**, an internal mechanism within the housing **14E** of the blood transfer device **10E**, and a cap **154** that is transitionable between an open position and a closed position.

[0089] During the use of blood transfer device **10E**, a lancet device can be used to lance a skin surface **S** of a patient. Next, the cap **154** is removed to open the blood transfer device **10E** and expose the material **16E** within the blood transfer device **10E**. The blood transfer device **10E** is then positioned such that the material **16E** is placed adjacent a punctured skin surface **S** of a patient so that the blood sample **12** can be transferred to the material **16E**. For example, the material **16E** may touch the punctured skin surface **S** to soak up the blood sample **12**. As the blood **12** is loaded into the material **16E**, the blood **12** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder throughout the internal micro pore structure of the material **16E**. Once the material **16E** is loaded with the blood **12**, the cap **154** is connected to the blood transfer device **10E** to close the blood transfer device **10E** and the material **16E** is deformed, e.g., compressed, to squeeze out a stabilized blood sample **12**. For example, the blood transfer device **10E** can be pushed down on a surface to trigger the internal mechanism within the housing **14E** of the blood transfer device **10E** to automatically compress the material **16E** and squeeze a stabilized blood sample **12** through the dispensing tip **26E**. In one embodiment, the stabilized blood sample **12** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device **60E**.

[0090] **Fig. 8** illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the present disclosure. Referring to **Fig. 8**, a lancet and blood transfer system **200** of the present disclosure includes a kit **201** having a blood transfer device **202**, a contact activated lancet device **204**, and alcohol swabs **206**. In one embodiment, the components of the kit **201** are packaged together.

[0091] Referring to **Figs. 1A-1E**, operating principles of embodiments of the present disclosure are illustrated. Referring to **Figs. 1B and 1C**, a deformable material **16** receives blood **12** therein. As the blood **12** is loaded into the material **16**, the blood **12** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder throughout the internal micro pore structure of the material **16**. Once the material **16** is loaded with the blood **12**, the material **16** is directly deformed, e.g., compressed, to squeeze out a stabilized blood sample **12**.

[0092] Referring to **Figs. 1D and 1E**, a deformable material **16** receives blood **12** therein. As the blood **12** is loaded into the material **16**, the blood **12** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder throughout the internal micro pore structure of the material **16**. Once the material **16**

is loaded with the blood **12**, the material **16** is indirectly deformed, e.g., compressed, via the viscoelastic member **18** to squeeze out a stabilized blood sample **12**.

[0093] A blood transfer device of the present disclosure offers uniform blood mixing with an anticoagulant throughout micro pores of an open cell foam for small sample volumes such as capillary blood samples obtained from a finger stick. A blood transfer device of the present disclosure could catch blood clots or other contaminants within the pores of the open cell foam and prevent them from being dispensed into a diagnostic sample port. A blood transfer device of the present disclosure enables a simple, low cost design for receiving and dispensing a blood sample. Blood sample management based on a deformable open cell foam may be used and adjusted for capillary, venous, and arterial sample management.

[0094] **Figs. 9–20** illustrate other exemplary embodiments of the present disclosure. The present disclosure also provides a blood transfer device that includes an open cell foam material and a capillary tube to collect a blood sample, stabilize the blood sample, e.g., mix the blood sample with an anticoagulant, meter the blood sample, and dispense the stabilized blood sample to a diagnostic device. The present disclosure also provides an open cell foam material that may be placed within a syringe assembly for mixing and stabilizing blood. For example, an open cell foam material may be used with an arterial blood gas syringe. In this manner, stabilized blood is dispensed for blood gas analysis.

[0095] **Figs. 9–13** illustrate an exemplary embodiment of a blood transfer device of the present disclosure. Referring to **Figs. 9–13**, a blood transfer device **300** adapted to receive a blood sample **302** includes a housing **304**, an open cell foam material **306** having a dry anticoagulant powder **310** therein, and a capillary tube **308**.

[0096] Referring to **Figs. 9–13**, housing **304** includes a first end **320**, a second end **322**, a first portion **324**, a second portion **326**, a third portion **328**, a finger grip **330** disposed between the second portion **326** and the third portion **328**, an actuation member **332** transitional between a first position and a second position, and a lid **334** movable between a closed position in which the open cell foam material **306** is sealed within the housing **304** and an open position in which a portion of the open cell foam material **306** is exposed. With the lid **334** in the open position and the open cell foam material **306** in contact with the blood sample **302**, the blood sample **302** is absorbed within the open cell foam material **306** and mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder **310** therein. In one embodiment, the actuation member **332** is a push button formed of a rubber material.

[0097] In one embodiment, open cell foam material **306** includes pores **312** and is disposed within the housing **304** of the blood transfer device **300**. Referring to **Figs. 9–13**, in one

embodiment, the open cell foam material **306** is disposed within the first portion **324** of the housing **304**. In one embodiment, the open cell foam material **306** includes a dry anticoagulant powder **310** within the pores **312** of the open cell foam material **306**.

[0098] The open cell foam material **306** is adapted to receive a blood sample **302** such that the blood sample **302** is mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder **310** which is present inside the open cell foam material **306**. In this manner, a stabilized blood sample may travel from the open cell foam material **306** into capillary tube **308** for final metering and dispensing as described in more detail below.

[0099] In one embodiment, the open cell foam **306** is treated with an anticoagulant to form a dry anticoagulant powder **310** finely distributed throughout the pores **312** of the open cell foam **306**. The open cell foam **306** may be loaded with a blood sample **302**. The blood **302** gets soaked into the open cell foam **306** based on capillary principles. As the blood **302** is loaded into the open cell foam **306**, the blood **302** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder **310** throughout the internal micro pore structure of the open cell foam **306**. The stabilized blood sample **302** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device, a point-of-care testing device, or similar analytical device.

[00100] As described above, a method of loading an anticoagulant to the open cell foam material **306** having pores **312** may include soaking the open cell foam material **306** in a liquid solution of the anticoagulant and water; evaporating the water of the liquid solution; and forming a dry anticoagulant powder **310** within the pores **312** of the open cell foam material **306**.

[00101] The method of the present disclosure enables precisely controlled loading of an anticoagulant into the open cell foam material **306** by soaking it with an anticoagulant and water solution and then drying the open cell foam material **306** to form a finely distributed dry anticoagulant powder **310** throughout the pores **312** of the open cell foam material **306**.

[00102] Anticoagulants such as Heparin or EDTA (Ethylene Diamine Tetra Acetic Acid) as well as other blood stabilization agents could be introduced into the open cell foam material **306** as a liquid solution by soaking the open cell foam material **306** in the liquid solution of a desired concentration. After evaporating the liquid phase, e.g., evaporating the water from a water and Heparin solution, a dry anticoagulant powder may be formed and finely distributed throughout the internal structure of the open cell foam material **306**. For example, the dry anticoagulant powder may be finely distributed throughout the pores **312** of the open cell foam material **306**. In a similar manner, the open cell foam material **306** could be treated to provide a hydrophobic, hydrophilic, or reactive internal pore surface.

[00103] Referring to **Figs. 9-13**, capillary tube **308** is in fluid communication with the open cell foam material **306** and a portion of the capillary tube **308** is disposed within the housing **304** of the blood transfer device **300**. The capillary tube **308** includes a first end **340**, a dispensing tip **342**, and an internal wall surface **344**. The first end **340** of the capillary tube **308** is in fluid communication with the open cell foam material **306**. In one embodiment, the internal wall surface **344** of the capillary tube **308** includes an anticoagulant coating.

[00104] The capillary tube **308** is adapted to receive the blood sample **302** after the blood sample **302** is mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder **310** within the open cell foam material **306**. Referring to **Fig. 13**, with the blood sample **302** received within the capillary tube **308**, movement of the actuation member **332** from the first position to the second position dispenses the blood sample **302** through the dispensing tip **342** of the capillary tube **308**.

[00105] In one embodiment, the capillary tube **308** or the housing **304** of the blood transfer device **300** may include fill lines, such as graduations located on a sidewall **350** of blood transfer device **300**, for providing an indication as to the level or amount of stabilized blood sample **302** contained within capillary tube **308**. Such markings may be provided on an external surface of sidewall **350**, an internal surface of sidewall **350**, or integrally formed or otherwise within sidewall **350** of blood transfer device **300**.

[00106] Referring to **Figs. 10-13**, during the use of blood transfer device **300** to collect a blood sample **302**, stabilize the blood sample **302**, e.g., mix the blood sample **302** with an anticoagulant, meter the blood sample **302**, and dispense the stabilized blood sample **302** to a diagnostic device, a lancet device can be used to lance a skin surface **S** of a patient.

[00107] Next, referring to **Fig. 10**, the lid **334** is moved to the open position to expose a portion of the open cell foam material **306**. The blood transfer device **300** is then positioned such that the open cell foam material **306** is placed adjacent a punctured skin surface **S** of a patient so that the blood sample **302** can be transferred to the open cell foam material **306**. For example, when a drop of blood **302** comes in contact with the open cell foam material **306**, the blood **302** is instantly absorbed due to a strong capillary action of multiple open cell foam pores **312**.

[00108] As the blood **302** is loaded into the open cell foam material **306**, the blood **302** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder **310** throughout the internal micro pore structure of the open cell foam material **306**. Referring to **Figs. 11 and 12**, once the open cell foam material **306** is loaded with the blood **302**, the lid **334** is moved to the closed position in which the

open cell foam material **306** is sealed within the housing **304** and the stabilized blood sample **302** is drawn from the open cell foam material **306** into the capillary tube **308**.

[00109] Referring to **Fig. 11**, with the second end **322** of the blood transfer device **300** positioned below the first end **320**, the capillary blood transfer from the open cell foam material **306** to the capillary tube **308** is improved. In one embodiment, the internal wall surface **344** of the capillary tube **308** includes an anticoagulant coating to provide a second stage of mixing for the stabilized blood sample **302**.

[00110] The stabilized blood sample **302** is allowed to fill up the capillary tube **308** to the appropriate marking or fill line, such as the graduations located on a sidewall **350** of blood transfer device **300** as described above. In one embodiment, the length of the capillary tube **308** up to a marking defines the volume of the blood sample collected, e.g., blood metering.

[00111] Referring to **Fig. 13**, movement of the actuation member **332** from the first position to the second position dispenses the stabilized blood sample **302** through the dispensing tip **342** of the capillary tube **308**. For example, the stabilized blood sample **302** may be dispensed from the capillary tube **308** using air pressure. In one embodiment, the actuation member **332** is a push button that can be pushed to dispense the stabilized blood sample **302**. For example, when it is desired to expel the stabilized blood sample **302** contained within capillary tube **308**, the blood transfer device **300** may be grasped with the user's thumb on actuation member **332** of housing **304** and with the user's fingers extending around finger grip **330**. Next, the user effects a squeezing movement between the thumb on actuation member **332** of housing **304** and four fingers grasping finger grip **330**, thereby causing actuation member **332** to be pushed or moved from the first position to the second position. In one embodiment, the stabilized blood sample **302** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device.

[00112] The blood transfer device **300** includes an open cell foam material **306** and a capillary tube **308** to collect a blood sample **302**, stabilize the blood sample **302**, e.g., mix the blood sample **302** with a dry anticoagulant powder **310** within the open cell foam material **306**, meter the blood sample **302**, and dispense the stabilized blood sample to a diagnostic device.

[00113] Capillary blood samples may be transferred by capillary tubes that have an internal wall coated with a dry anticoagulant. Such capillary tubes might result in insufficient blood mixing with the anticoagulant due to the laminar nature of the capillary flow and slow diffusion kinetics of the dry anticoagulant. The blood transfer device **300** of the present disclosure enables more uniform mixing of a capillary blood sample by mixing the blood

sample with a dry anticoagulant powder 310 within the open cell foam material 306 before it enters the capillary tube 308 for final dispensing.

[00114] **Figs. 14-18** illustrate another exemplary embodiment of a blood transfer device of the present disclosure. Referring to **Figs. 14-18**, a blood transfer device 400 adapted to receive a blood sample 402 includes a housing 404, an open cell foam material 406 having a dry anticoagulant powder 410 therein, a first capillary tube 408, and a second capillary tube 414.

[00115] Referring to **Figs. 14-18**, housing 404 includes a first end 420, a second end 422, a first portion 424, a second portion 426, a third portion 428, a finger grip 430 disposed between the second portion 426 and the third portion 428, an actuation member 432 transitional between a first position and a second position, and a lid 434 movable between a closed position in which an inlet 460 of the first capillary tube 408 and the open cell foam material 406 are sealed within the housing 404 and an open position in which the inlet 460 of the first capillary tube 408 is exposed. With the lid 434 in the open position and the inlet 460 of the first capillary tube 408 in contact with the blood sample 402, the blood sample 402 is transferred to the open cell foam material 406 via the first capillary tube 408 and mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder 410 therein. In one embodiment, the actuation member 432 is a plunger.

[00116] In one embodiment, open cell foam material 406 includes pores 412 and is disposed within the housing 404 of the blood transfer device 400. Referring to **Figs. 14-18**, in one embodiment, the open cell foam material 406 is disposed within the first portion 424 of the housing 404. In one embodiment, the open cell foam material 406 includes a dry anticoagulant powder 410 within the pores 412 of the open cell foam material 406.

[00117] As described above, the open cell foam material 406 is adapted to receive a blood sample 402 such that the blood sample 402 is mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder 410 which is present inside the open cell foam material 406. In this manner, a stabilized blood sample may travel from the open cell foam material 406 into the second capillary tube 414 for final metering and dispensing as described in more detail below.

[00118] In one embodiment, the open cell foam 406 is treated with an anticoagulant to form a dry anticoagulant powder 410 finely distributed throughout the pores 412 of the open cell foam 406. The open cell foam 406 may be loaded with a blood sample 402. The blood sample 402 is transferred to the open cell foam material 406 via the first capillary tube 408. As the blood 402 is loaded into the open cell foam 406, the blood 402 is exposed to the anticoagulant powder 410 throughout the internal micro pore structure of the open cell foam

406. The stabilized blood sample **402** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device, a point-of-care testing device, or similar analytical device.

[00119] In one embodiment, the open cell foam material **406** is a soft deformable open cell foam that is inert to blood. In one embodiment, the open cell foam material **406** is a Basotect® foam available from BASF. Such a foam is a Melamine foam which is an open cell foam material consisting of a formaldehyde-melamine-sodium bisulfite copolymer. The Melamine foam is a flexible, hydrophilic open cell foam that is resistant to heat and many organic solvents. In one embodiment, the open cell foam material **406** may be a sponge material.

[00120] As described above, a method of loading an anticoagulant to the open cell foam material **406** having pores **412** may include soaking the open cell foam material **406** in a liquid solution of the anticoagulant and water; evaporating the water of the liquid solution; and forming a dry anticoagulant powder **410** within the pores **412** of the open cell foam material **406**.

[00121] The method of the present disclosure enables precisely controlled loading of an anticoagulant into the open cell foam material **406** by soaking it with an anticoagulant and water solution and then drying the open cell foam material **406** to form a finely distributed dry anticoagulant powder **410** throughout the pores **412** of the open cell foam material **406**.

[00122] Anticoagulants such as Heparin or EDTA (Ethylene Diamine Tetra Acetic Acid) as well as other blood stabilization agents could be introduced into the open cell foam material **406** as a liquid solution by soaking the open cell foam material **406** in the liquid solution of a desired concentration. After evaporating the liquid phase, e.g., evaporating the water from a water and Heparin solution, a dry anticoagulant powder may be formed and finely distributed throughout the internal structure of the open cell foam material **406**. For example, the dry anticoagulant powder may be finely distributed throughout the pores **412** of the open cell foam material **406**. In a similar manner, the open cell foam material **406** could be treated to provide a hydrophobic, hydrophilic, or reactive internal pore surface.

[00123] Referring to Figs. 14-18, the blood transfer device **400** includes a first capillary tube **408** and a second capillary tube **414**. The first capillary tube **408** is in fluid communication with the open cell foam material **406** and is disposed between the first end **420** of the housing **404** and the open cell foam material **406**. The second capillary tube **414** is in fluid communication with the open cell foam material **406** and is disposed between the second end **422** of the housing **404** and the open cell foam material **406**. Thus, the open cell foam material **406** is disposed between the first capillary tube **408** and the second capillary

tube 414. In this manner, referring to **Fig. 14**, the housing 404, the first capillary tube 408, and the second capillary tube 414 protects the open cell foam material 406 within the blood transfer device 400.

[00124] The first capillary tube 408 includes an inlet 460, a second end 462, and an internal wall surface 464. The first capillary tube 408 is in fluid communication with the open cell foam material 406 and a portion of the first capillary tube 408 is disposed within the housing 404 of the blood transfer device 400. The second end 462 of the first capillary tube 408 is in fluid communication with the open cell foam material 406. In one embodiment, the internal wall surface 464 of the first capillary tube 408 includes an anticoagulant coating.

[00125] Referring to **Fig. 15**, with the lid 434 of housing 404 in the open position and the inlet 460 of the first capillary tube 408 in contact with the blood sample 402, the blood sample 402 is transferred to the open cell foam material 406 via the first capillary tube 408 and mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder 410 therein.

[00126] The second capillary tube 414 includes a first end 470, a dispensing tip 472, and an internal wall surface 474. The second capillary tube 414 is in fluid communication with the open cell foam material 406 and a portion of the second capillary tube 414 is disposed within the housing 404 of the blood transfer device 400. The first end 470 of the second capillary tube 414 is in fluid communication with the open cell foam material 406. In one embodiment, the internal wall surface 474 of the second capillary tube 414 includes an anticoagulant coating.

[00127] The second capillary tube 414 is adapted to receive the blood sample 402 after the blood sample 402 is mixed with the dry anticoagulant powder 410 within the open cell foam material 406. Referring to **Fig. 18**, with the blood sample 402 received within the second capillary tube 414, movement of the actuation member 432 from the first position to the second position dispenses the blood sample 402 through the dispensing tip 472 of the second capillary tube 414.

[00128] In one embodiment, the second capillary tube 414 or the housing 404 of the blood transfer device 400 may include fill lines, such as graduations located on a sidewall 450 of blood transfer device 400, for providing an indication as to the level or amount of stabilized blood sample 402 contained within second capillary tube 414. Such markings may be provided on an external surface of sidewall 450, an internal surface of sidewall 450, or integrally formed or otherwise within sidewall 450 of blood transfer device 400.

[00129] Referring to **Figs. 14-18**, in one embodiment, the first capillary tube 408 and the second capillary tube 414 have different lengths. For example, in one embodiment, the first

capillary tube **408** may be shorter than the second capillary tube **414**. In one embodiment, the first capillary tube **408** and the second capillary tube **414** have different internal diameters.

[00130] Referring to **Figs. 15-18**, during the use of blood transfer device **400** to collect a blood sample **402**, stabilize the blood sample **402**, e.g., mix the blood sample **402** with an anticoagulant, meter the blood sample **402**, and dispense the stabilized blood sample **402** to a diagnostic device, a lancet device can be used to lance a skin surface **S** of a patient.

[00131] Next, referring to **Fig. 15**, the lid **434** is moved to the open position to expose the inlet **460** of the first capillary tube **408**. The blood transfer device **400** is then positioned such that the inlet **460** of the first capillary tube **408** is placed adjacent a punctured skin surface **S** of a patient so that the blood sample **402** can be transferred to the open cell foam material **406** via the first capillary tube **408**.

[00132] As the blood **402** is loaded into the open cell foam material **406** via the first capillary tube **408**, the blood **402** is exposed to the anticoagulant powder **410** throughout the internal micro pore structure of the open cell foam material **406**. Referring to **Figs. 16** and **17**, once the open cell foam material **406** is loaded with the blood **402**, the lid **434** is moved to the closed position in which the inlet **460** of the first capillary tube **408** and the open cell foam material **406** are sealed within the housing **404** and the stabilized blood sample **402** is drawn from the open cell foam material **406** into the second capillary tube **414**.

[00133] Referring to **Fig. 16**, with the second end **422** of the blood transfer device **400** positioned below the first end **420**, the capillary blood transfer from the open cell foam material **406** to the second capillary tube **414** is improved. In one embodiment, the internal wall surface **474** of the second capillary tube **414** includes an anticoagulant coating to provide a second stage of mixing for the stabilized blood sample **402**.

