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(54) Title: APPARATUS FOR IMAGING SKIN

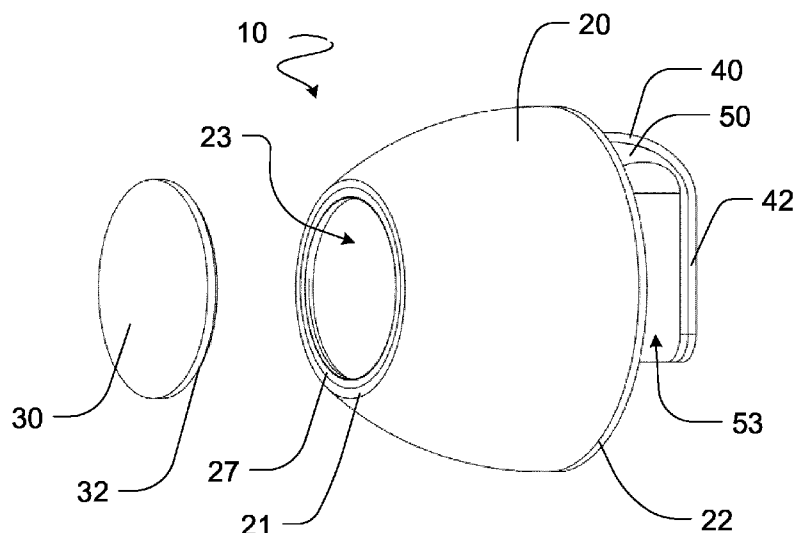


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: An apparatus for skin imaging is provided. The apparatus is used in conjunction with a mobile device to obtain digital images using a digital camera and a light source provided by the mobile device. The apparatus includes an optical system for illuminating an object to be imaged with uniform ambient light and a light conduit for delivering reflected light to the mobile device digital camera. The apparatus is removably attachable to the mobile device and/or a mobile device case. One or more optical elements, such as lenses, films, filters, and light caps may be used to improve image quality and/or acquire magnified images.



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APPARATUS FOR IMAGING SKIN

Reference to Related Applications

[0001] This application claims priority from U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 62/183,713, entitled SMART DERMOSCOPE APPARATUS AND SOFTWARE FOR SKIN IMAGING, filed June 23, 2015 which is hereby incorporated herein by this reference in its entirety for all purposes. For purposes of the United States of America this application claims the benefit of U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 62/183,713, entitled SMART DERMOSCOPE APPARATUS AND SOFTWARE FOR SKIN IMAGING, filed June 23, 2015.

Technical Field

[0002] This application relates to apparatus useful for imaging skin. Example embodiments provide apparatus that are used in conjunction with mobile devices to obtain digital images using an imaging system and a light source provided by the mobile device.

Background

[0003] A skin lesion is a part of the skin that has an abnormal appearance compared to the skin around it. Dermoscopy is the evaluation of skin lesions by a specialist with the aid of a dermoscope to diagnose and treat skin conditions and diseases. Typical dermoscopes include a magnifying lens, a non-polarized light source, a contact plate, and a liquid medium that is applied between the contact plate and the skin. The liquid medium reduces light that is reflected from the surface of the skin and allows visual inspection substantially unobstructed by reflected light. Dermoscopes that use polarized light are able to dispense with the liquid medium while cancelling out skin surface reflections. Some dermoscopes are capable of capturing images or video for diagnosis and analysis purposes.

[0004] Performed regularly, self-examination can alert an individual to changes in the skin and aid in the early detection of skin conditions and diseases. However, naked eye examination lacks the sensitivity required for early-stage detection of some skin conditions and diseases, e.g. skin cancer. Dermoscopes offer improved sensitivity, but such devices are typically expensive and/or most individuals lack the specialized training in dermatoscopy necessary to distinguish benign

from problematic skin lesions.

[0005] Mobile devices offer another tool for acquiring images. Many mobile devices today include a digital camera, a light source for illuminating objects in the field of view of the camera, and software for recording, storing, and modifying digital images. However, such devices are typically provided with lenses that have limited ability to magnify small objects such as details of skin lesions. These devices are not suited for imaging small objects or objects under the surface of the skin.