[00134] The stabilized blood sample **402** is allowed to fill up the second capillary tube **414** to the appropriate marking or fill line, such as the graduations located on a sidewall **450** of blood transfer device **400** as described above. In one embodiment, the length of the second capillary tube **414** up to a marking defines the volume of the blood sample collected, e.g., blood metering.

[00135] Referring to **Fig. 18**, movement of the actuation member **432** from the first position to the second position dispenses the stabilized blood sample **402** through the dispensing tip **472** of the second capillary tube **414**. For example, the stabilized blood sample **402** may be dispensed from the second capillary tube **414** using air pressure. In one embodiment, the actuation member **432** is a plunger that can be pushed to dispense the stabilized blood sample **402**. For example, when it is desired to expel the stabilized blood

sample **402** contained within second capillary tube **414**, the blood transfer device **400** may be grasped with the user's thumb on actuation member **432** of housing **404** and with the user's fingers extending around finger grip **430**. Next, the user effects a squeezing movement between the thumb on actuation member **432** of housing **404** and four fingers grasping finger grip **430**, thereby causing actuation member **432** to be pushed or moved from the first position to the second position. In one embodiment, the stabilized blood sample **402** may be transferred to a diagnostic instrument such as a blood testing device.

[00136] The blood transfer device **400** includes an open cell foam material **406** and a first capillary tube **408** and second capillary tube **414** to collect a blood sample **402**, stabilize the blood sample **402**, e.g., mix the blood sample **402** with a dry anticoagulant powder **410** within the open cell foam material **406**, meter the blood sample **402**, and dispense the stabilized blood sample to a diagnostic device.

[00137] Capillary blood samples may be transferred by capillary tubes that have an internal wall coated with a dry anticoagulant. Such capillary tubes might result in insufficient blood mixing with the anticoagulant due to the laminar nature of the capillary flow and slow diffusion kinetics of the dry anticoagulant. The blood transfer device **400** of the present disclosure enables more uniform mixing of a capillary blood sample by mixing the blood sample with a dry anticoagulant powder **410** within the open cell foam material **406** before it enters the second capillary tube **414** for final dispensing.

[00138] **Figs. 19 and 20** illustrate an exemplary embodiment of a syringe assembly of the present disclosure. Referring to **Figs. 19 and 20**, a syringe assembly **500** includes an open cell foam material **502** having a dry anticoagulant powder **504** therein. The open cell foam material **502** is disposed within the syringe assembly **500**.

[00139] In one embodiment, the syringe assembly **500** includes a syringe barrel **506** having a first end **508**, a second end **510**, and a sidewall **512** extending therebetween and defining an interior **514**. Referring to **Figs. 19 and 20**, the open cell foam material **502** is disposed within the interior **514** of the syringe barrel **506**.

[00140] In one embodiment, the syringe assembly **500** includes a plunger rod **516** and a stopper **518**. The plunger rod **516** includes a first end and a second end. The stopper **518** is engaged with the second end **522** of the plunger rod **516** and is slidably disposed within the interior **514** of the syringe barrel **506**. The stopper **518** is sized relative to the interior **514** of the syringe barrel **506** to provide sealing engagement with the sidewall **512** of the syringe barrel **506**.

[00141] The open cell foam material **502** is placed in the syringe barrel **506** for mixing and stabilizing blood. The blood gets collected in the syringe barrel **506** with the open cell foam material **502** embedded inside the syringe barrel **506**. The stabilized blood can then be dispensed for analysis. In one embodiment, the syringe assembly is an arterial blood gas syringe and the stabilized blood can be dispensed for blood gas analysis.

[00142] While this disclosure has been described as having exemplary designs, the present disclosure can be further modified within the spirit and scope of this disclosure. This application is therefore intended to cover any variations, uses, or adaptations of the disclosure using its general principles. Further, this application is intended to cover such departures from the present disclosure as come within known or customary practice in the art to which this disclosure pertains and which fall within the limits of the appended claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A specimen transfer device adapted to receive a sample, comprising:
 - a housing having a first end, a second end, a sidewall extending therebetween, and an actuation member movable between a first position and a second position;
 - a deformable material disposed within the housing, the material deformable from an initial position in which the material is adapted to contain the sample to a deformed position in which at least a portion of the sample is released from the material; and
 - a viscoelastic member disposed within the housing between the material and the sidewall of the housing and between the material and the actuation member, wherein the viscoelastic member is engaged with the actuation member and the material such that movement of the actuation member from the first position to the second position exerts a force on the viscoelastic member which deforms the material from the initial position to the deformed position.
2. The specimen transfer device of claim 1, wherein the material includes pores.
3. The specimen transfer device of claim 2, further comprising a dry anticoagulant powder within the pores of the material.
4. The specimen transfer device of claim 1, wherein the housing includes a dispensing tip at the first end.
5. The specimen transfer device of claim 4, wherein the housing includes a valve disposed within the dispensing tip, the valve transitionable between a closed position and an open position.
6. The specimen transfer device of claim 5, wherein with the material in the deformed position and the valve in the open position, the at least a portion of the sample released from the material may flow through the dispensing tip.
7. The specimen transfer device of claim 1, wherein the viscoelastic member has a viscoelastic member hardness.

8. The specimen transfer device of claim 7, wherein the actuation member has an actuation member hardness.

9. The specimen transfer device of claim 8, wherein the viscoelastic member hardness is less than the actuation member hardness.

10. The specimen transfer device of claim 1, wherein the actuation member is located at the second end of the housing.

11. The specimen transfer device of claim 1, wherein the actuation member is a push button.

12. The specimen transfer device of claim 1, wherein the sample is blood.

13. A specimen transfer and testing system, comprising:

a specimen transfer device adapted to receive a sample, comprising:

a housing having a first end, a second end, a sidewall extending therebetween, a dispensing tip at the first end, an actuation member at the second end, and a valve disposed within the dispensing tip, the actuation member movable between a first position and a second position, the valve transitionable between a closed position and an open position;

a deformable material having pores and disposed within the housing, the material deformable from an initial position in which the material is adapted to contain the sample to a deformed position in which at least a portion of the sample is released from the material; and

a viscoelastic member disposed within the housing between the material and the sidewall of the housing and between the material and the actuation member,

wherein the viscoelastic member is engaged with the actuation member and the material such that movement of the actuation member from the first position to the second position exerts a force on the viscoelastic member which deforms the material from the initial position to the deformed position, and

wherein with the material in the deformed position and the valve in the open position, the portion of the sample released from the material may flow through the dispensing tip; and

a sample testing device having a receiving port adapted to receive the dispensing tip of the specimen transfer device for closed transfer of at least a portion of the sample from the specimen transfer device to the sample testing device.

14. The specimen transfer and testing system of claim 13, wherein the specimen transfer device further comprises a dry anticoagulant powder within the pores of the material.

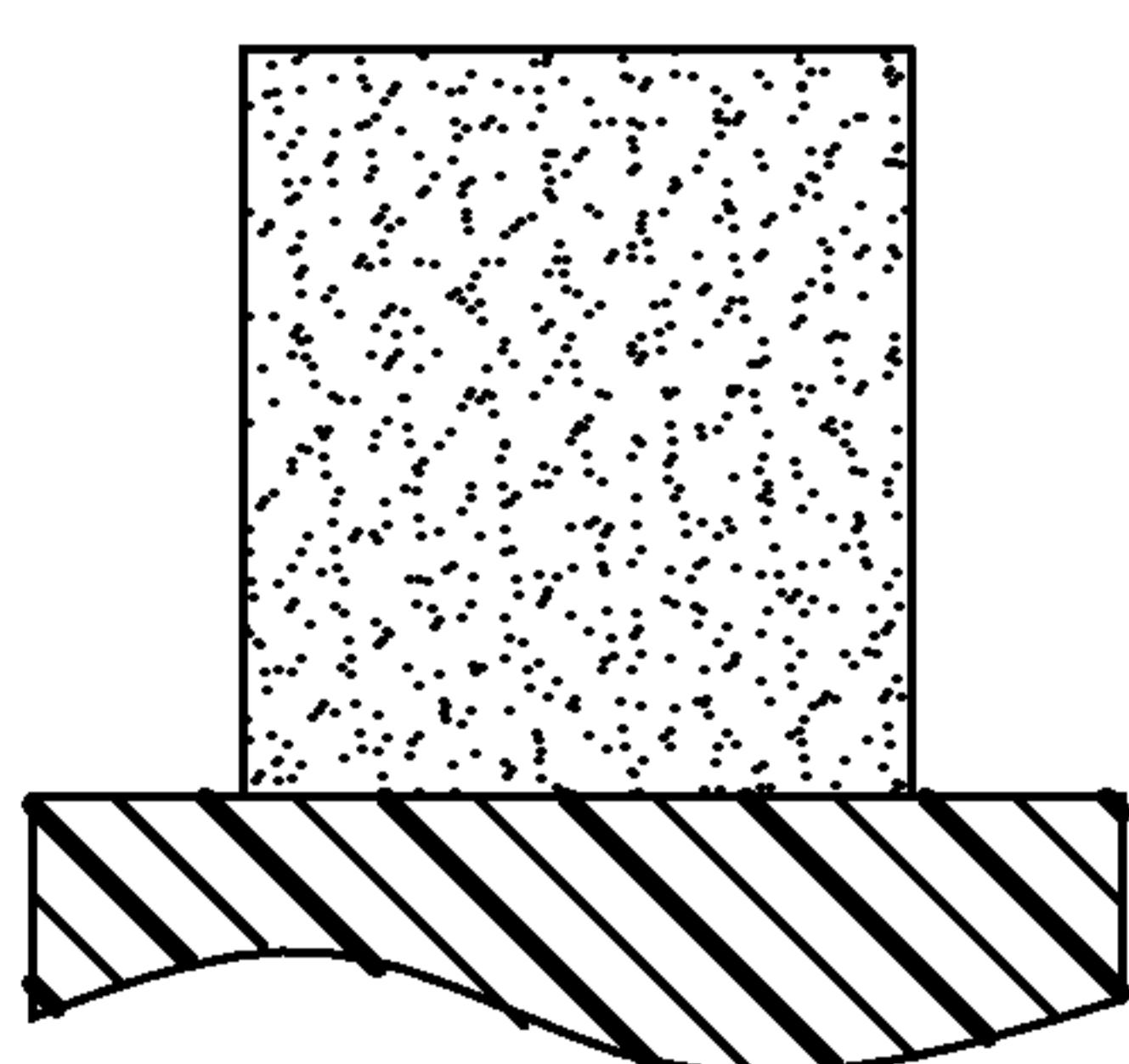
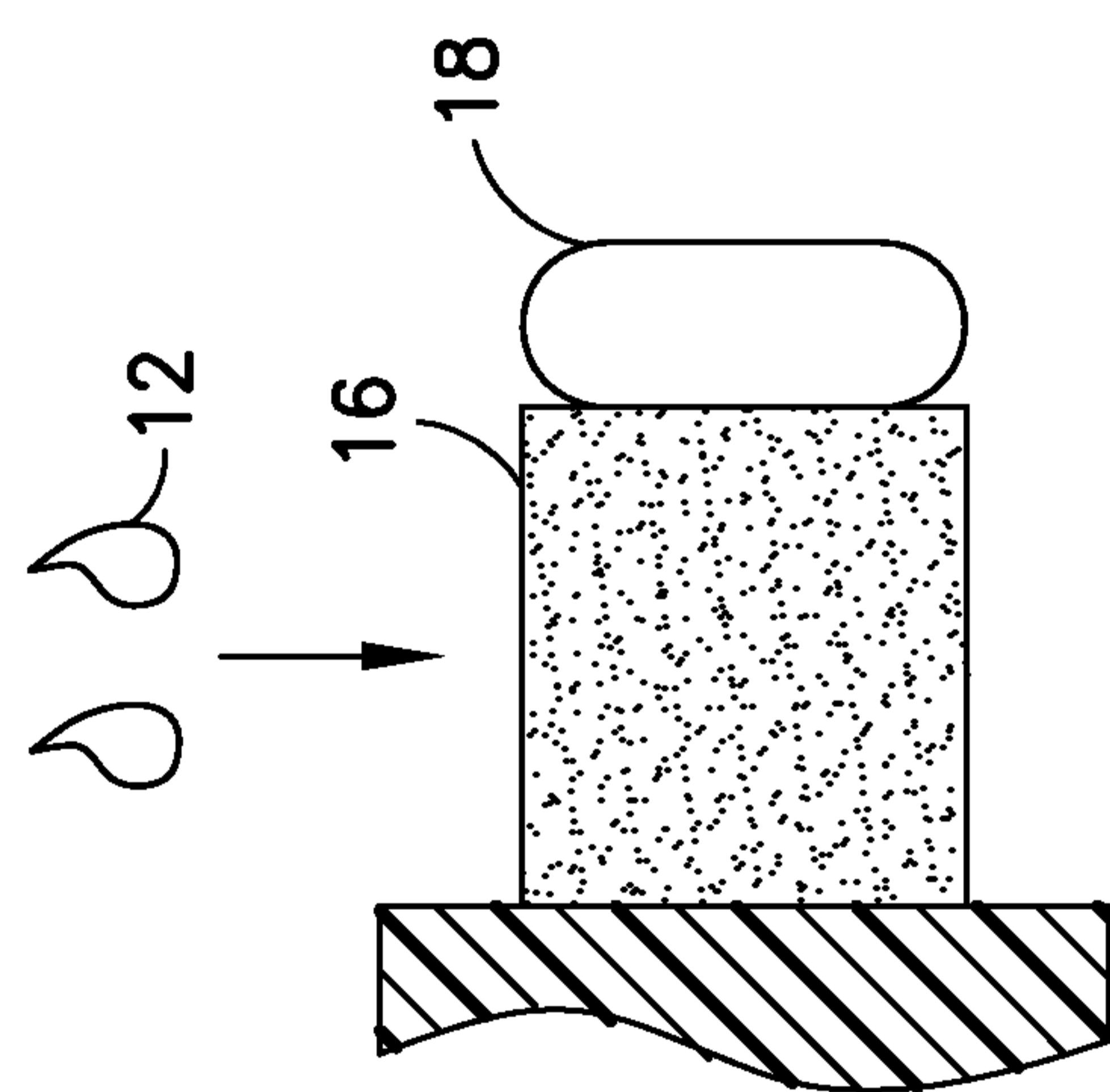
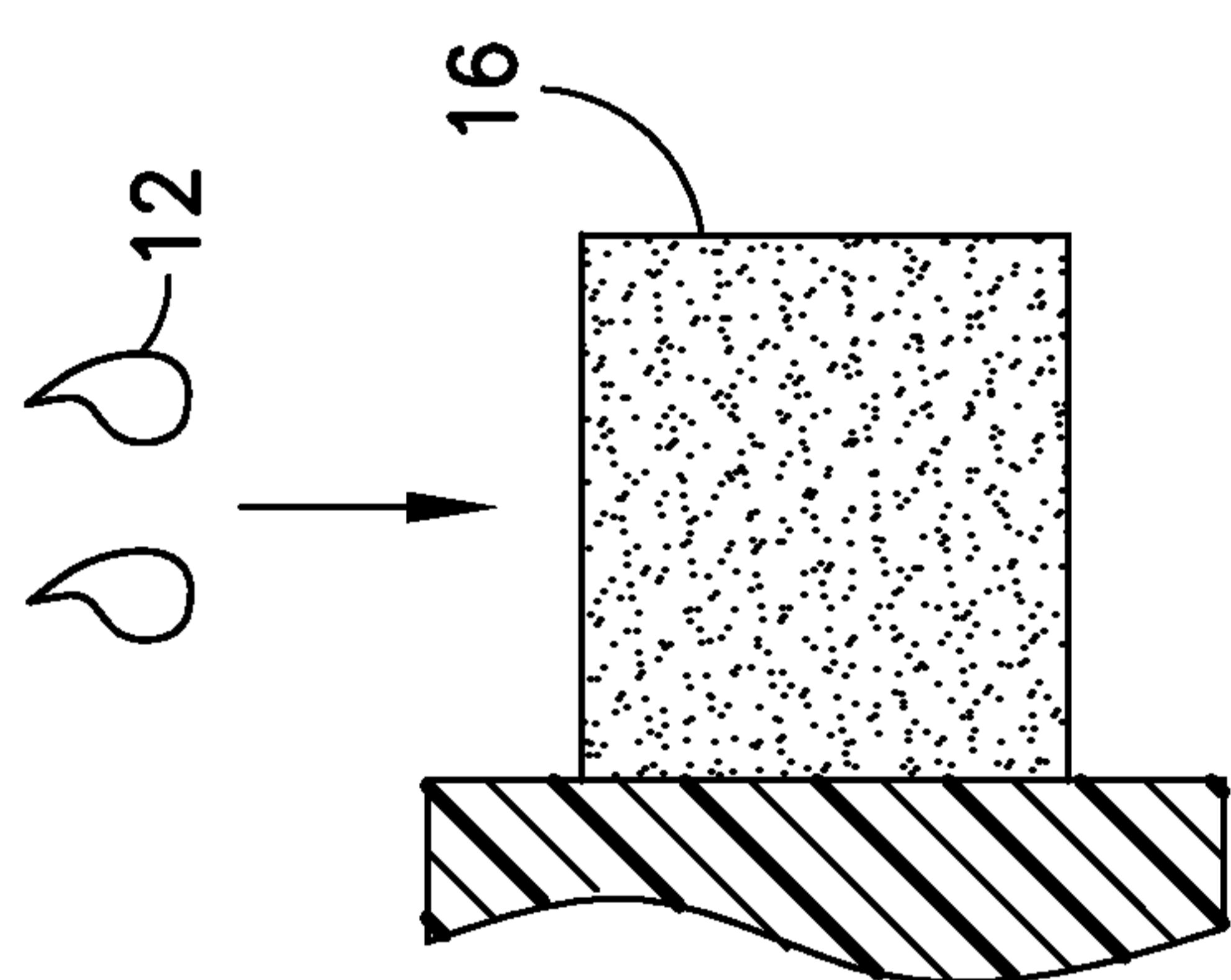
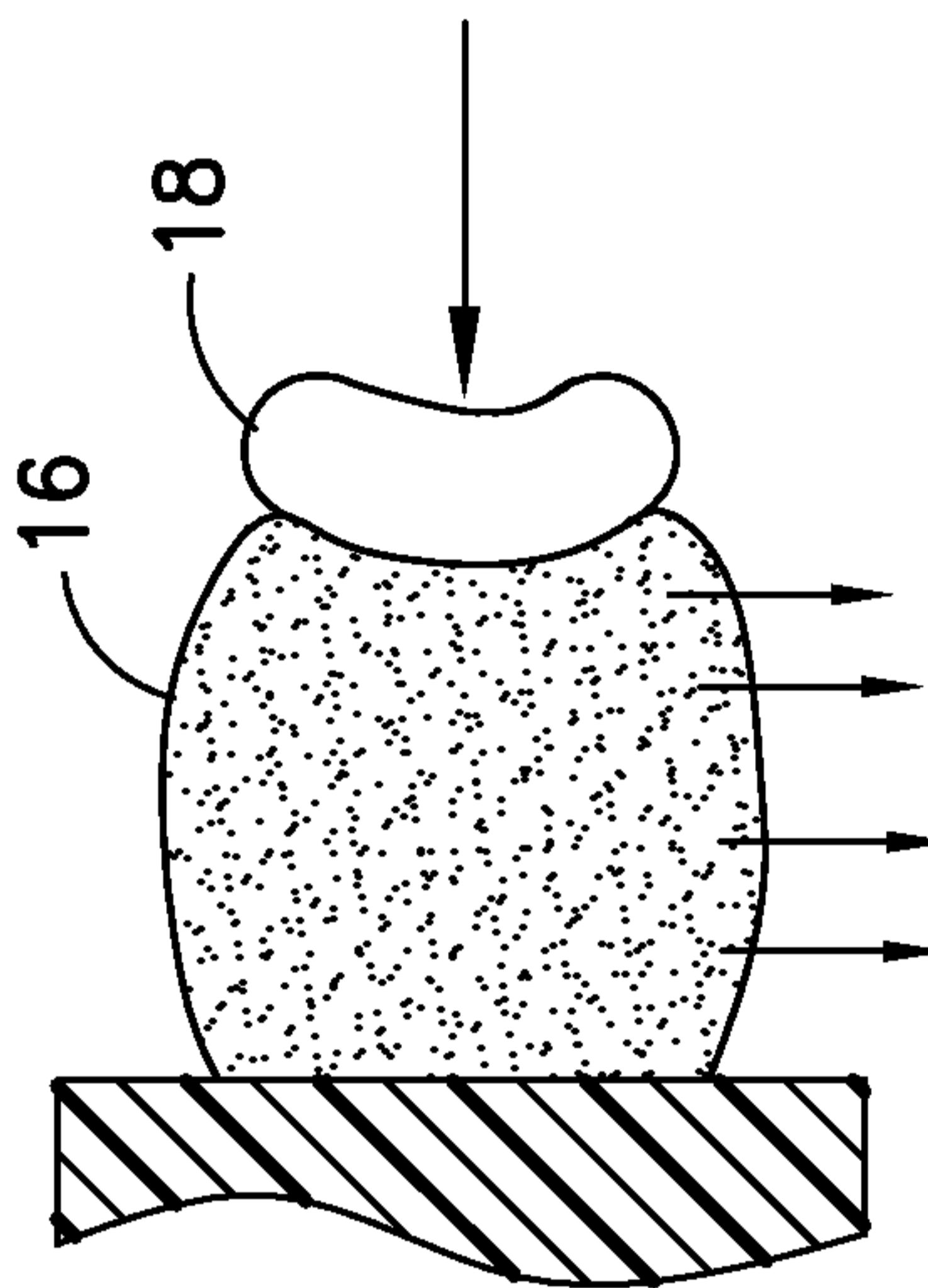
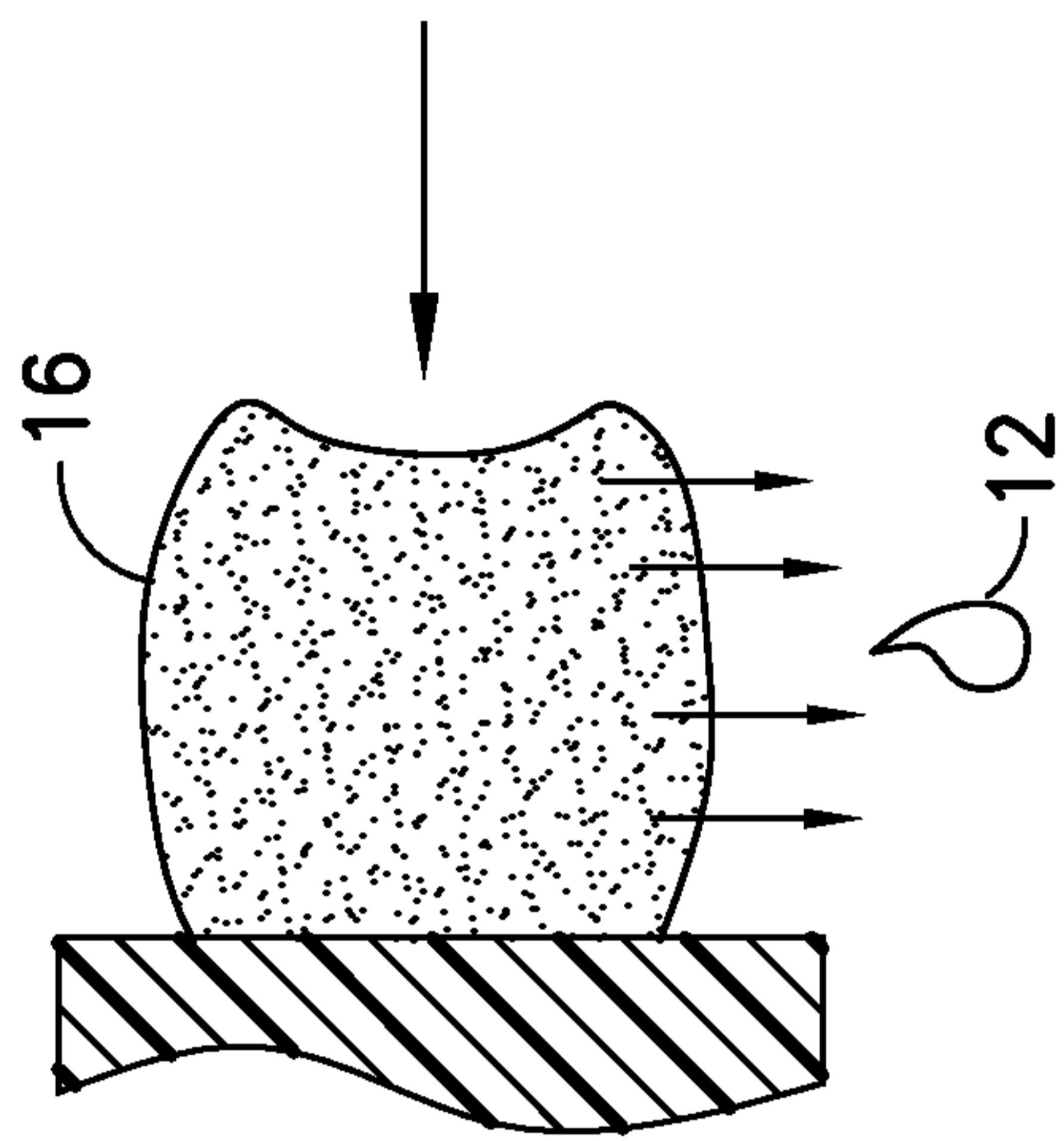
15. The specimen transfer and testing system of claim 13, wherein the viscoelastic member has a viscoelastic member hardness, the actuation member has an actuation member hardness, and wherein the viscoelastic member hardness is less than the actuation member hardness.