[0006] Since it is typically not possible to change the lens of conventional mobile devices, a magnifying lens must be connected to the device to obtain high quality and/or magnified digital images. Lens devices that are removably attachable to mobile devices are known; however, such devices typically include a light source and power supply (such as a battery). For example, some removably-attachable lens devices (such as MoleScopeTM, HUDTM by First DermTM, and DermLite DL1TM) include one or more light emitting diodes (LEDs) positioned about a device lens, rechargeable or disposable batteries to power the LEDs, and complex printed circuit boards to control lighting. Such devices can be undesirable complex, heavy, and/or expensive. Other lens devices use specifically designed solid light guides to collect light from a mobile device light source and are attached to mobile devices cases, for example, as described in Patent publication No. US-2015-0065803 which provides a device for imaging the tympanic membrane that may be used in conjunction with a camera of a cellular telephone.

[0007] Mobile device technology is rapidly evolving. With advancements in this field of technology and in consumer preferences, the sizes and shapes of mobile devices rapidly change rendering mobile device cases obsolete. The positions of the mobile device lens and light source also change as the size and shape of mobile devices change.

[0008] The foregoing examples of the related art and limitations related thereto are intended to be illustrative and not exclusive. Other limitations of the related art will become apparent to those of skill in the art upon a reading of the specification and a study of the drawings.

Summary

[0009] The following embodiments and aspects thereof are described and illustrated in conjunction with systems, tools, and methods which are meant to be exemplary and illustrative, not limiting in scope. In various embodiments, one or more of the above-described problems
5 have been reduced or eliminated, while other embodiments are directed to other improvements.

[0010] One aspect of the present invention provides an apparatus for use with a mobile device. The apparatus includes a body and a connector. The body includes a first end defining a first aperture and a second end opposed to the first end, the second end defining a lens aperture and a light guide aperture. The lens aperture is configured to align with a mobile device lens and the
10 light guide aperture is configured to align with a mobile device light source when the apparatus is removably attached to the mobile device. The body comprises an optical system for illuminating an object to be imaged and a light conduit for delivering light reflected by the object to the mobile device lens. The connector is coupled to the body and is adapted for removably attaching the apparatus to the mobile device.

[0011] In some embodiments, the optical system includes a beam splitter positioned in front of the light guide aperture. The beam splitter splits light received from the mobile device light source into plural beams and directs the beams in desired directions. In some embodiments the beam splitter is arranged to direct the plural beams into one or more light guides and the one or more light guides distribute light of the one or more beams to illuminate skin or another object to
20 be imaged.

[0012] In some embodiments, the beam splitter comprises a prism light guide.

[0013] In some embodiments, the beam splitter comprises a light reflector.

[0014] In some embodiments, the light reflector comprises a V-shaped mirror.

[0015] In some embodiments, the optical system comprises a light guide that extends around the light conduit. The light guide may have a generally circular configuration, for example the light
25 light guide may be toroidal or partial toroidal. The light guide may be solid or hollow. A hollow light guide has the advantage of light weight. The optical system may be arranged such that the light guide emits substantially uniform illumination around the circumference of the light conduit.

[0016] In some embodiments, a partially toroidal light guide comprises a reflective interior

surface and an annular opening for allowing light to exit therefrom.

[0017] In some embodiments, the light guide comprises a solid toroidal light guide arranged for uniformly distributing light from the mobile device light source.

5 [0018] In some embodiments, the solid toroidal light guide comprises a first flat surface for allowing light to exit therefrom and a second flat surface for capturing light from the light source aperture.

[0019] In some embodiments, the solid toroidal light guide comprises an outer surface coated with a material having a refractive index that is greater than the refractive index of the toroidal light guide.

10 [0020] In some embodiments, the toroidal light guide comprises a diffused surface and/or a diffuser film adjacent to the first flat surface for controlling the amount of light that exits the toroidal light guide and/or for enhancing uniform light distribution.

[0021] In some embodiments, the optical system comprises fiber-optic light guide for uniformly distributing light from the mobile device light source.

15 [0022] In some embodiments, the fiber-optic light guide includes a plurality of fibre-optic fibers that merge at the light guide aperture to capture light from the mobile device light source.

The plurality of fibers may be circumferentially distributed about the light conduit. The plurality of fibers may each be coated with a material having a refractive index that is greater than the refractive index of each fiber.

20 [0023] In some embodiments, the apparatus includes an eye cap removably attachable to the first end of the body.

[0024] In some embodiments, the apparatus includes an ear cap removably attachable to the first end of the body.

25 [0025] In some embodiments, the body comprises a light cap for uniformly mixing light from the optical system. A distance between a first end of the light cap and a second end of the light cap opposed to the first end may be selected to mix the light uniformly.

[0026] In some embodiments, an interior surface of the light cap is coated with a light-absorptive material. The light cap may include a reference ruler and/or a reference colour chart.

[0027] In some embodiments, the light conduit includes at least one lens.

[0028] In some embodiments, an interior surface of the light conduit is coated with a light-absorptive material.

[0029] In some embodiments, the connector includes a bracket extending outwardly from the second end of the body. The bracket defines a first opening between the bracket and the body for receiving the mobile device.

[0030] In some embodiments, the bracket is removably attachable to the second end of the body.

[0031] In some embodiments, the connector comprises a plurality of brackets. Each bracket may be removably attachable to the second end of the body. Each bracket may extend outwardly from the second end of the body to define an opening between the bracket and the body for receiving the mobile device.

[0032] In some embodiments, the connector includes an adapter configured to friction-fit inside the first opening. The adapter defines a second opening for receiving the mobile device.

[0033] In some embodiments, the connector includes a plurality of adapters. Each adaptor may be configured to friction-fit inside the first opening and defining a second opening for receiving the mobile device.

[0034] In some embodiments, the adapter is C-shaped and defines an aperture configured to align with the first aperture of the body and the mobile device lens.

[0035] In some embodiments, the apparatus comprises a mobile device case. The connector may include a magnetic piece that is magnetically attracted to the case for removably attaching the apparatus to the mobile device case.

[0036] In some embodiments, the mobile device case defines an aperture configured to align with the mobile device lens and the mobile device light source when the mobile device is inserted into the case.

[0037] In some embodiments, the mobile device case includes a magnetic piece adjacent to the aperture for aligning the mobile device lens with the lens aperture and the mobile device light source with the light source aperture.

[0038] In some embodiments, the apparatus further includes at least one filter. The at least one

filter may comprise a diffuser film and/or a first polarizer filter and/or a second polarizer filter.

[0039] In some embodiments, first and second linear polarizers are arranged with their polarization axes at 90 degrees to one another.

[0040] In some embodiments, circular polarization is used, a first polarizer filter is polarized in a clockwise direction and a second polarizer filter is polarized in a counterclockwise direction or vice versa.

[0041] In some embodiments, the at least one filter comprises a filter configured for providing structured precision lighting.

[0042] In some embodiments, the apparatus includes a contact lens removably attachable to the first end of the body. The contact lens may be disposable and/or magnifying.

[0043] Another aspect of the present invention provides an apparatus for use with a mobile device. The apparatus includes an optical system for illuminating an object to be imaged with light from a mobile device light source, a light conduit for delivering light reflected by the object to a mobile device lens, and a connector for removably attaching the apparatus to the mobile device.

[0044] In some embodiments, the light conduit comprises at least one lens.

[0045] One aspect of the invention provides a compact device that collects light in a relatively small area and distributes the light to provide uniform illumination emanating from an annular area. Such a device may be applied to collect light from a flash or other illumination source of a mobile device such as a cellular telephone and to distribute that light from an annulus surrounding a lens of a camera of the mobile device. Such an arrangement can be useful for close-up photography using the camera. The device may project a relatively small distance (e.g. 15 mm or less – in some embodiments 11 mm or less) from a surface of the mobile device.