16. The specimen transfer and testing system of claim 13, wherein the actuation member is a push button.

17. The specimen transfer and testing system of claim 13, wherein the sample is blood.

18. A lancet and specimen transfer device, comprising:
a lancet housing comprising a forward end, a rearward end, and a puncturing element, the puncturing element at least partially disposed within the lancet housing and adapted for movement between a pre-actuated position wherein the puncturing element is retained within the lancet housing and a puncturing position wherein at least a portion of the puncturing element extends through the forward end of the lancet housing; and
the specimen transfer device of claim 1 engageable with the rearward end of the lancet housing.

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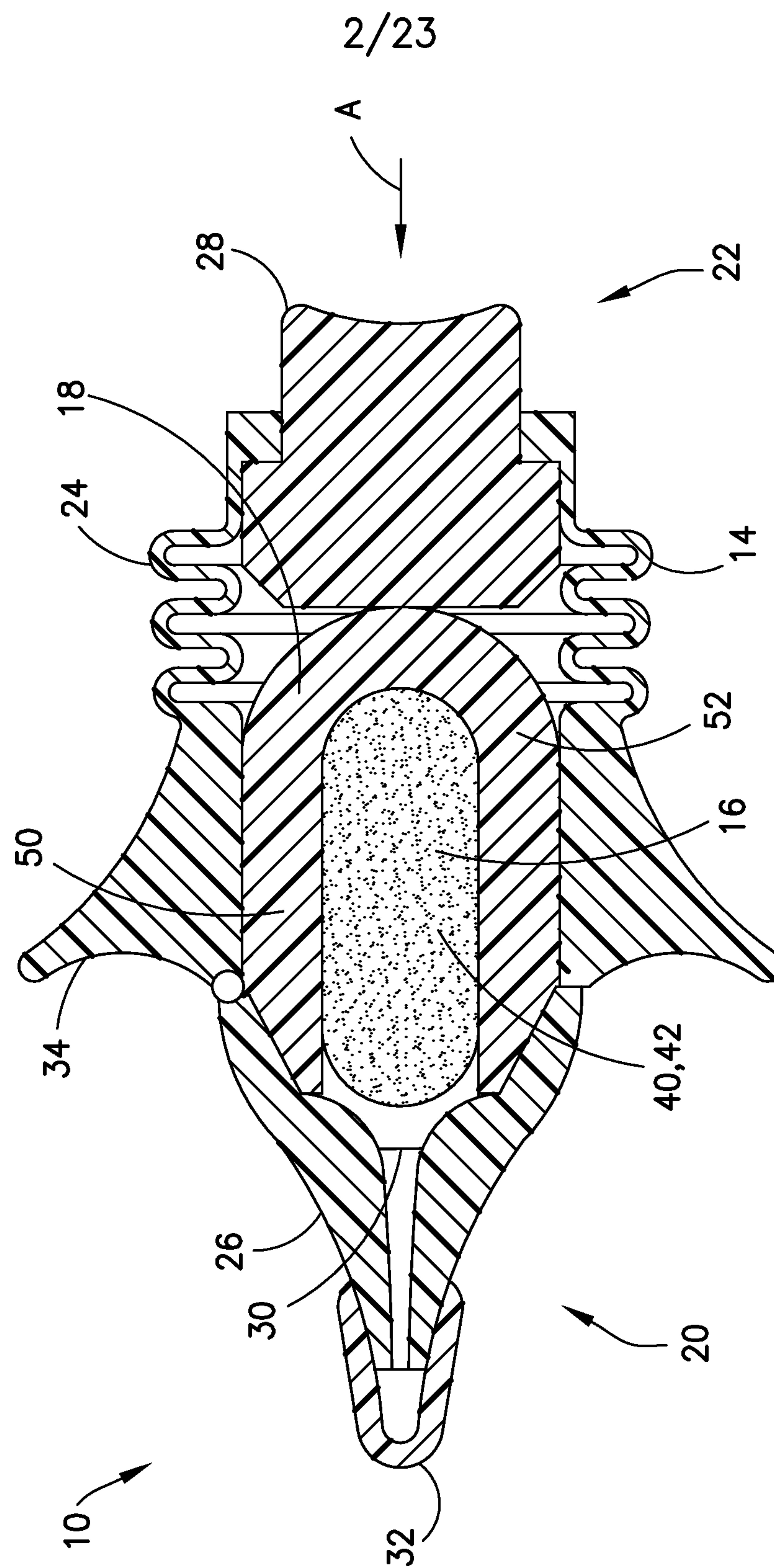
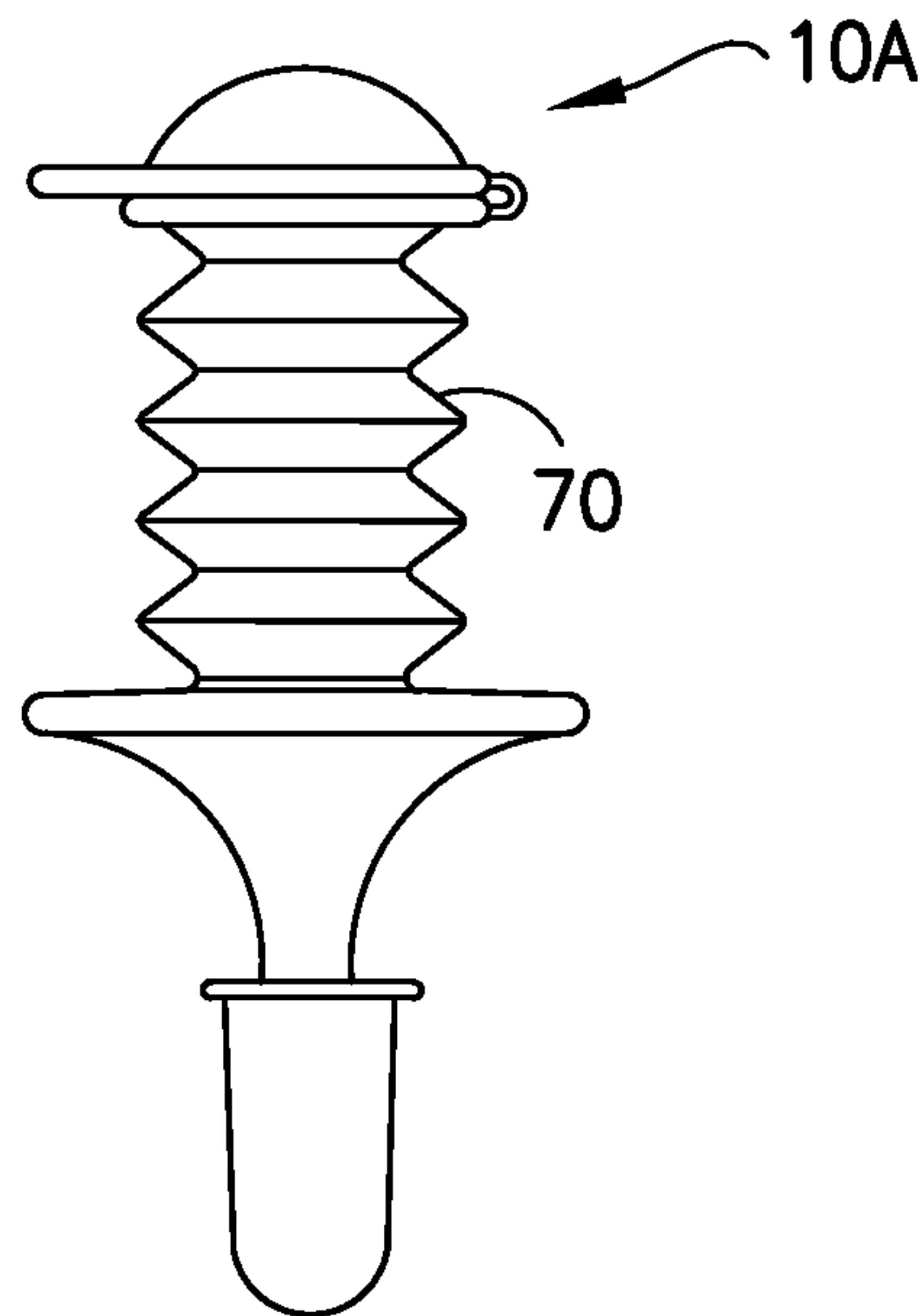
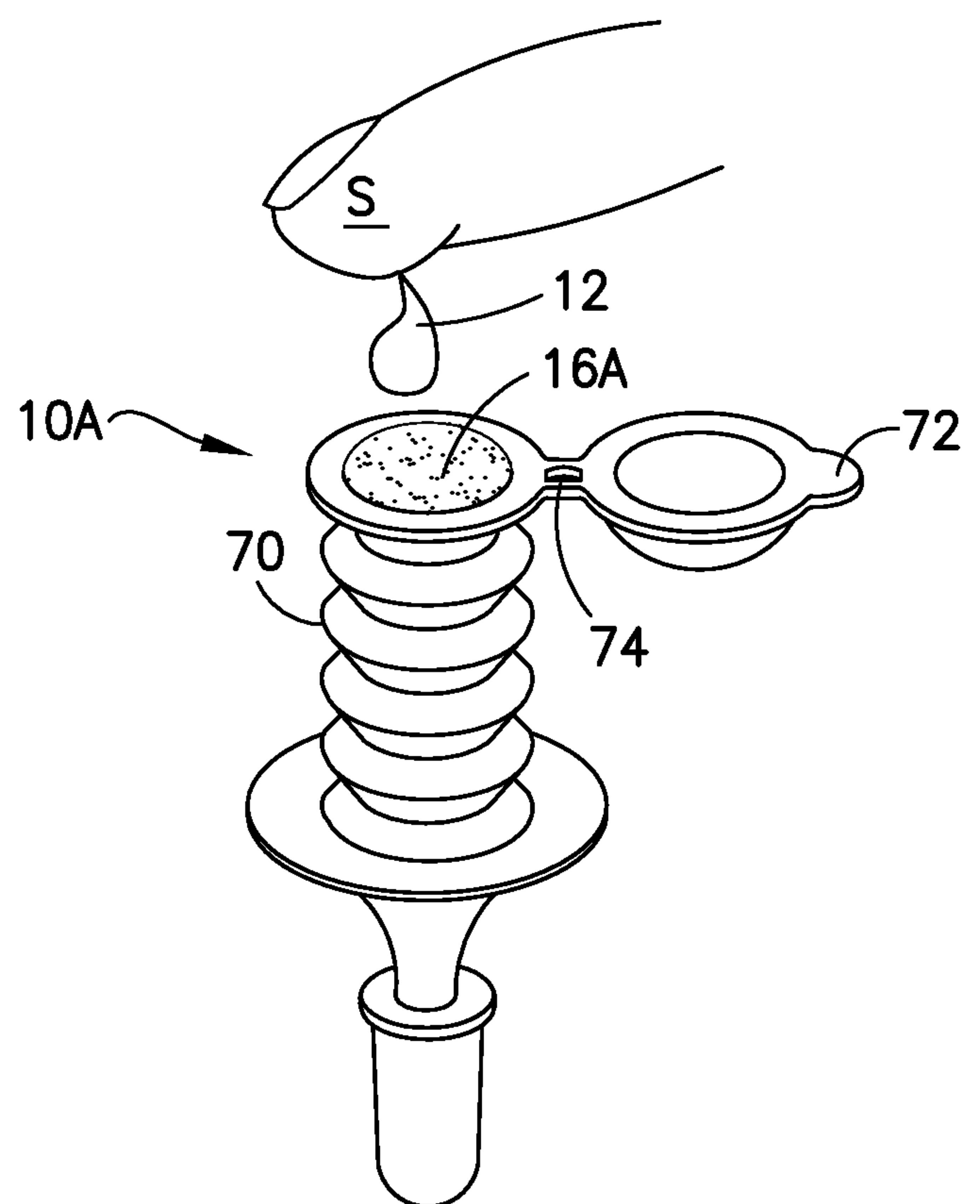
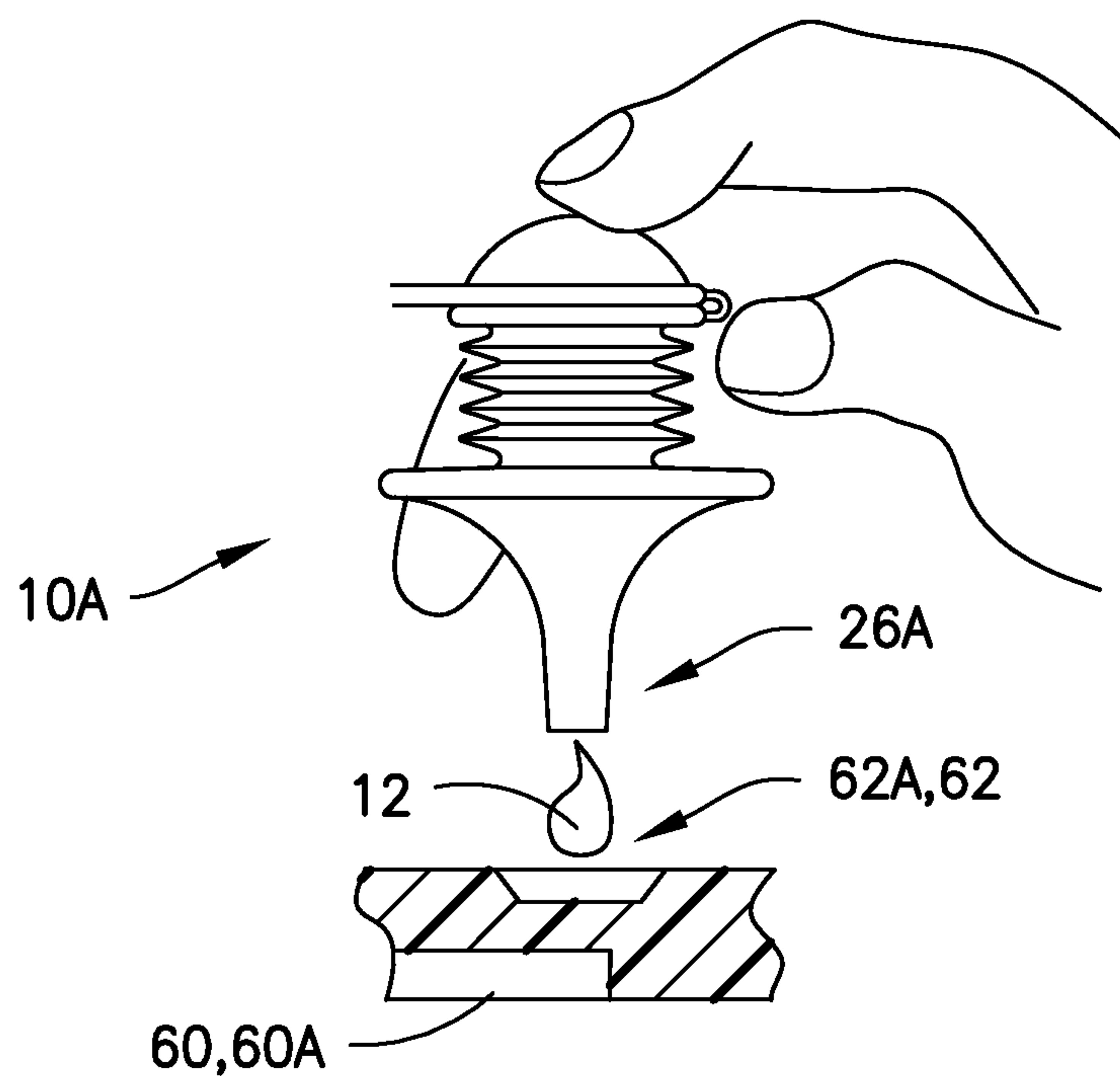
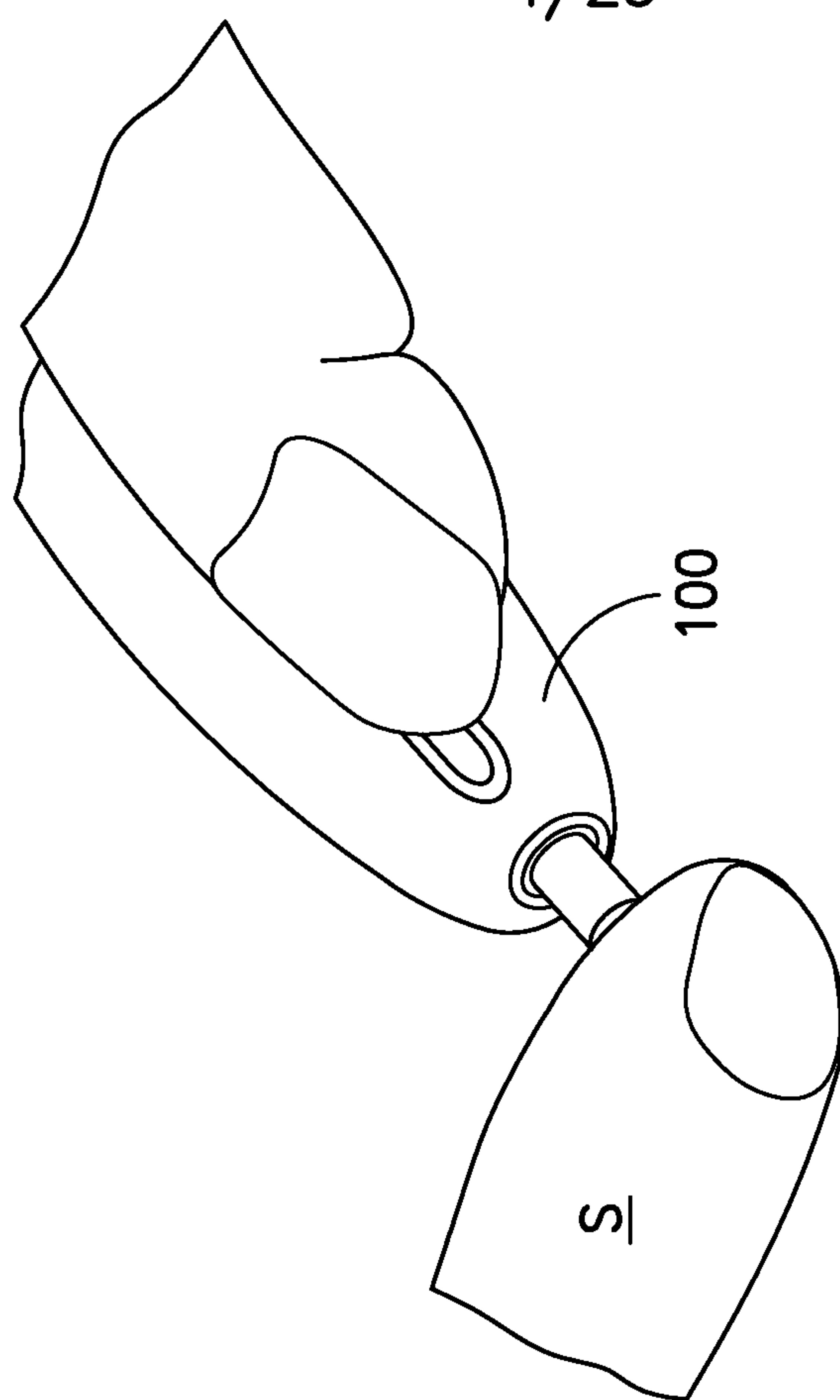
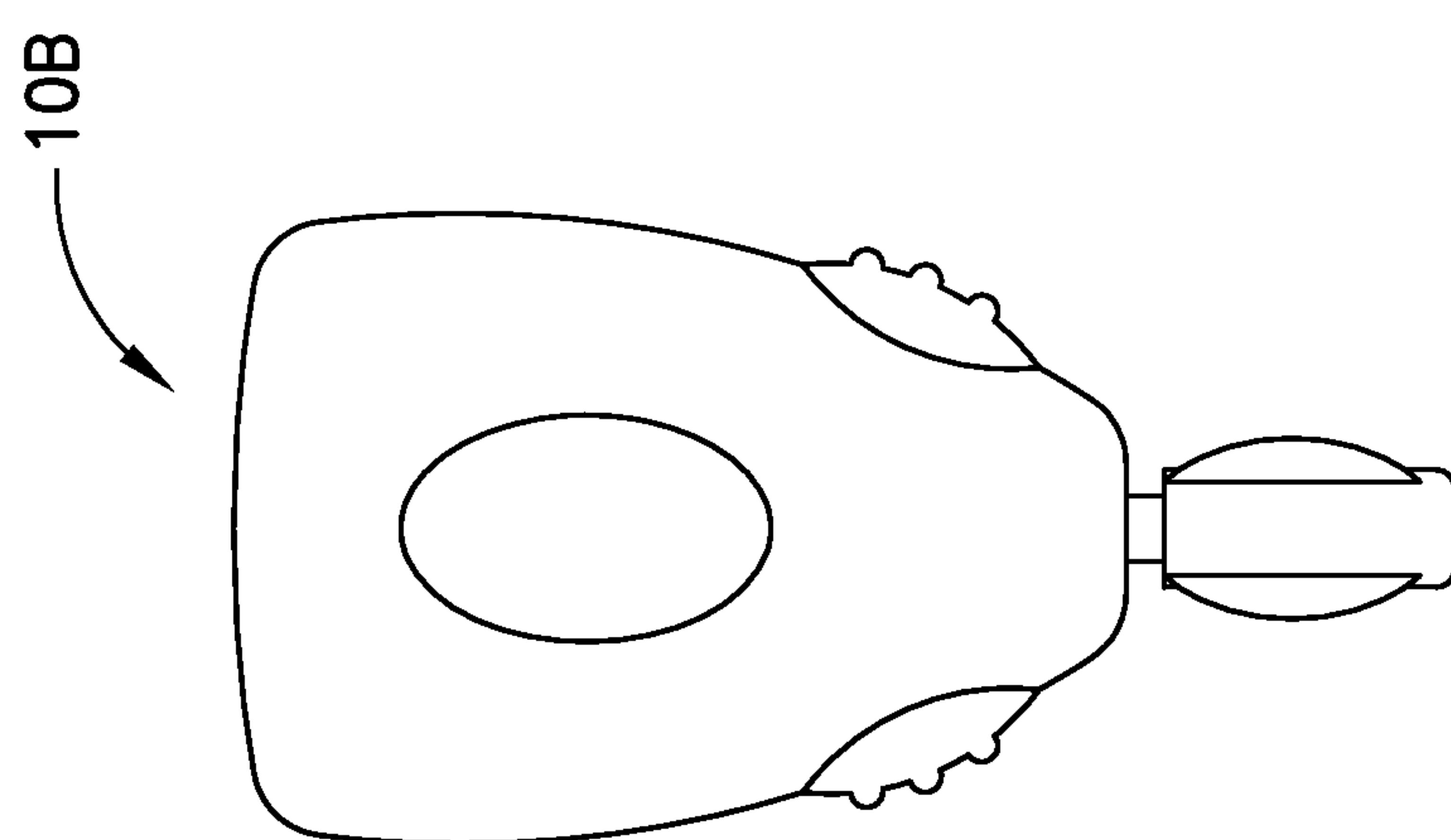


FIG.2

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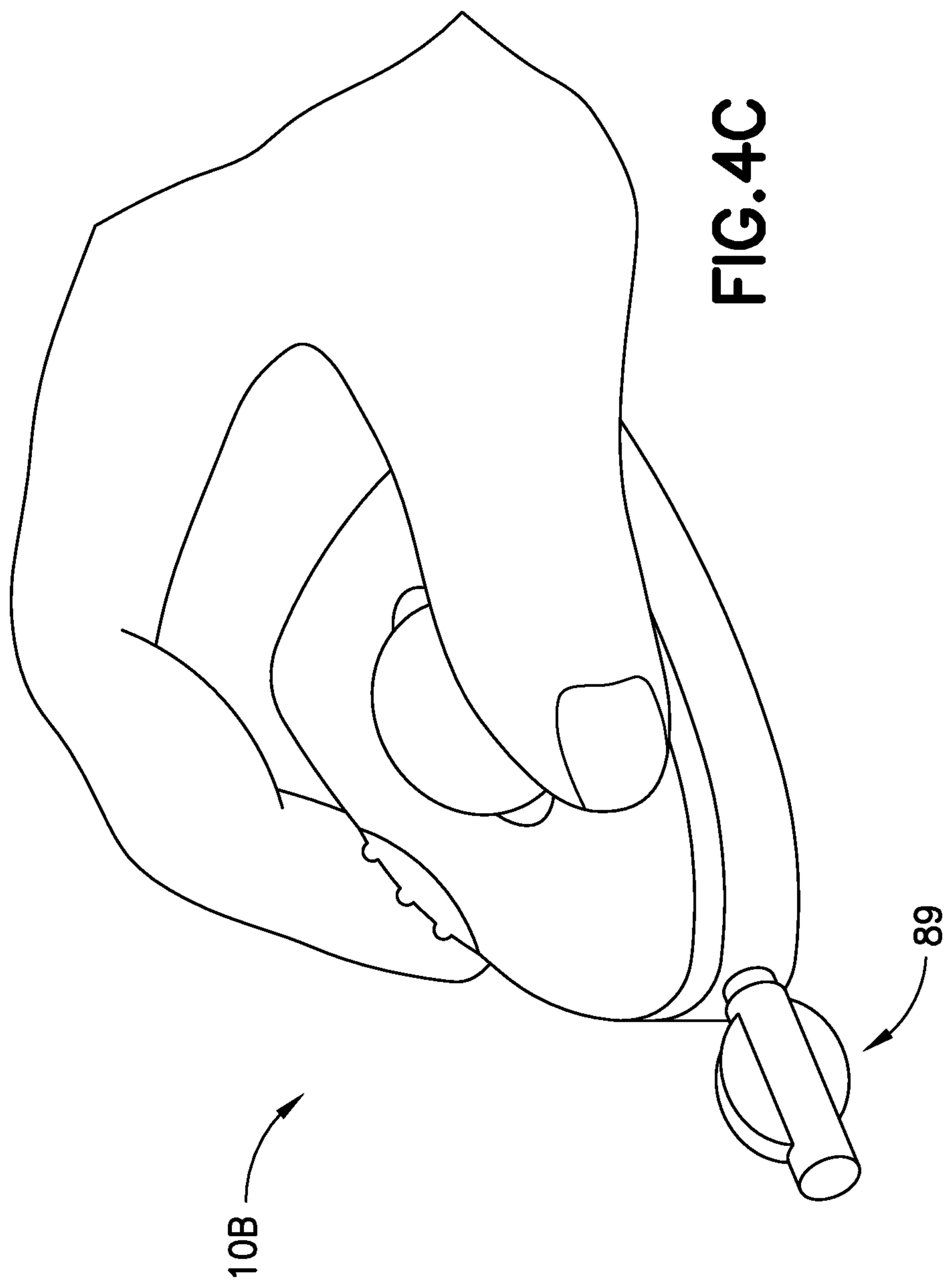
**FIG. 3A****FIG. 3B****FIG. 3C**

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**FIG. 4B****FIG. 4A**

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FIG.4C



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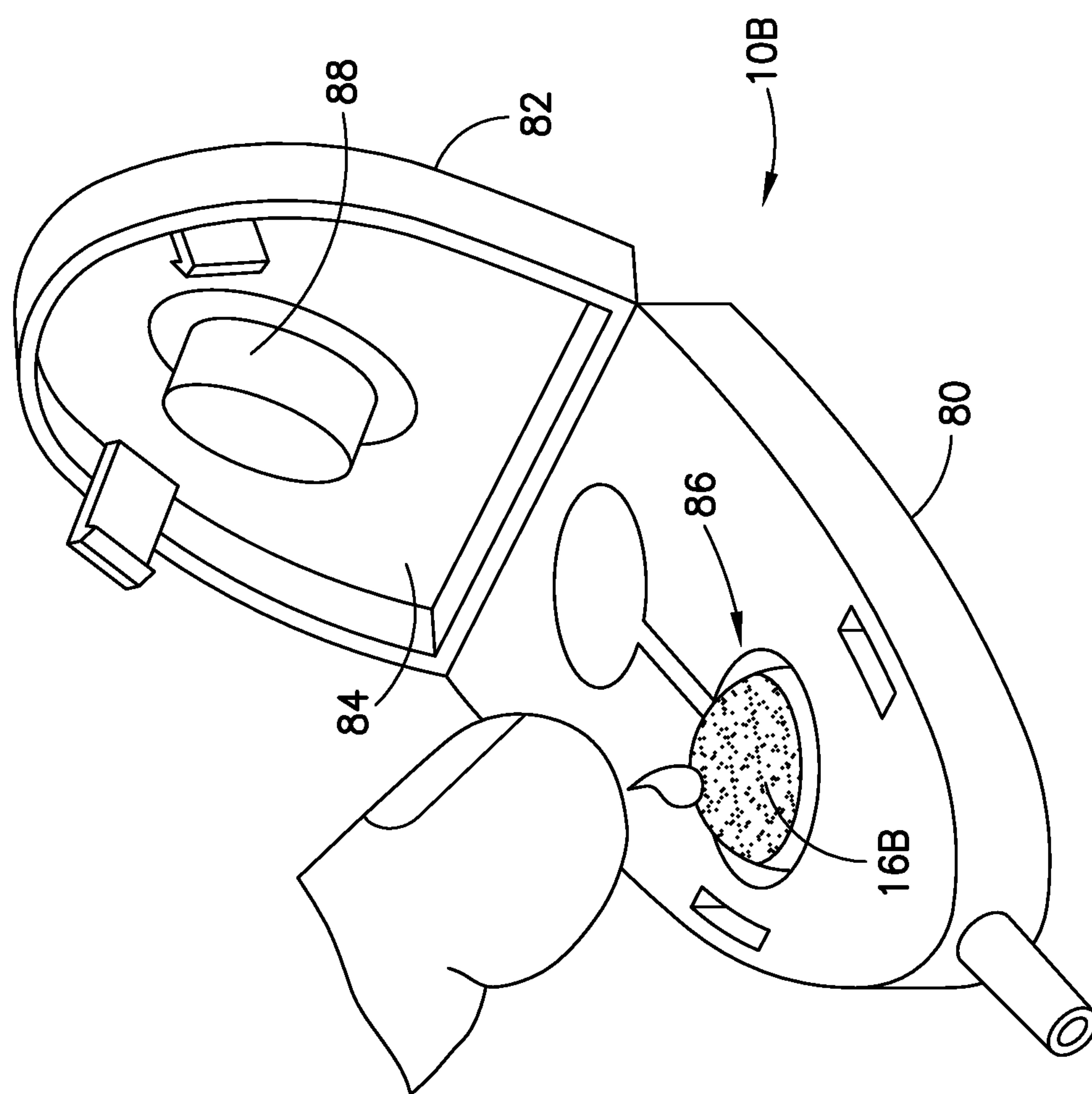
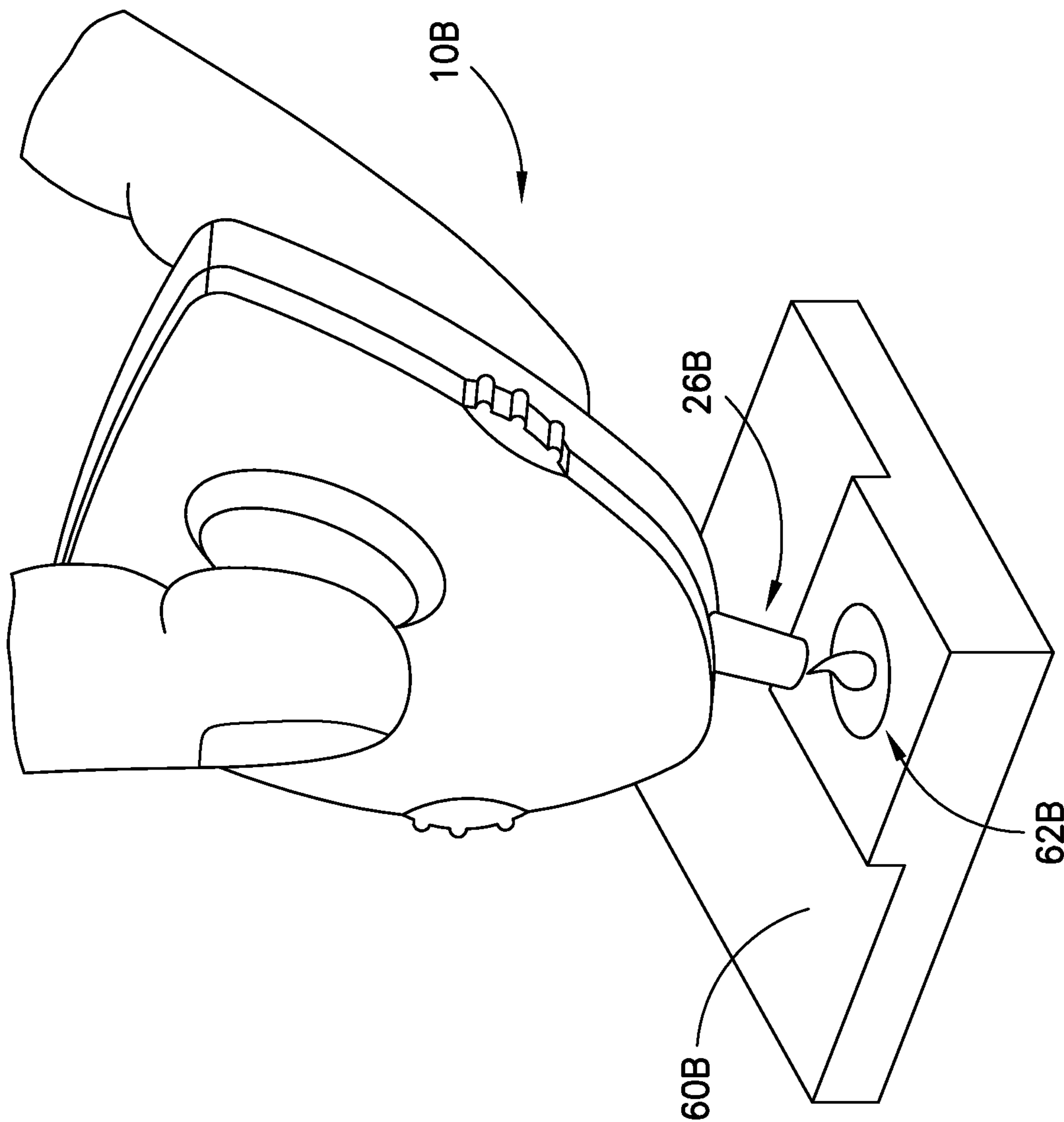