[0046] In some embodiments light from the light source of the mobile device is split by a beam splitter into plural light beams that are directed into one or more light guides. The one or more light guides may extend in a plane that is perpendicular to an optical axis of the camera of the mobile device. In some embodiments the one or more light guides extend along a circular path concentric with the optical axis of the mobile device. In some embodiments the beam splitter is integrated with a light guide that collects light from the light source of the mobile device.

[0047] In addition to the exemplary aspects and embodiments described above, further aspects and embodiments will become apparent by reference to the drawings and by study of the following detailed descriptions.

5 Brief Description of the Drawings

[0048] Exemplary embodiments are illustrated in referenced figures of the drawings. It is intended that the embodiments and figures disclosed herein are to be considered illustrative rather than restrictive.

10 [0049] Figure 1 is a front perspective view of an apparatus for imaging skin according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

[0050] Figure 2 is a rear perspective view of the apparatus shown in Figure 1.

[0051] Figure 3 is a front perspective view of the apparatus shown in Figure 1, wherein the apparatus is removably attached to a mobile device.

[0052] Figure 4 is an extended front perspective view of the apparatus shown in Figure 3.

15 [0053] Figure 5 is a side elevation cross-sectional view of the apparatus shown in Figure 3.

[0054] Figure 6 is a rear perspective view of an apparatus for imaging skin according to an example embodiment of the present invention, wherein the apparatus is removably attachable to a mobile device case.

20 [0055] Figure 7 is a perspective cross-sectional view of an apparatus for imaging skin according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

[0056] Figure 8 is an extended view of the apparatus shown in Figure 7.

[0057] Figure 9 is a cross-sectional view of a toroidal light guide according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

25 [0058] Figure 10 is a perspective view of a fiber-optic light guide according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

[0059] Figure 11 is a perspective view of a prism light guide according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

[0060] Figure 12 is a front plan view of the light guide shown in Figure 11.

[0061] Figure 13 is a perspective view a light reflector according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

[0062] Figure 14 is a front plan view of the light reflector shown in Figure 13.

5 [0063] Figure 15 is a perspective view of an eye cap according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

[0064] Figure 16 is a perspective view of an ear cap according to an example embodiment of the present invention.

10 **Description**

[0065] Throughout the following description specific details are set forth in order to provide a more thorough understanding to persons skilled in the art. However, well known elements may not have been shown or described in detail to avoid unnecessarily obscuring the disclosure. Accordingly, the description and drawings are to be regarded in an illustrative, rather than a
15 restrictive, sense.

[0066] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “mobile device” (as used herein) refers to a handheld computer including a digital camera and a light source. For example, a mobile device may comprise a smartphone, a tablet computer, and/or a personal digital assistant (PDA).

[0067] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “digital camera” (as used herein) refers to a device
20 comprising an imaging system for digitally encoding images and/or videos. The digital camera may internally store the images and/or videos or transmit the images and/or videos to an external storage device for storage, reproduction, viewing, and/or modification.

[0068] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “imaging system” (as used herein) refers the combination of an optical sensor and an optical system for acquiring digital images.

25 [0069] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “optical sensor” (as used herein) refers to a mobile device sensor that measures the intensity of electromagnetic waves typically in a wavelength range between UV light and infrared light. For example, an optical sensor may comprise a photodiode.

[0070] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “optical system” (as used herein) refers to a system that includes one or more of lenses, mirrors, reflectors, filters, prisms, optical gaps and light guides.

5 [0071] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “light guide” (as used herein) refers to an apparatus that is capable of carrying light from one location to another. A light guide may include, but is not limited to, one or more of optical fibers and hollow or solid geometric shapes that internally reflect light.

[0072] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “light source” (as used herein) refers to an electronically-powered device that emits photons to provide illumination and includes, but is not
10 limited to, LEDs.

[0073] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “optical element” (as used herein) includes a lens, a mirror, a reflector, a filter, a prism, a light guide, or an optical film.

[0074] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “optical aberration” (as used herein) refers to a departure of the performance of an optical system from the paraxial approximation. For example,
15 in an imaging system, optical aberration occurs when light from one point of an object does not convert into (or does not diverge from) a single point after transmission through the system.