FIG.4D

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**FIG.4E**

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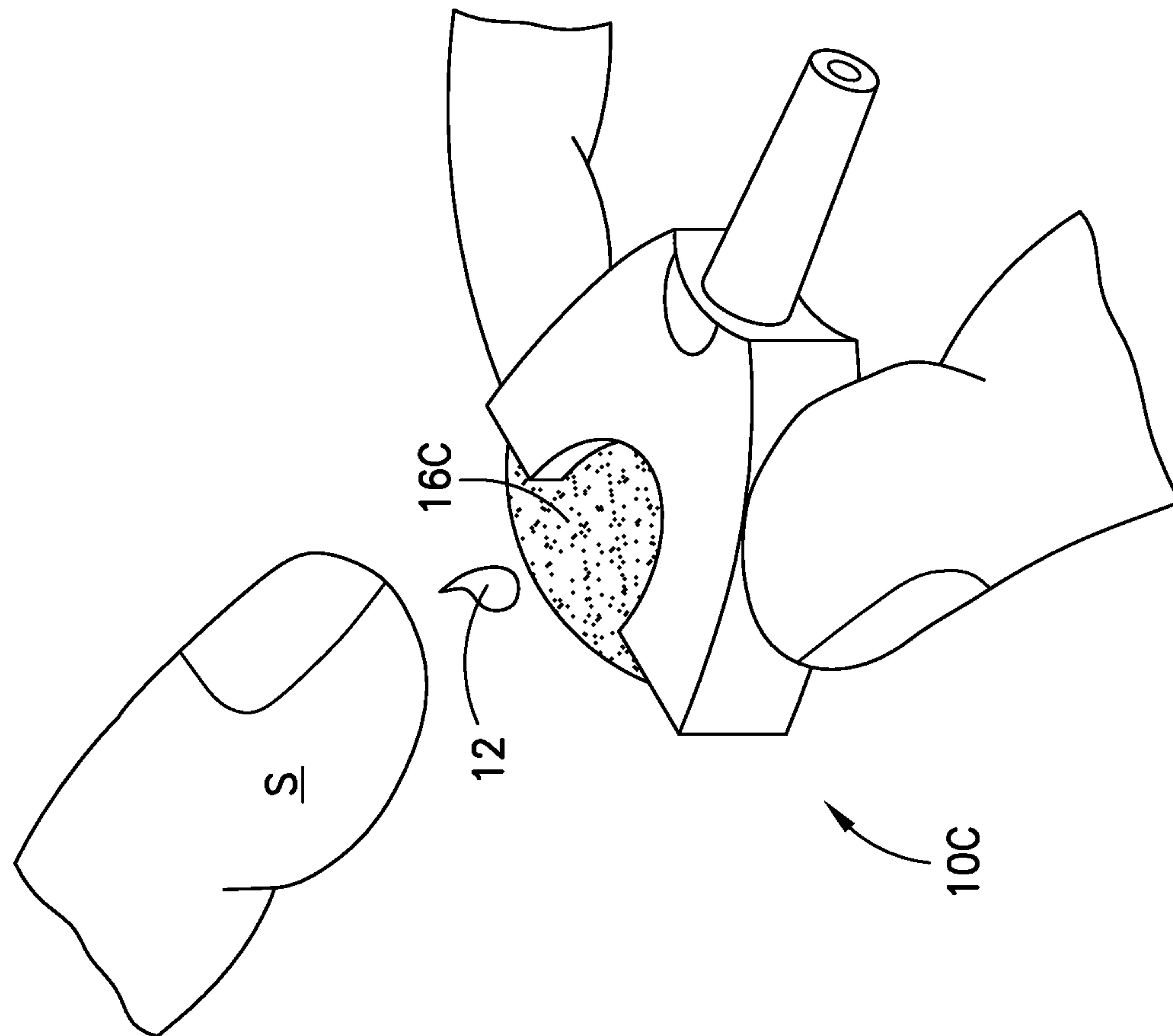


FIG.5B

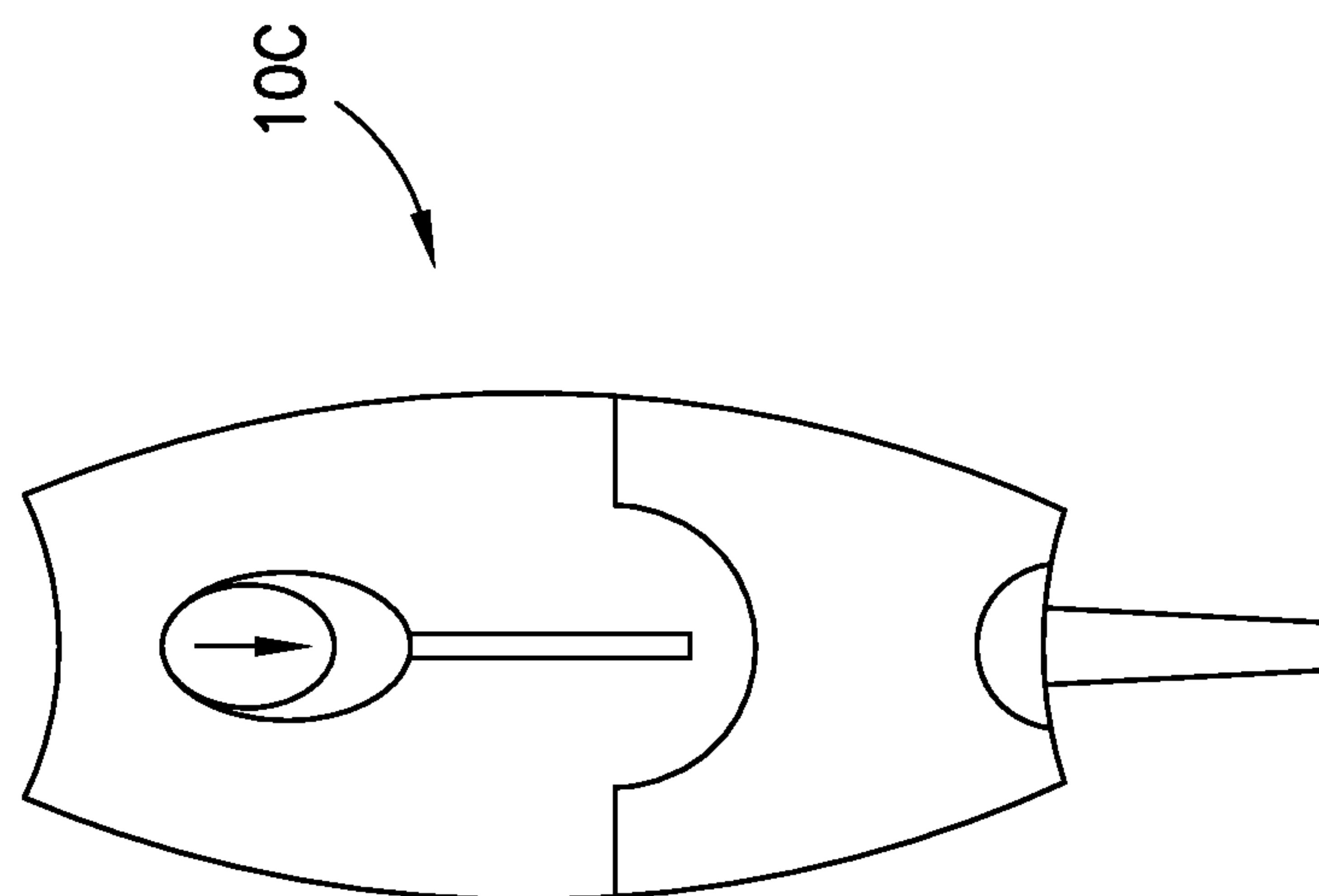
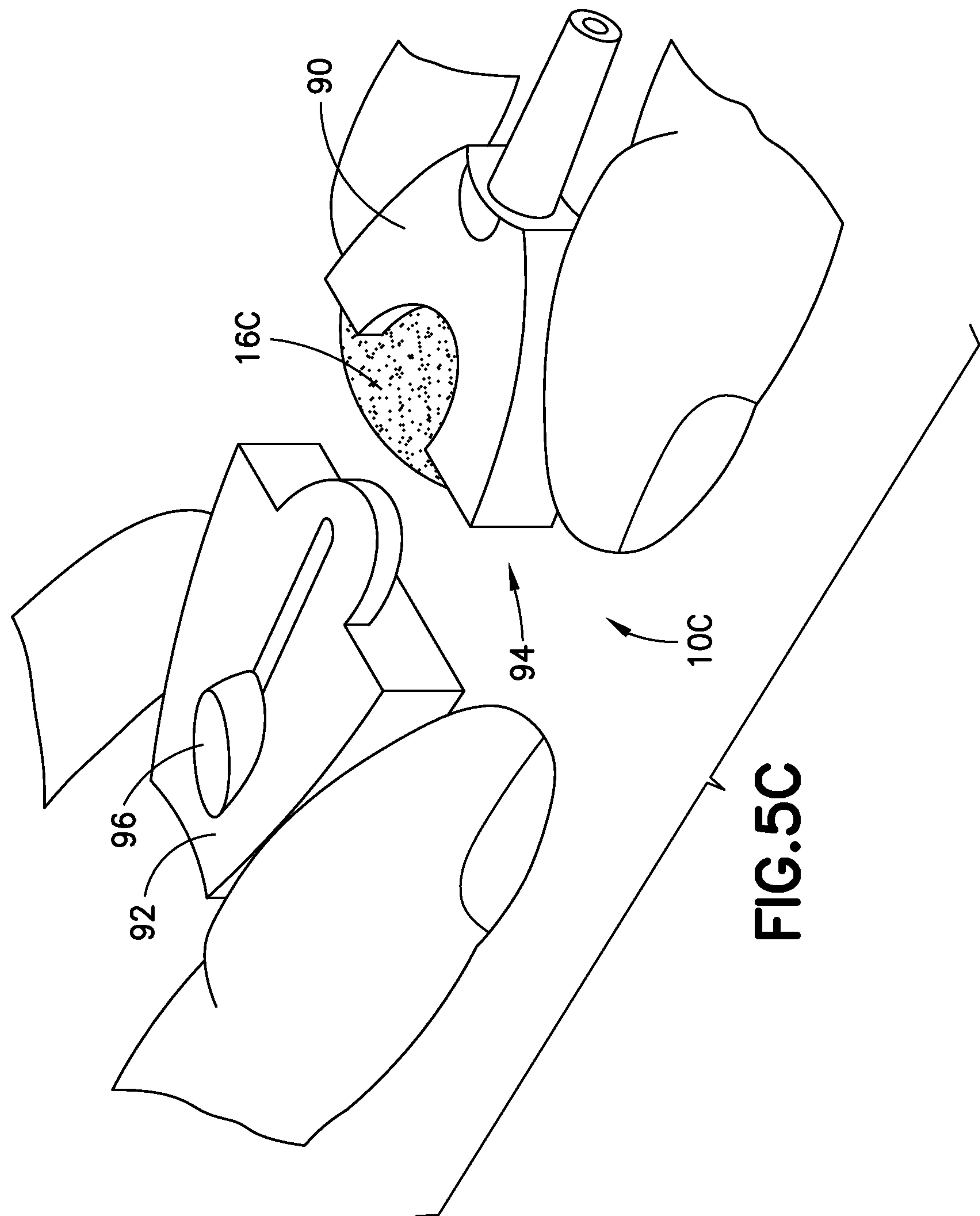
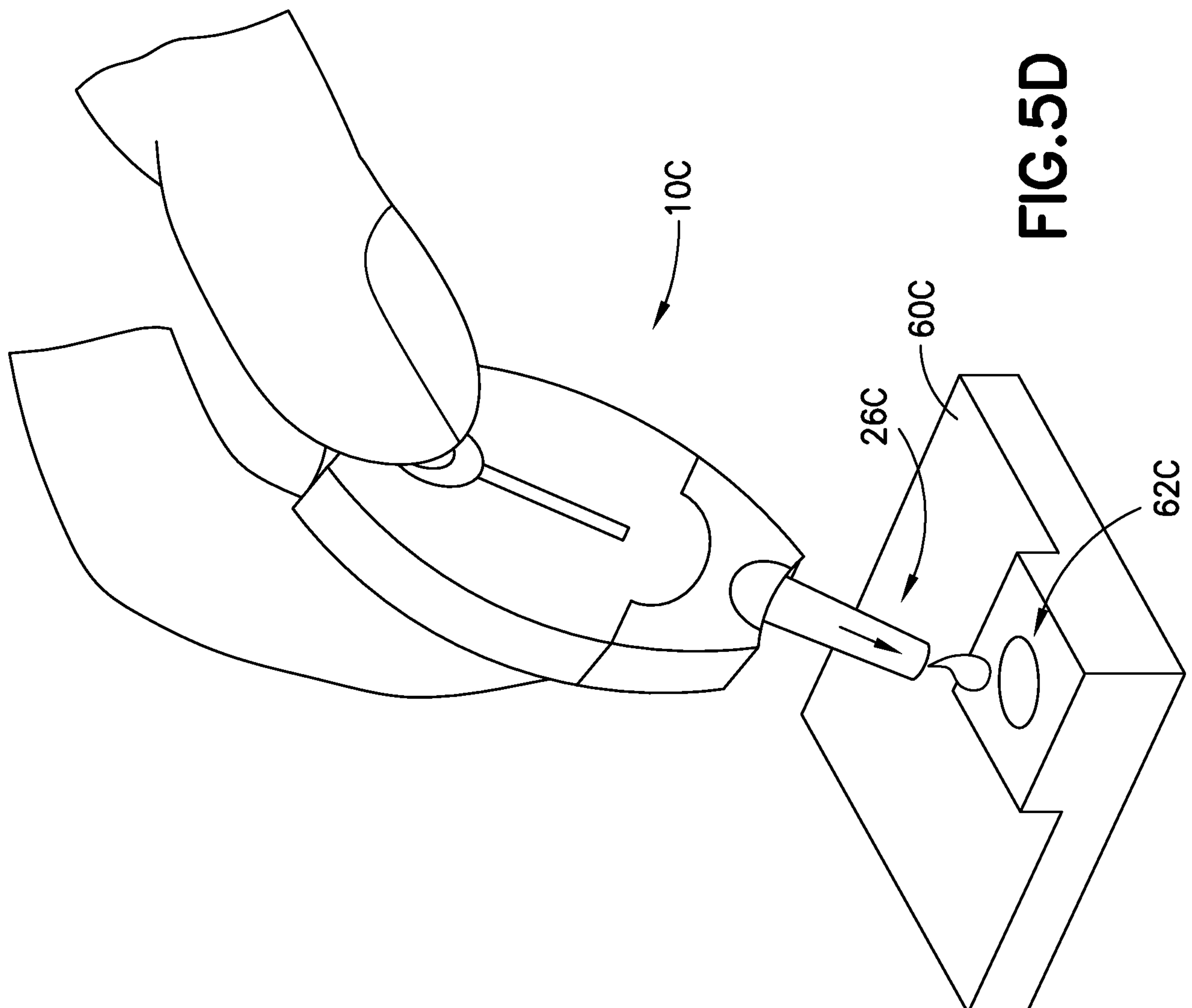


FIG.5A

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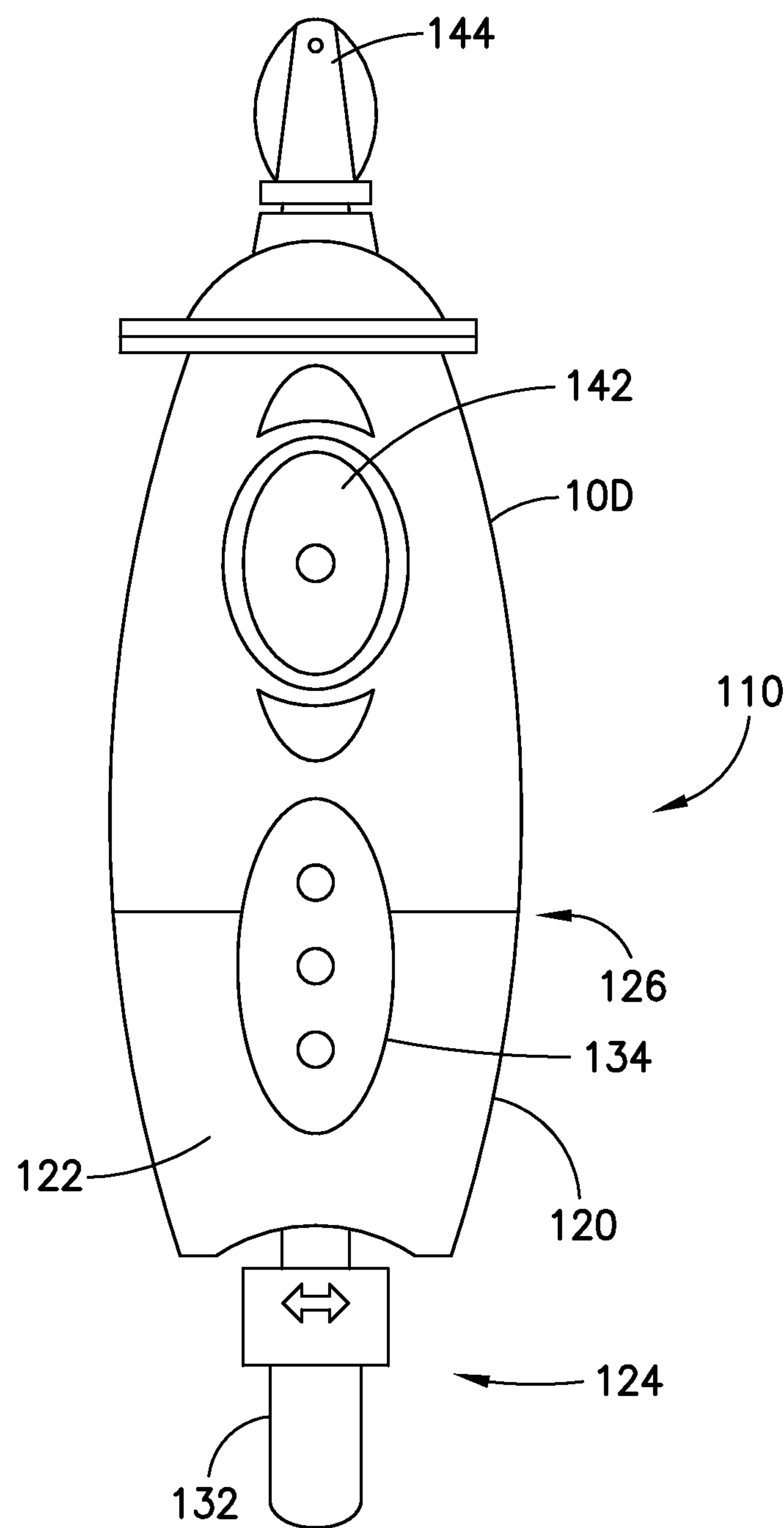


FIG.6A

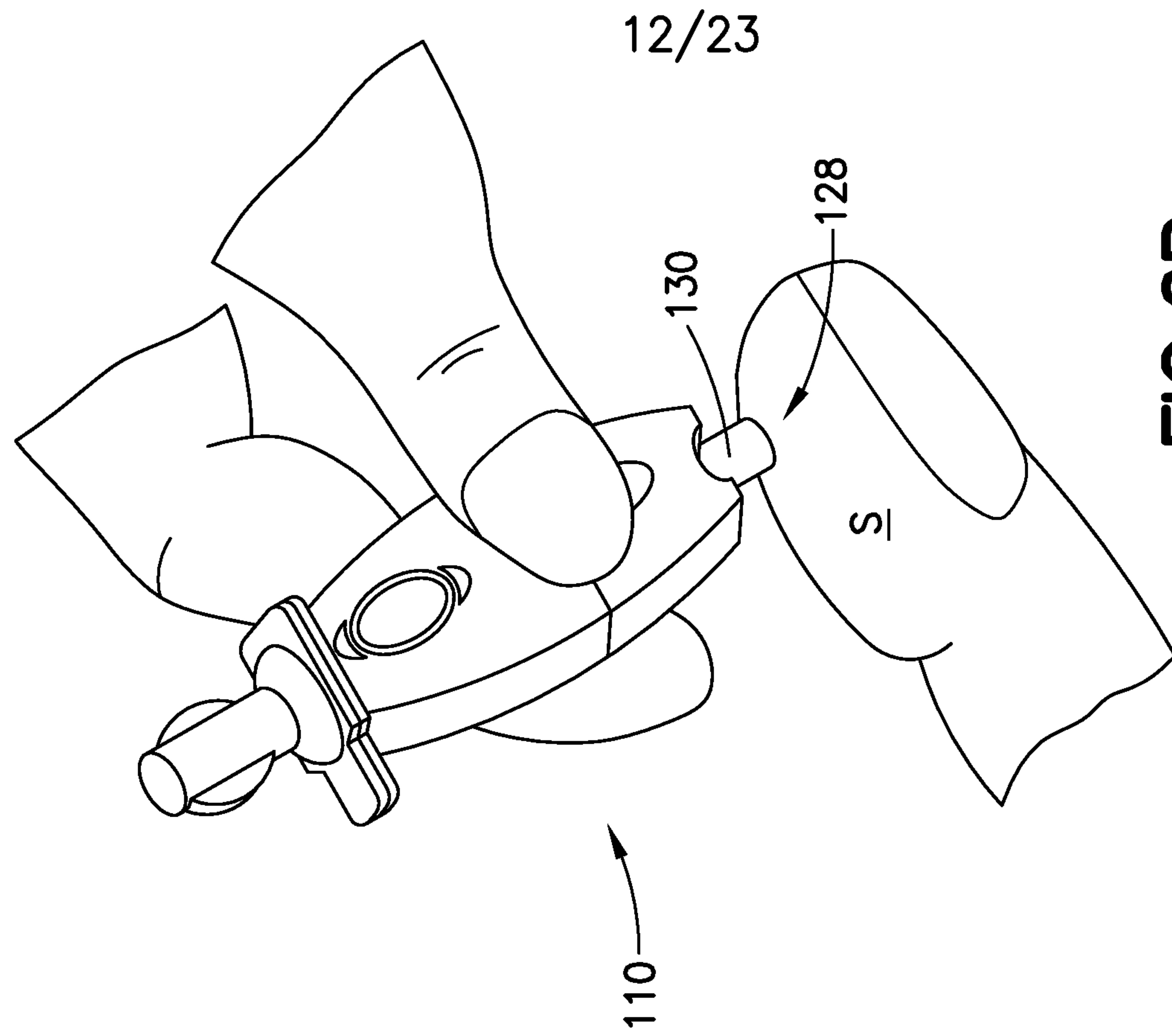


FIG. 6B

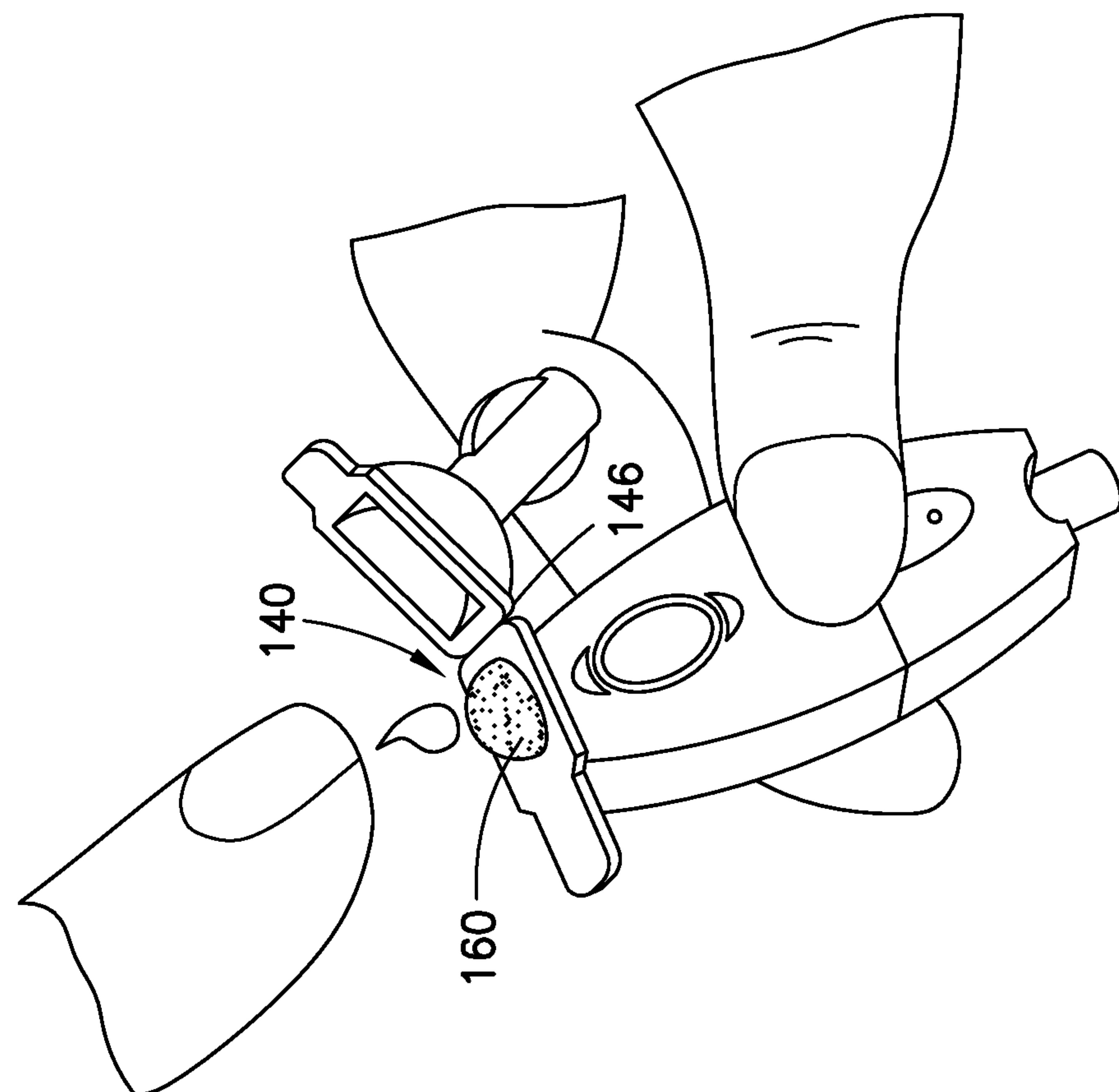
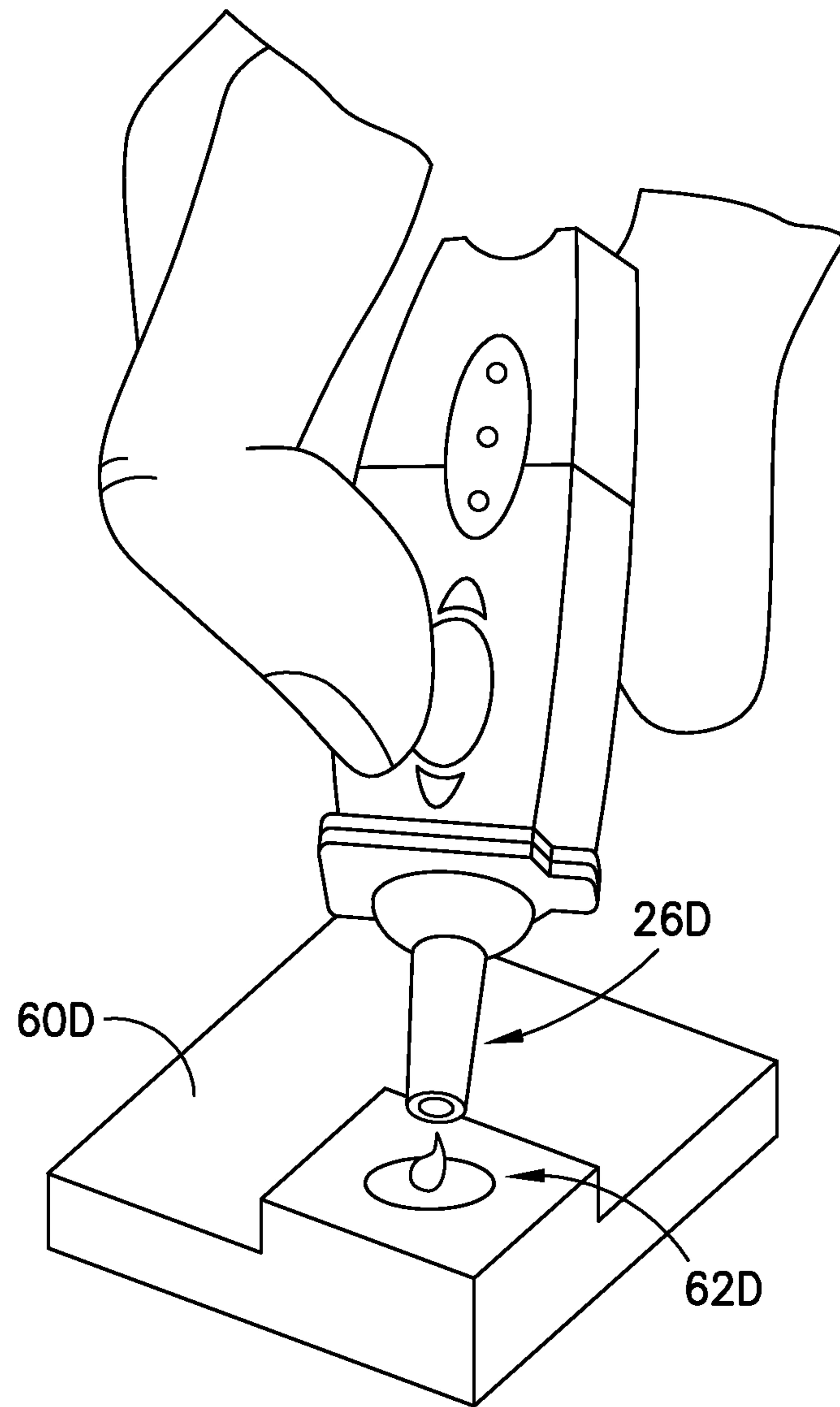


FIG. 6C

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**FIG. 6D**

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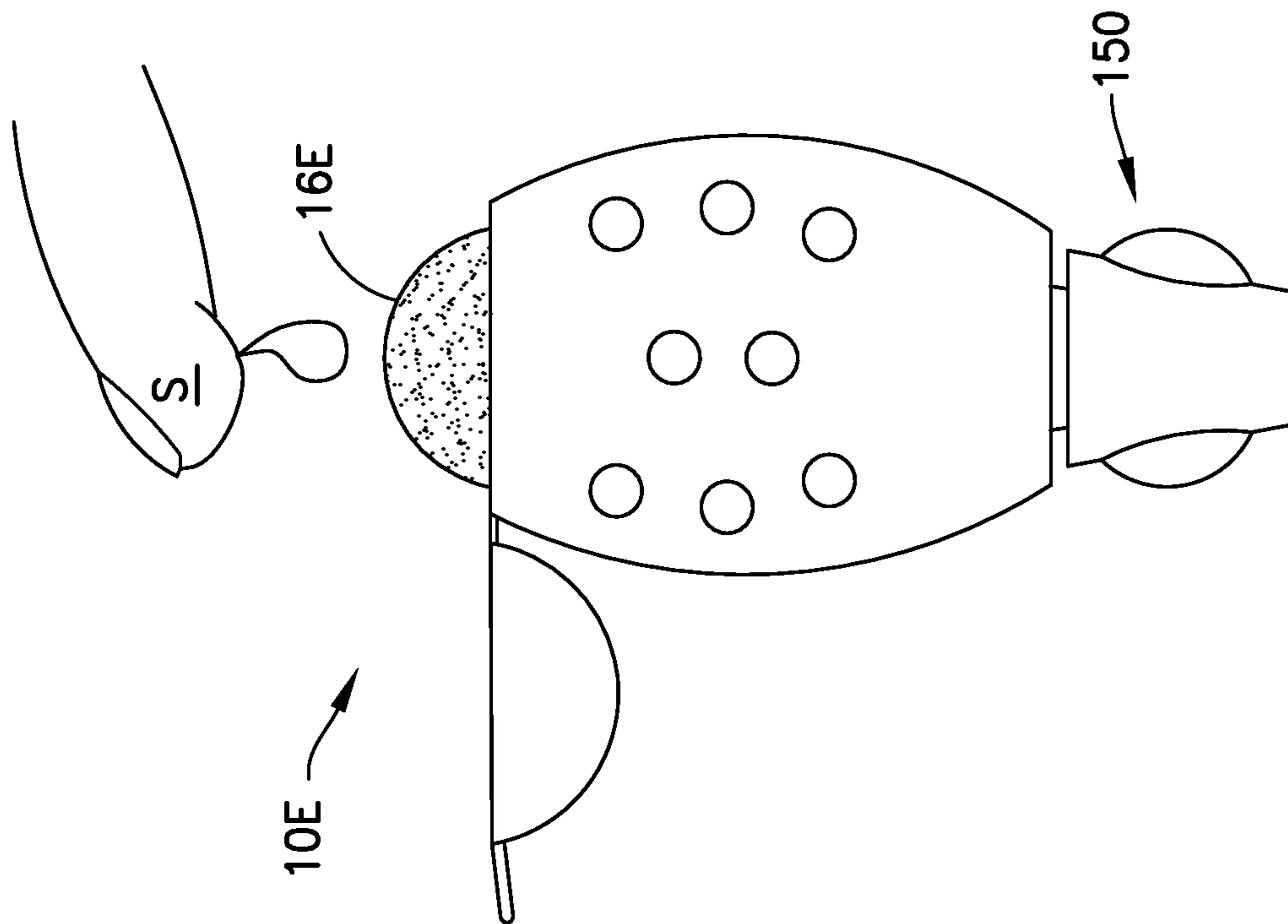


FIG. 7B

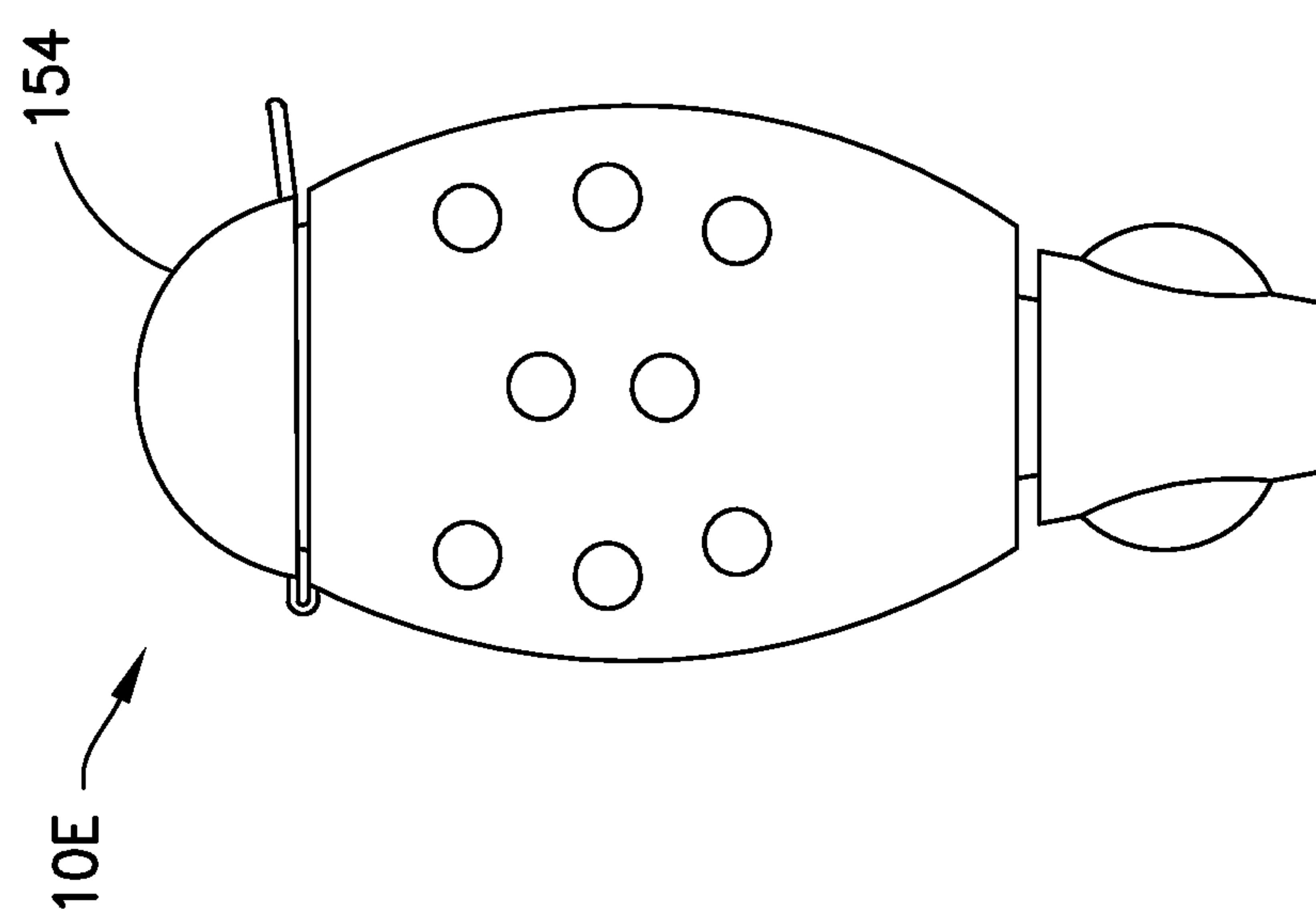


FIG. 7A

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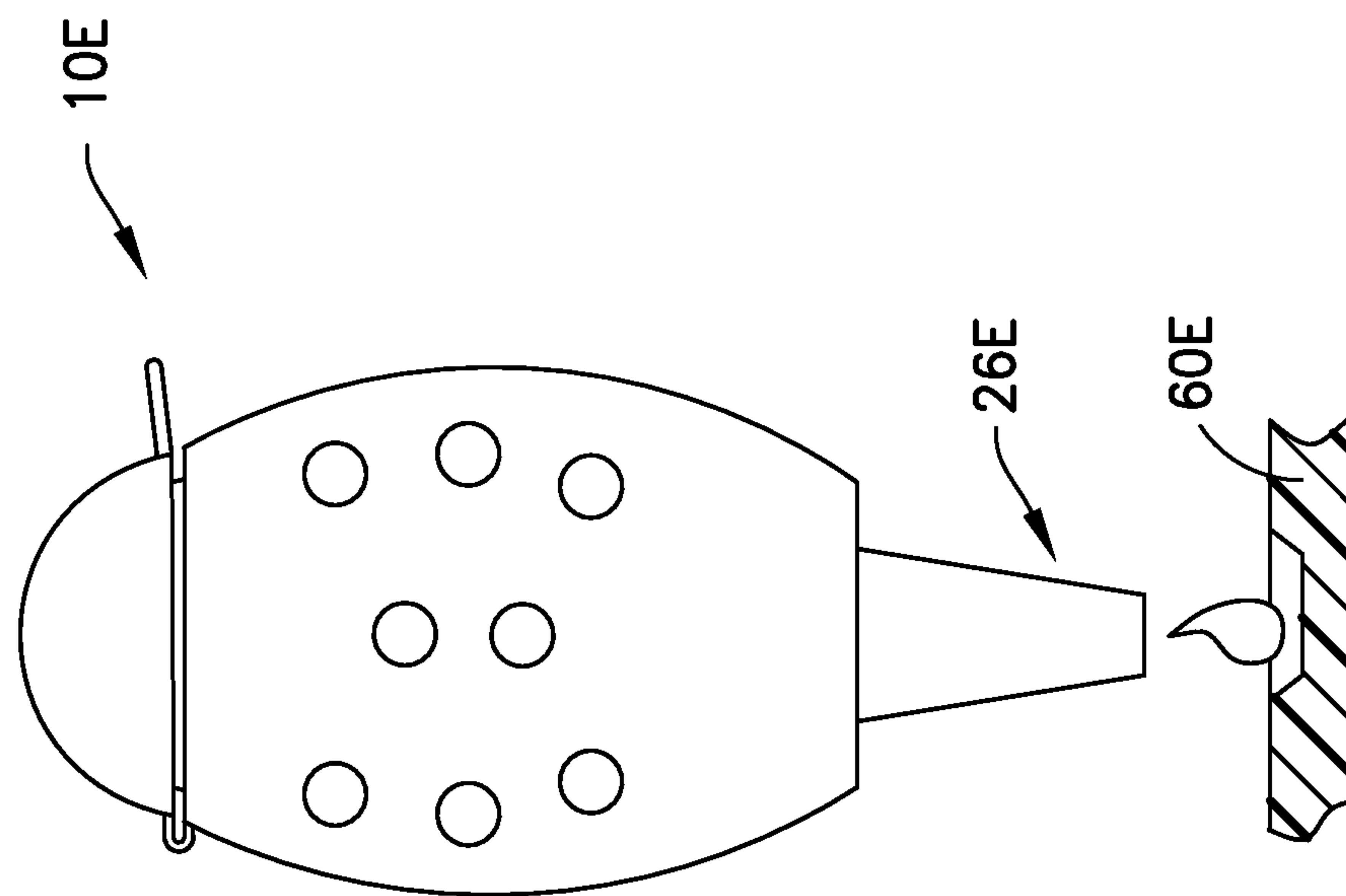