[0075] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “paraxial approximation” (as used herein) refers to a small-angle approximation used in Gaussian optics for tracing light rays through an optical system. A light ray that is paraxial makes a small angle to an optical axis of an optical system
20 and lies close to the axis throughout the system.

[0076] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “field of view” (as used herein) refers to the extent of the observable world that is seen (by eye, imaging system, or optical sensor) at a given moment. In the case of an imaging system and/or sensor, field of view refers to the range of angles through which an optical sensor is sensitive to electromagnetic radiation.

25 [0077] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “focal length” (as used herein) refers to the distance between a lens and a focal point of an optical system, wherein the lens converges parallel rays of light into the optical system’s focal point). The focal length of an optical system is a measure of how strongly the system converges or diverges light. A system with a shorter focal length has greater optical power than one with a longer focal length since the system with

the shorter focal length is able to bring light rays into focus in a shorter distance.

[0078] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “f-number” (as used herein) refers to the ratio of the focal length of a lens to the diameter of an aperture of an optical system. It is a dimensionless number that is a quantitative measure of, for example, camera lens speed.

5 **[0079]** Unless the context dictates otherwise, “angle of incidence” (as used herein) refers to an angle between a light ray incident on a surface and a line perpendicular to the surface at the point of incidence.

[0080] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “angular distribution” (as used herein) refers to the distribution of light emitted by a light source over angles ranging from 0° to 360° relative to a
10 specified angle (for example, relative to 0°).

[0081] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “uniform light distribution” (as used herein) refers to a distribution of light such that over an area of interest there is a substantially uniform light level.

[0082] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “optical magnification” (as used herein) refers to
15 the ratio between a dimension of an object in an image and the corresponding dimension of the object itself. Optical magnification is a dimensionless number.

[0083] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “structured precision lighting” (as used herein) refers to light projected in a known pattern (i.e. a plane, a grid, or a more complex shape) at a known angle.

20 **[0084]** Unless the context dictates otherwise, “specular reflection” (as used herein) refers to a mirror-like reflection of light from a surface, in which the angle of reflection equals the angle of incidence. The incident ray, the reflected ray, and the normal direction are coplanar.

[0085] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “diffuse reflection” (as used herein) refers to a reflection of light from a surface such that an incident ray is reflected at many angles rather than
25 at just one angle (as in the case of specular reflection).

[0086] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “diffuser” (as used herein) refers to a filter that diffuses or scatters light in some manner. A diffuser may be applied to provide soft light and/or to achieve a more uniform light distribution.

[0087] Unless the context dictates otherwise, a “polarizer” (as used herein) refers to an optical filter that can convert a beam of light of undefined or mixed polarization into a beam of well-defined polarization.

5 [0088] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “linear polarizer” (as used herein) refers to a polarizer that selectively passes or creates a linearly-polarized electromagnetic wave (e.g. a linearly-polarized light wave). The direction of the electric field of the electromagnetic wave is aligned parallel to a polarization direction or ‘polarization axis’ of the polarizer.

[0089] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “circular polarizer” (as used herein) refers to a polarizer filter that selectively passes and/or creates a circularly-polarized electromagnetic wave.
10 In a circularly-polarized wave a direction of the electric component of the electromagnetic wave changes in a rotary manner along the direction of propagation. Circular polarization can be either clockwise or counterclockwise.

[0090] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “beam splitter” (as used herein) refers to an optical device that is operable to split a beam of light into plural beams of light.

15 [0091] Unless the context dictates otherwise, “Total Internal Reflection” (as used herein) refers to a phenomenon which occurs when a wave propagating in a first medium strikes a boundary of the first medium with a second medium and the wave is entirely reflected back toward the first medium. Total internal reflection can occur when the second medium has lower index of refraction and the angle of incidence of the wave with the boundary is larger than a critical angle.