FIG. 7D

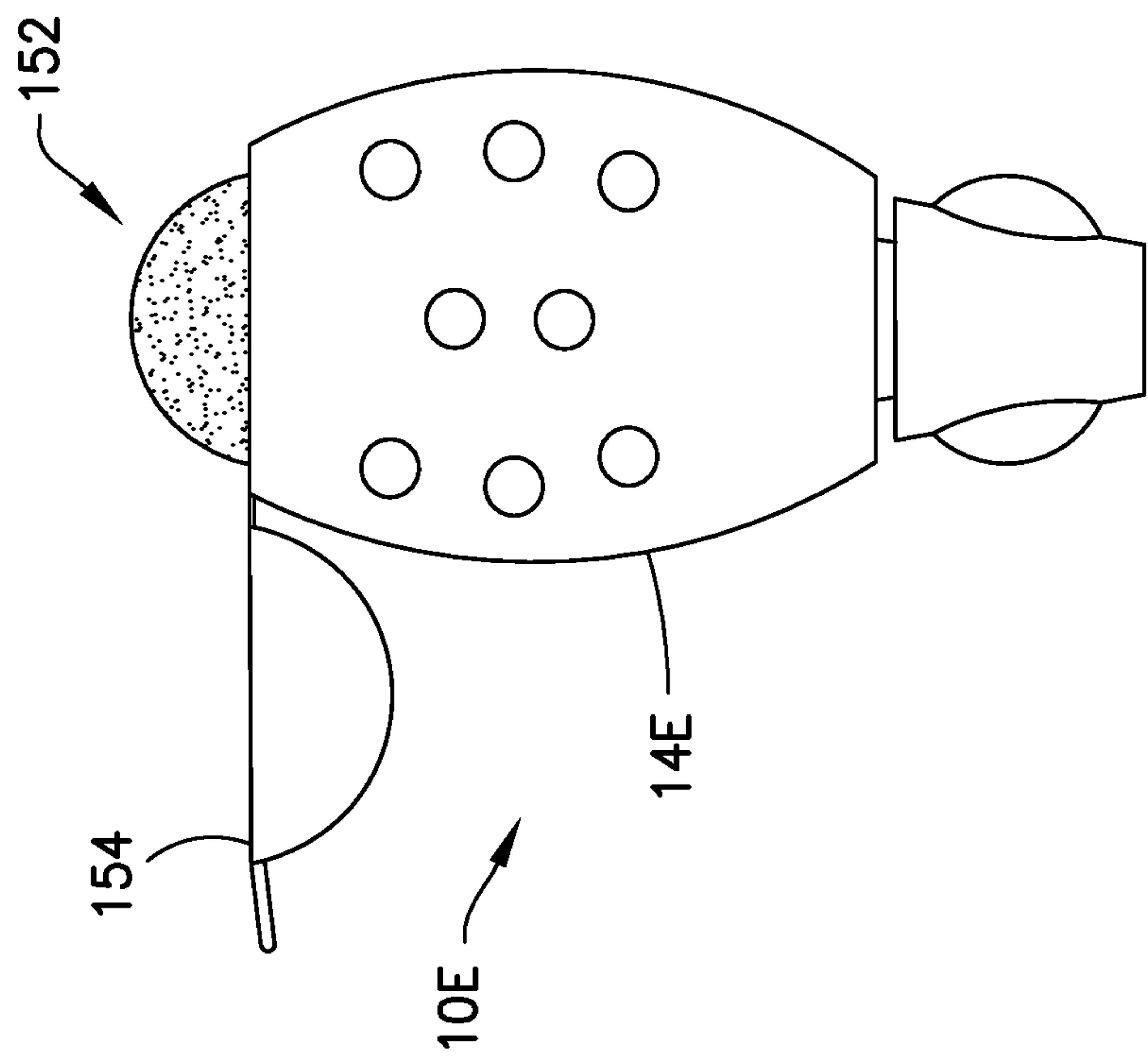


FIG. 7C

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200,201

206

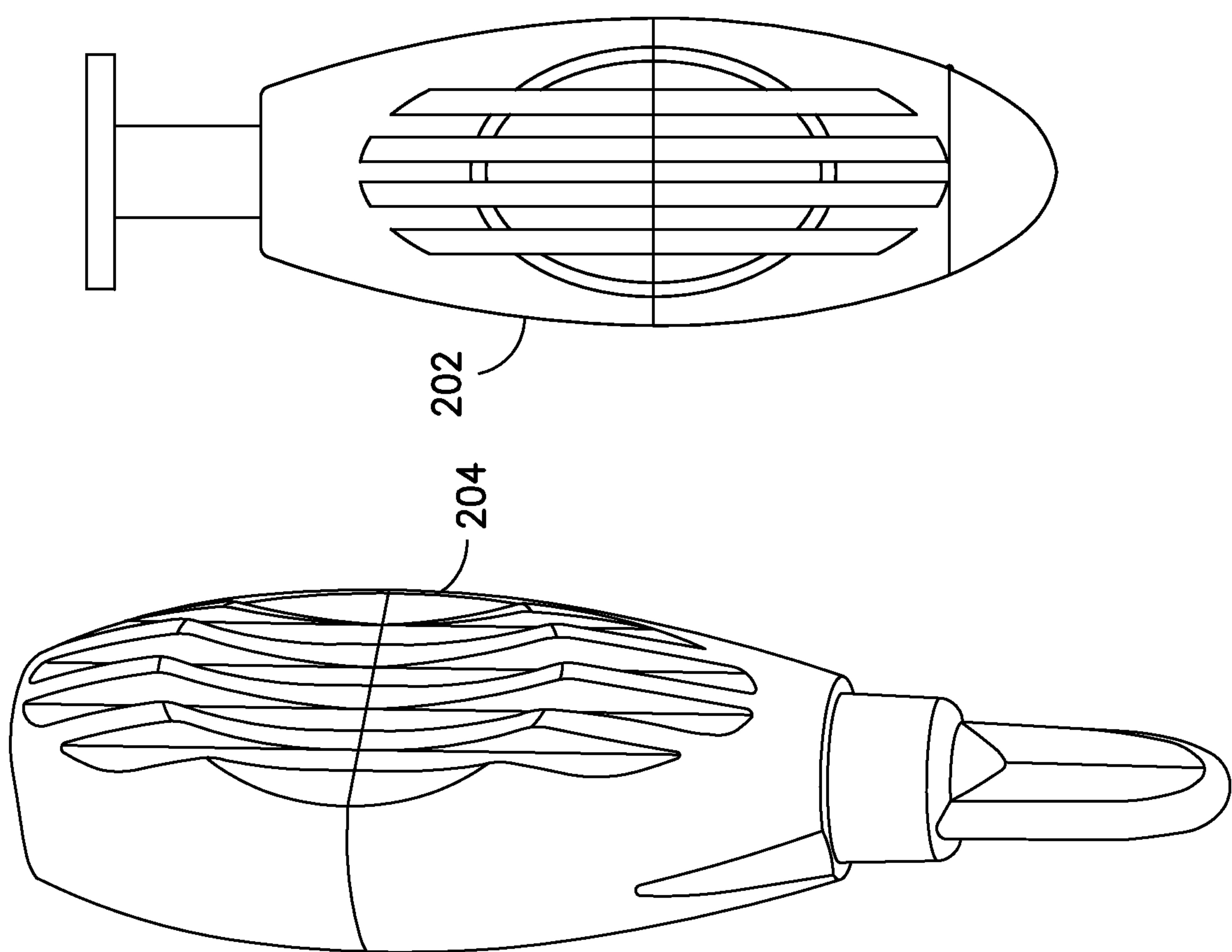
ALCOHOL
SWAB202
204

FIG.8

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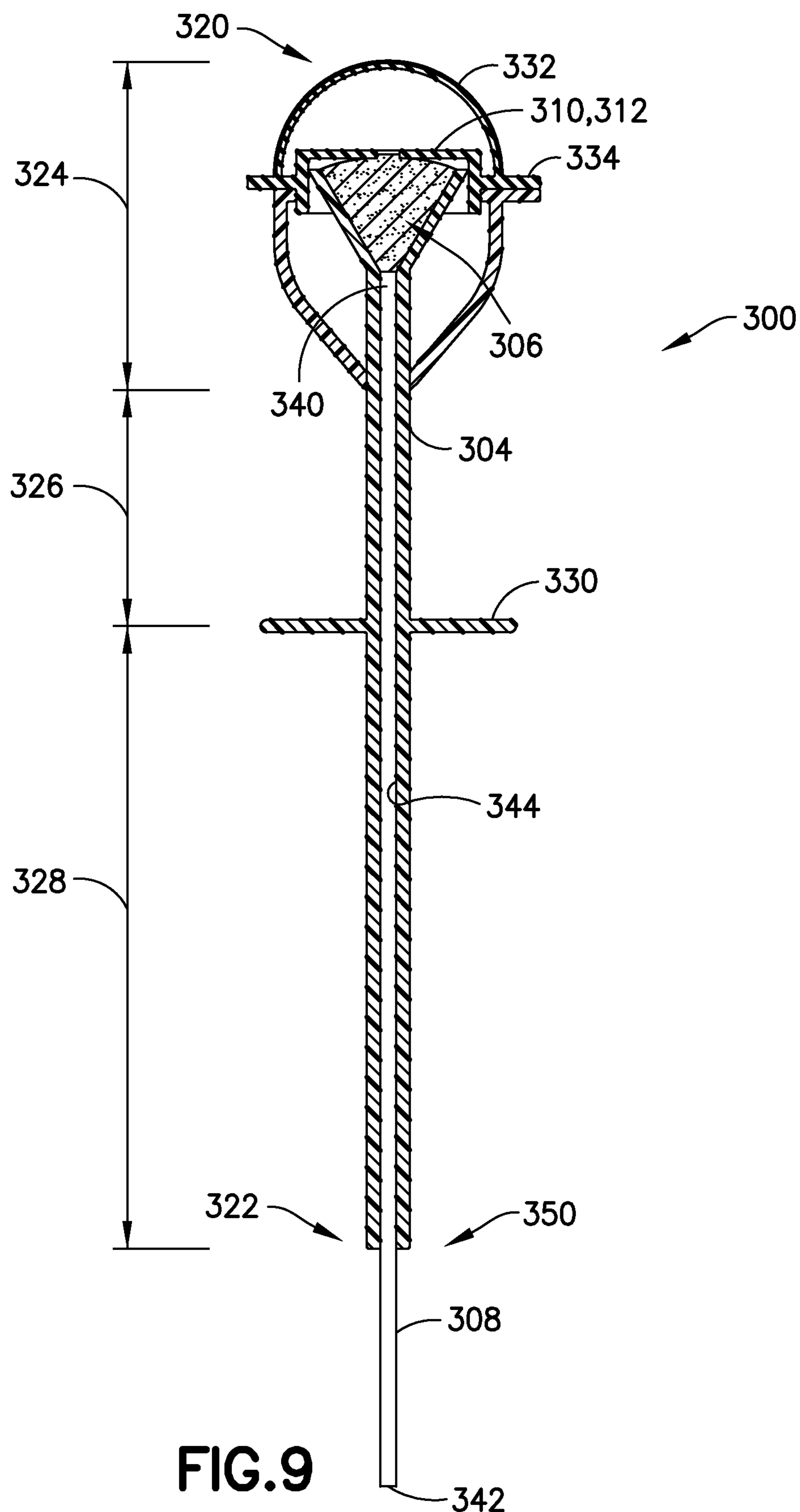
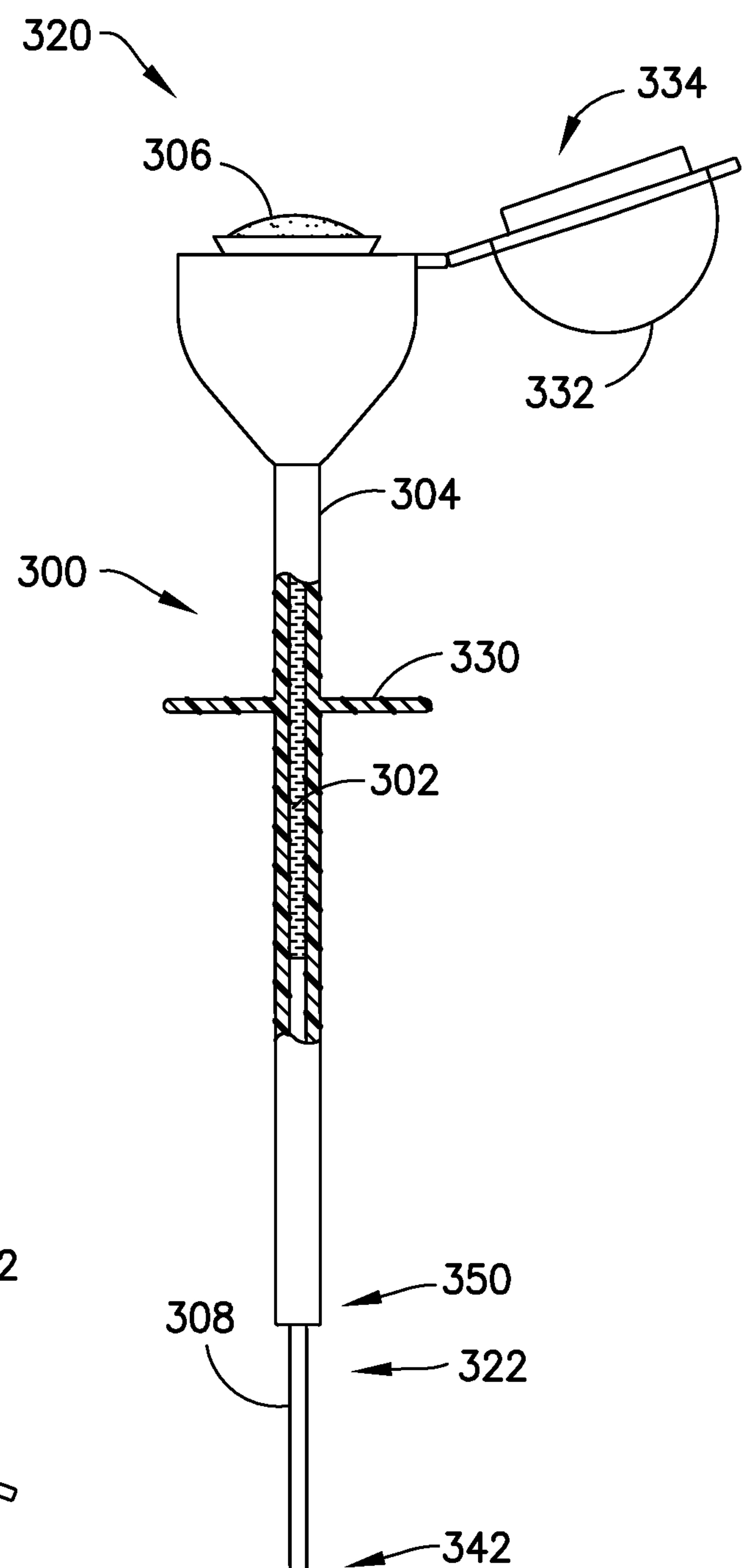
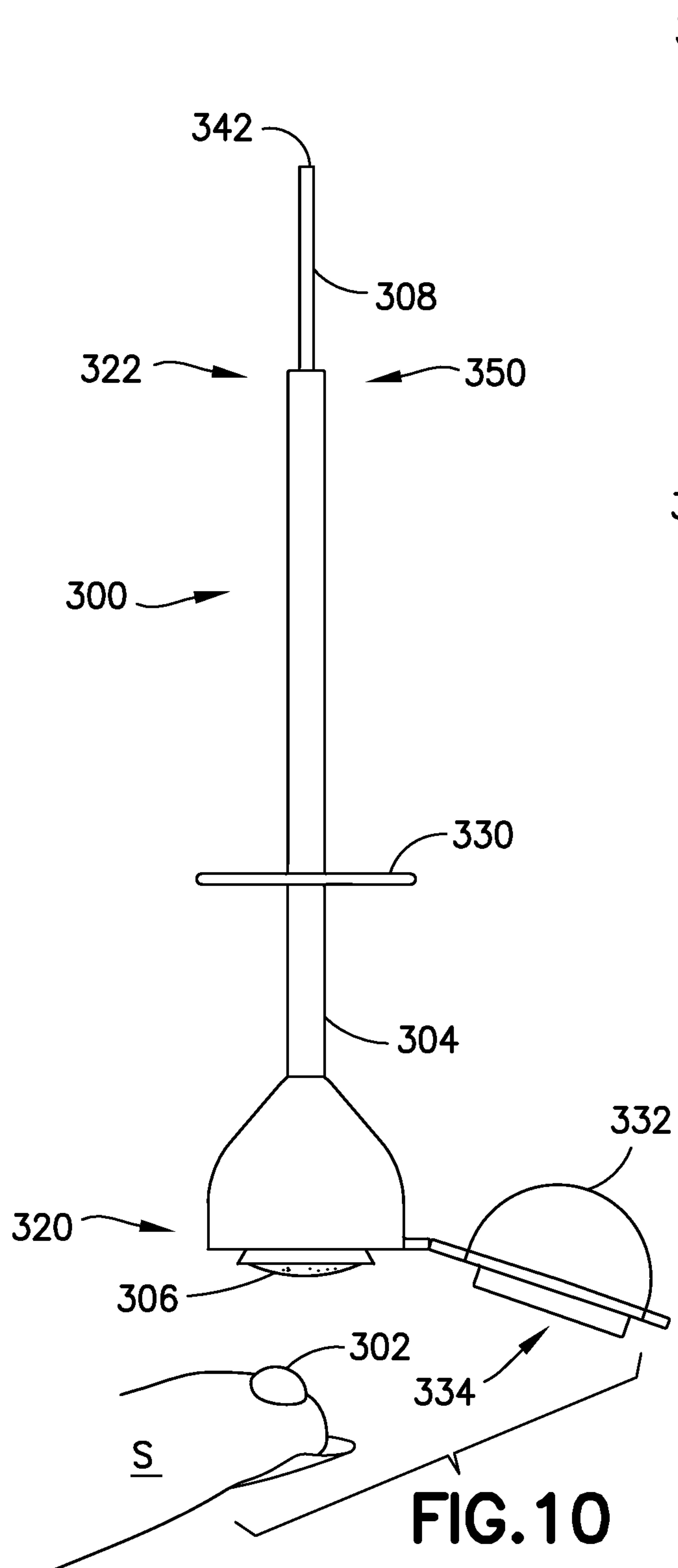


FIG.9

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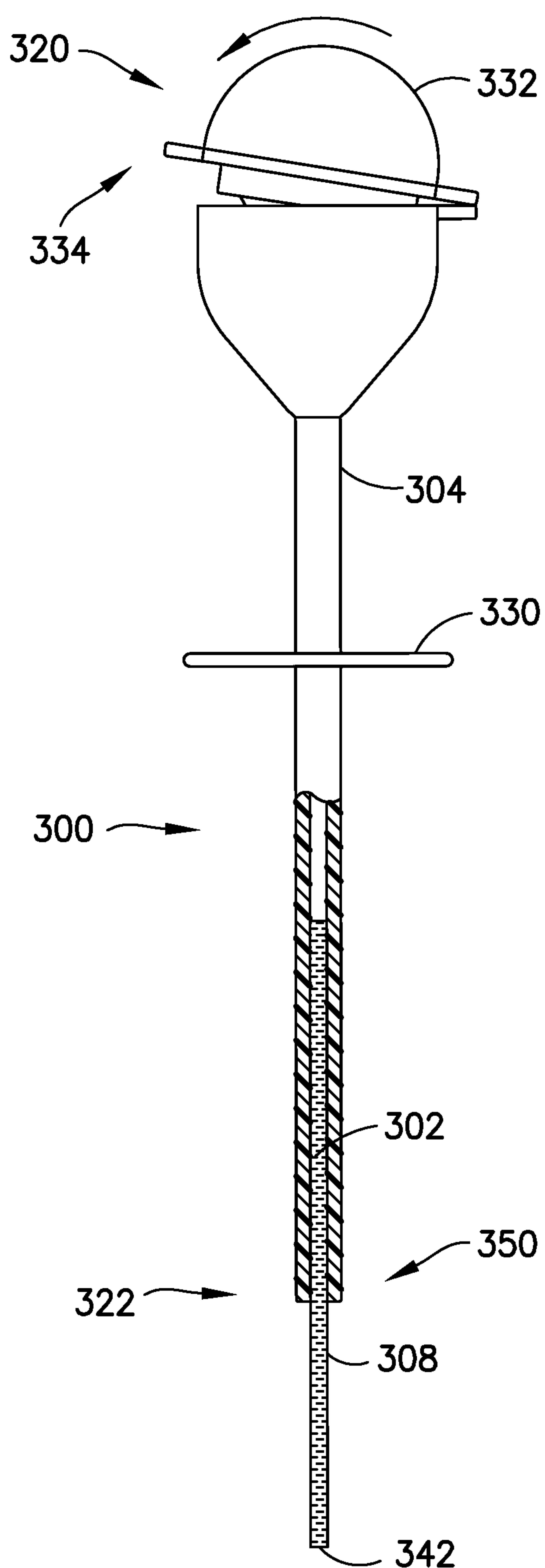


FIG. 12

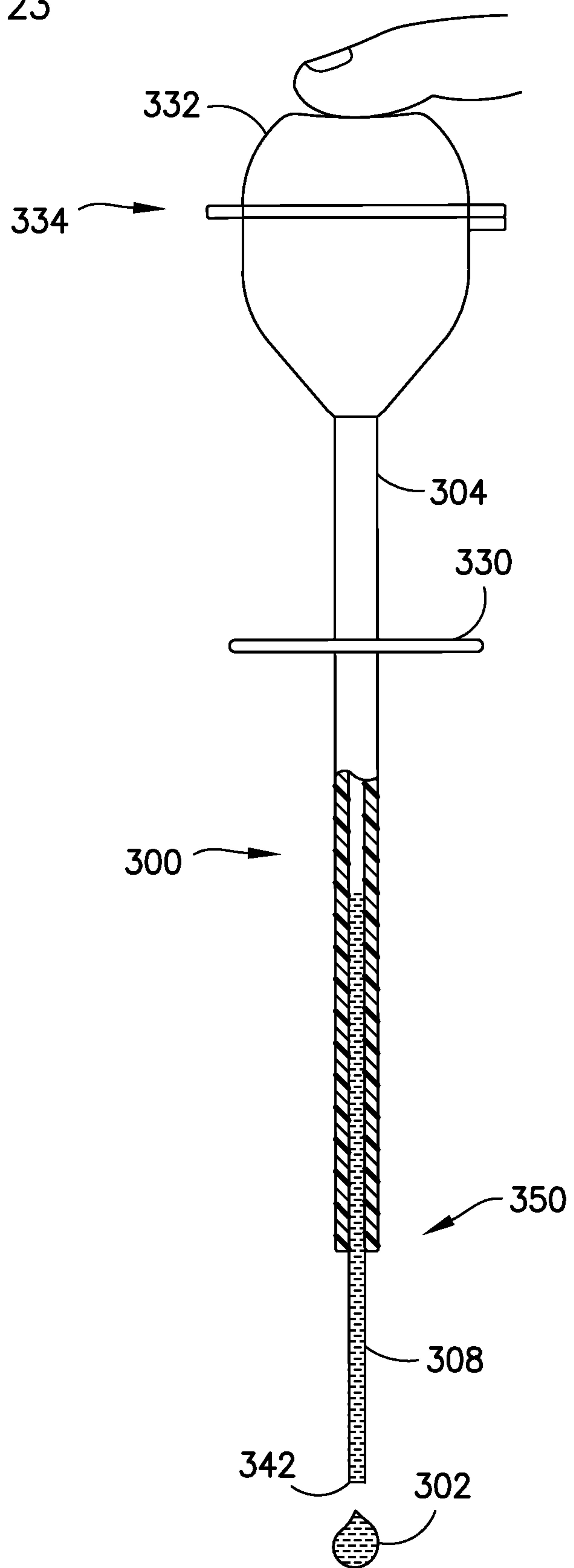


FIG. 13

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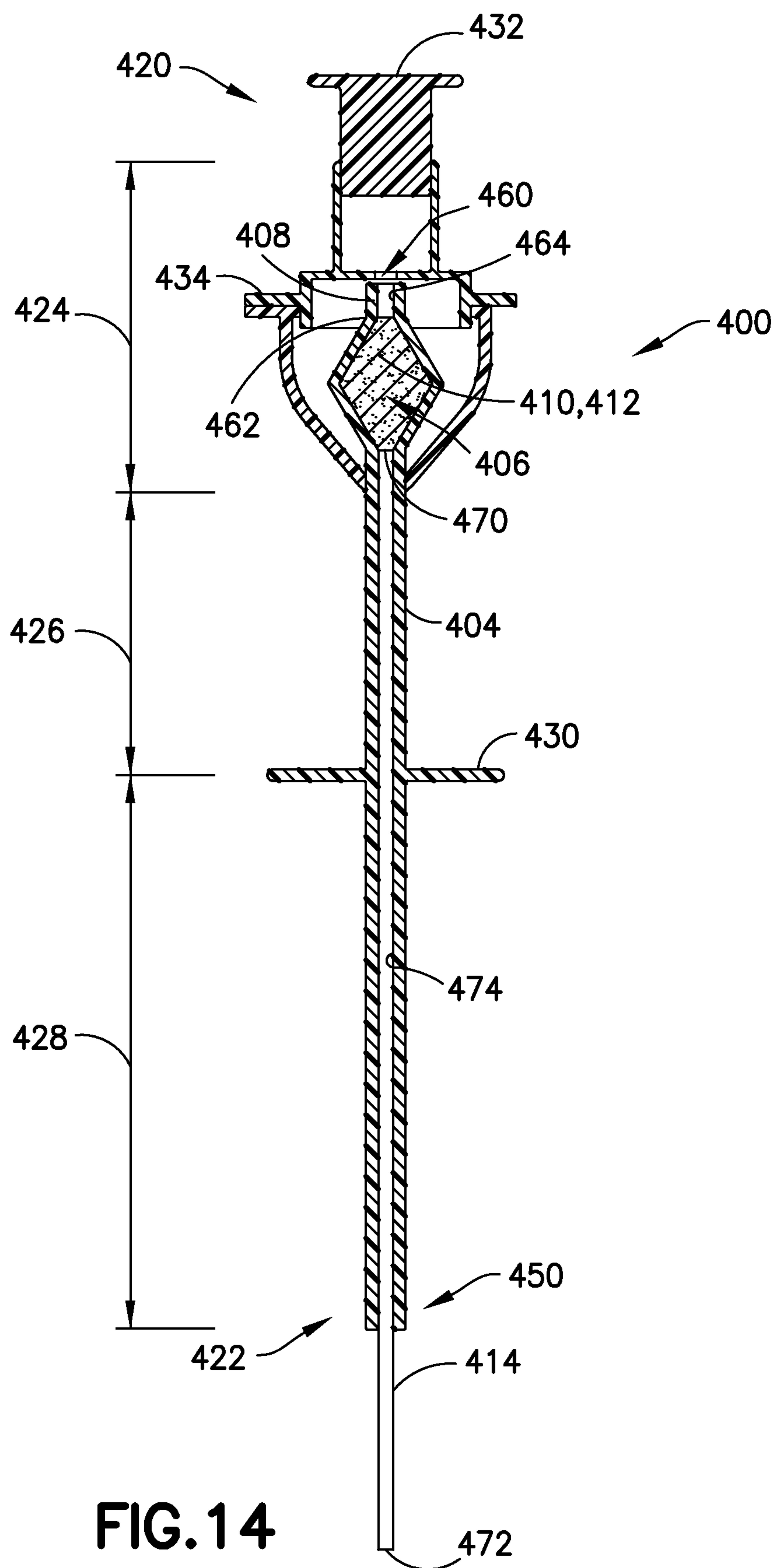


FIG. 14

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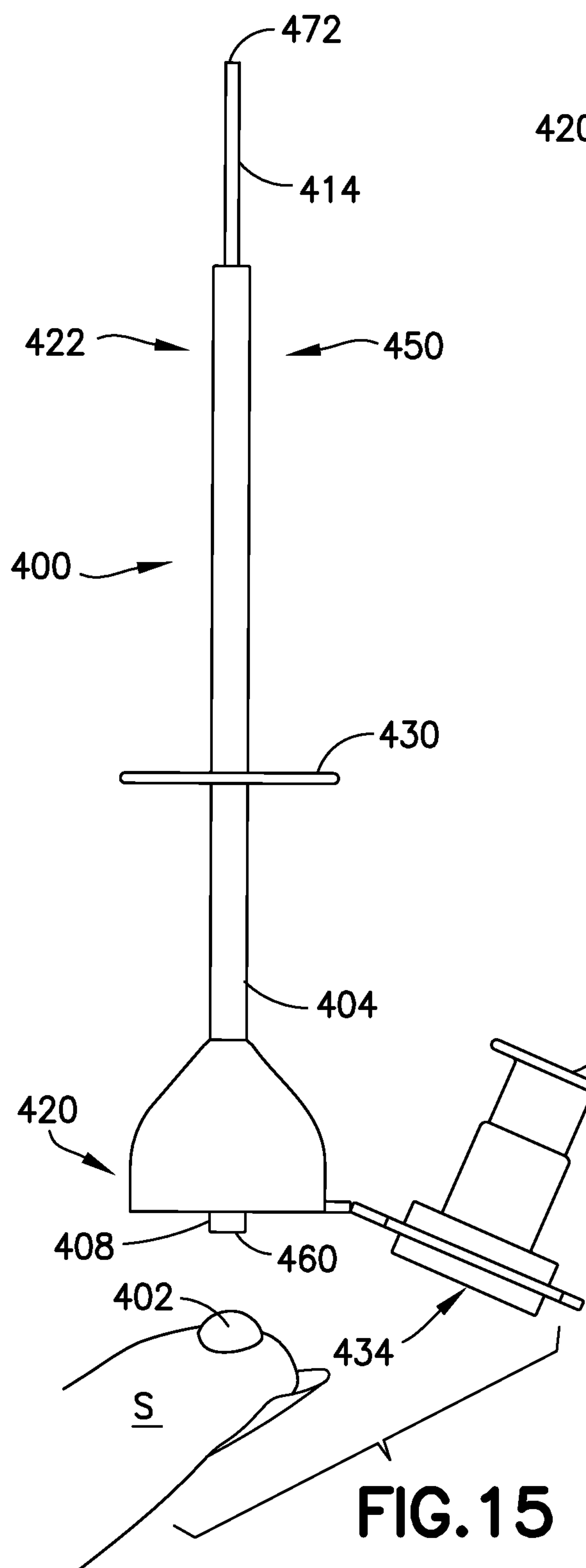
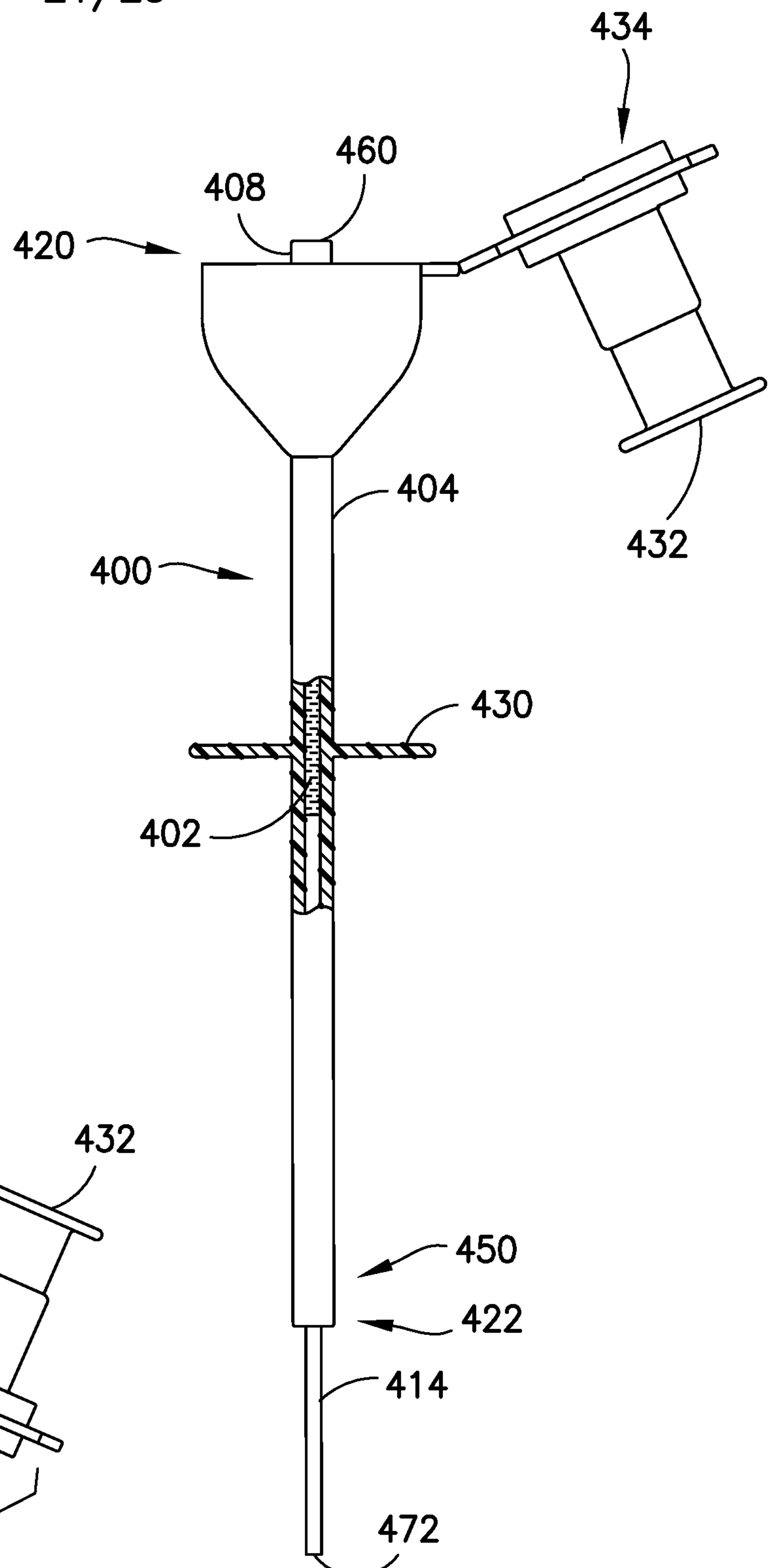


FIG. 15



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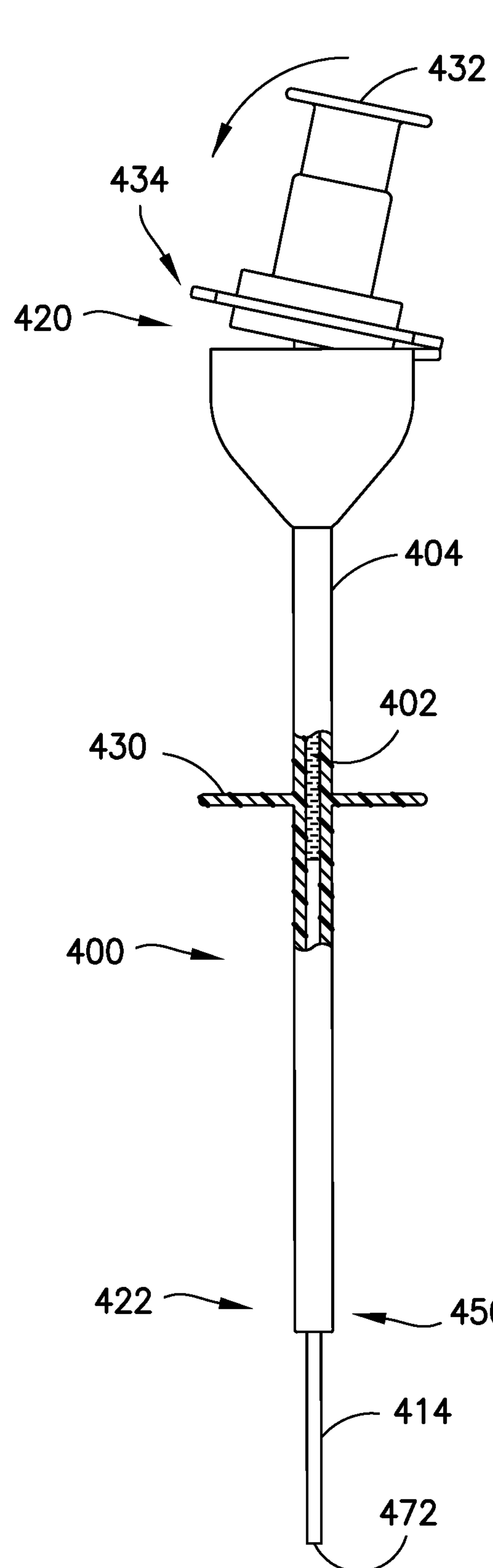


FIG. 17

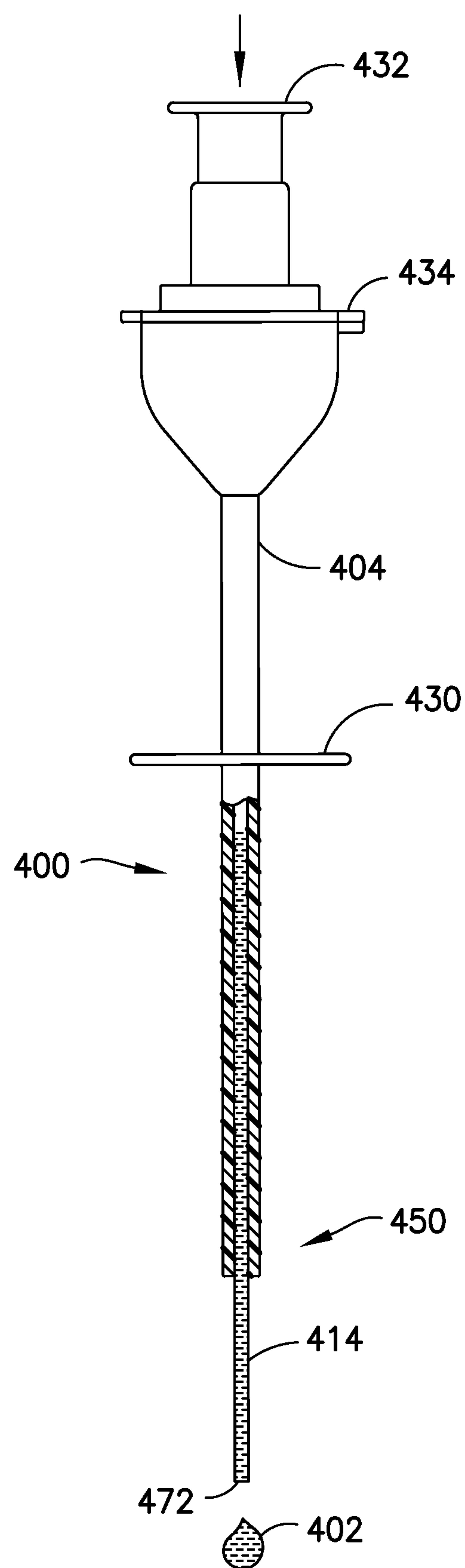


FIG. 18