20 [0092] Some embodiments of the present invention provide an apparatus for skin imaging. The apparatus is used in conjunction with a mobile device to obtain digital images using a digital camera and a light source provided by the mobile device. The apparatus captures light from the mobile device light source and delivers light that is suitable for imaging skin, including skin lesions and/or features below the surface of the skin, to illuminate skin to be imaged. Light
25 reflected and/or scattered from the skin surface re-enters the apparatus and is delivered to a lens of the mobile device digital camera. The apparatus is removably attachable to the mobile device and/or a mobile device case. One or more optical elements, such as prisms, reflectors, and light guides, are used to deliver light from the mobile device light source to the skin. The apparatus may include one or more optical elements, such as lenses, films, and/or filters, and/or a light cap
30 for improving image quality and/or for acquiring magnified digital images.

[0093] The optical system that captures light from the mobile device and distributes that light in a manner suitable for acquiring images of skin or another object may be relatively very compact. Various example embodiments are described herein. In some embodiments the apparatus projects by 15mm or less (in some embodiments 11 mm or less) from a surface of the mobile device (e.g. from a face of a mobile telephone).

[0094] An apparatus **10** in accordance with one example embodiment of the present invention is shown in Figures 1 to 5. Apparatus **10** may be used in conjunction with any of a variety of mobile devices, such as mobile device **90** (see Figures 3 to 5), having a digital camera and a light source to produce digital images of an object. Apparatus **10** includes an optical system for illuminating an object to be imaged with uniform light. Apparatus **10** further includes light conduit for delivering light reflected from the object to the mobile device digital camera. In combination with the digital camera of the mobile device, apparatus **10** may be used to produce digital images that are magnified and/or substantially unobstructed by reflected ambient and/or stray light. Apparatus **10** may include a connector for attaching the apparatus to the mobile device and/or a mobile device case.

[0095] Apparatus **10** includes a body **20** that houses the optical system. Body **20** has a first end **21** and a second end **22** opposed to first end **21**. Light from a mobile device light source enters body **20** via an aperture **25** defined by second end **22**. Light travels through and exits body **20** via an aperture **23** defined by first end **21**. Light is reflected by the skin of a subject and reenters body **20** via aperture **23**. Body **20** delivers the reflected light, to a lens of a mobile device digital camera via an aperture **24** defined by second end **22**. Apertures **24** and **25** are positioned to align with the lens and the light source, respectively, of the mobile device when apparatus **10** is removably attached thereto and/or to a mobile device case attached to the mobile device.

[0096] Body **20** is made of a light-weight material, including but not limited to plastic or metal. In some embodiments, body **20** is conical and tapers from second end **22** to first end **21**. In some embodiments, body **20** is elliptical and tapers from second end **22** to first end **21**. Body **20** may have any shape provided the field of view of apparatus **10** is smaller than the area of second end **22** so that glare effects may be minimized.

[0097] In some embodiments, body **20** includes a bracket, such as bracket **40**, for removably mounting apparatus **10** to a mobile device. Bracket **40** extends outwardly from second end **22** of

body **20**. The mobile device is friction-fit into an opening **41** defined between bracket **40** and second end **22** of body **20** (see Figure 4). An arm **42** of bracket **40** extends over a front surface of the mobile device when apparatus **10** is removably attached thereto.

[0098] Arm **42** may be resilient so as to grippingly engage mobile devices of a range of thicknesses. When the mobile device is fit into opening **41**, the lens and the light source of the mobile device concentrically-align with apertures **24** and **25**, respectively, of body **20**. In this way, optical aberration is minimized. The size, shape, and configuration of bracket **40** may be selected to accommodate the various sizes, shapes, and configurations of a mobile device such that apparatus **10** is removably attachable to a variety of mobile devices. For example, opening **41** may be sized, shaped, and/or configured accordingly to fit thicker or thinner mobile devices. Arm **42** may have different sizes, shapes, and/or configurations for supporting a mobile device. Bracket **40** may be removably attachable to second end **22** of apparatus **10**. Apparatus **10** may include a plurality of brackets **40**, each bracket removably attachable to second end **22** of body **20** and having a different size, shape, and/or configuration.

[0099] In some embodiments, such as the example embodiment shown in Figures 1 to 5, apparatus **10** includes an adapter **50** for use with bracket **40** to accommodate the variety of sizes, shapes, and configurations of mobile devices. Adapter **50** is friction-fit into opening **41** and the mobile device is friction-fit into an opening **53** defined by adapter **50**, as best seen in the example embodiment shown in Figures 3 to 5. Adapter **50** may be C-shaped. An arm **51** of C-shaped adapter **50** may define an aperture **52**, which is positioned to concentrically-align with aperture **24** of body **20** when adapter **50** is friction-fit into opening **41**. When the mobile device is fit into opening **53** of adapter **50**, the lens and the light source of the mobile device concentrically-align with apertures **24** and **25**, respectively, of body **20**.

[0100] The size, shape, and configuration of adapter **50** may be configured to accommodate the various sizes, shapes, and configurations of a mobile device such that apparatus **10** is removably attachable to a variety of mobile devices. For example, arm **51** and/or opening **53** may be sized, shaped, and/or configured to fit thicker or thinner mobile devices. Aperture **52** may be sized, shaped, and/or configured to concentrically-align with the lenses of different mobile devices.

[0101] Bracket **40** may be made of a light-weight material including, but not limited to, plastic or metal. In some embodiments, bracket **40** is made of a flexible, but firm, elastic material

including, but not limited to, rubber. Adapter **50** may be made of an elastic material, including but not limited to rubber.

[0102] In the example embodiment shown in Figure 6, apparatus **10** is removably attachable to a mobile device case using a magnet **60** secured to an outer surface **28** of second end **22** of body **20**. In some embodiments, the case is ferromagnetic and apparatus **10** may be removably secured thereto via magnet **60**. In some other embodiments, the case, such as mobile device case **100**, includes a piece of ferromagnetic material **102** secured to an outer surface **103** thereof for removably attaching apparatus **10** via magnet **60**. Case **100** defines an aperture **101**, which is positioned to align with the lens and the light source of a mobile device when the mobile device is attached to case **100** (e.g. by being friction-fit inside the cavity (not shown) defined by case **100**). Ferromagnetic material **102** is positioned on case **100** adjacent to aperture **101** such that the lens and light source of a mobile device align with apertures **24** and **25**, respectively, of apparatus **10** to minimize optical aberration when apparatus **10** is removably attached to case **100**. In some embodiments, apparatus **10** includes a lens as described elsewhere herein.

Ferromagnetic material **102** is positioned on case **100** such that the mobile device lens concentrically-aligns with the lens of apparatus **10** to minimize optical aberration when apparatus **10** is removably attached to case **100**. Persons skilled in the art will recognize that ferromagnetic material **102** could be replaced with a magnet and second end **22** of body **20** and/or magnet **60** could be made of a ferromagnetic material for removably attaching apparatus **10** to the mobile device case.

[0103] In some embodiments, apparatus **10** includes a contact lens **30**. Contact lens **30** may be used, for example, to modify the optics of a camera viewing a subject's skin (e.g. contact lens **30** may provide magnification) and/or to press three-dimensional features of skin to be imaged into one plane by pressing contact lens **30** against the skin. When contact lens **30** is being used a liquid (such as a gel) may optionally be applied to the surface of skin to be imaged. Contact lens **30** may be disposable. In some embodiments, contact lens **30** does not modify the camera optics and simply provides a window through which skin or other objects may be imaged. Such a window may provide a clean or sterile surface for contact with a subject's skin and/or prevent a gel or liquid applied to the subject's skin from contaminating the rest of apparatus **10** and/or press on the skin to be imaged.

[0104] Contact lens **30** may be removably attachable to first end **21** of body **20**. In some embodiments, contact lens **30** is removably attached to first end **21** using one or more magnets. Persons skilled in the art will recognize that contact lens **30** may be removably attached to first end **21** using other means conventionally known. For example, contact lens **30** may be threadably secured, clipped, or snap-fit to first end **21** of body **20**. In the example embodiment shown in Figures 1 and 2, contact lens **30** is removably attachable to first end **21** via a ferromagnetic ring **31** secured to an inner surface **33** of contact lens **30** adjacent to an edge **32**. First end **21** of body **20** defines a rim **26** (see Figure 7) concentric about aperture **23** for supporting a magnetic ring **27**. Ferromagnetic ring **31** is complementarily sized and shaped to magnetically attract and attach to magnetic ring **27** when contact lens **30** contacts first end **21**. Persons skilled in the art will recognize that ferromagnetic ring **31** could be replaced with a magnet and rim **26** and/or magnetic ring **27** could be made of a ferromagnetic material for removably attaching contact lens **30** to first end **21**.

[0105] Contact lens **30** may be made of a light-transmitting material such as a polymeric clear plastic material and/or a glass material (such as quartz). In some embodiments, contact lens **30** does not substantially interfere and/or interact with light passing therethrough (e.g. contact lens **30** may serve as a window). In some embodiments, contact lens **30** magnifies, diffuses, and/or filters light that passes through it.

[0106] Contact lens **30** may optionally include a colour palette (not shown). The colour palette may be used for colour calibrating a mobile device by measuring and/or adjusting the colour response of the device to the palette. The colour palette may, for example, comprise small patches of a number of selected known colours located around a periphery of contact lens **30** or on a mounting portion of contact lens **30** within a field of view of a camera of a mobile device.

[0107] Contact lens **30** may optionally include a scale reference such as a ruler, grid, scale length or the like that is in the field of view of a camera.

[0108] The optical system of apparatus **10** includes a light guide for collecting light from a mobile device light source and uniformly distributing the light to illuminate an object to be imaged. The optical system may further include a light cap for mixing light emitted by the light guide.

[0109] In some embodiments, the optical system includes a first light guide (e.g. light guide **80**)

arranged to collect light from the light source and a second light guide (e.g. light guide **110**) arranged to uniformly distribute the light from the first light guide to illuminate an object (e.g. a skin lesion). The optical system may further include a light cap arranged to mix light emitted by the second light guide.

5 [0110] In the example embodiment shown in Figures 5, 7, and 8, the optical system includes a beam splitter (e.g. prism light guide **80** or light reflector **170**), a light guide **110**, and a light cap **220** for illuminating an object to be imaged with light from a mobile device light source.

[0111] Light guide **80** may be positioned in aperture **25** of body **20** to collect light from the mobile device light source and to deflect the light sideways for distribution. For example, light
10 may enter light guide **80** generally at right angles to the back of a mobile device and light guide **80** may redirect the light so that it exits light guide **80** generally parallel to the back of the mobile device. Such redirection helps to avoid forming a bright spot and accordingly helps to distribute light more uniformly within the light guide **110**.

[0112] Deflection of light may be achieved through any of a range of different mechanisms. In
15 the example embodiment shown in Figures 7, 8, 11, and 12, light guide **80** comprises a prism structure, which deflects light sideways by way of total internal reflection (TIR). When light guide **80** is positioned in aperture **25**, a top surface **81** of prism light guide **80** faces outwardly from body **20** and surfaces **82**, **83**, **84**, **85**, **86**, and **87** of light guide **80** are embedded inside body
20 **20**. A significant amount of the light rays emitted by the mobile device light source hit surfaces **82**, **83**, **84**, or **85** where they experience total internal reflection and thus remain within light guide **80**. Surfaces **82** and **86** and surfaces **84** and **87** form an angle α , as best seen in Figure 12.

[0113] Depending on the angles of incidence of the light rays emitted by the light source, light rays that hit surfaces **86** or **87** will either exit light guide **80** or undergo total internal reflection. Light rays that are reflected internally by surfaces **86** and **87** are deflected at right angles and
25 thus exit light guide **80** by way of side surfaces **82** and **84** respectively. The amount of light that is reflected by surfaces **86** and **87** in this direction (e.g. some reflected light rays travel approximately parallel to surface **81** after they are reflected) depends on angle α . To optimize the amount of light that is deflected sideways, an angle γ may be determined. Angle γ , which is
30 based on the angular distribution of the mobile device light source, refers to the angle (or a range of angles, for example between about 0° to about 20°) chosen such that at least about 50%,

preferably at least about 60%, more preferably at least about 70%, of the light rays from the mobile device light source falls within that range. Based on angle γ , angle α may be selected so that most or all light rays that enter light guide **80** with angles of incidence in the range of $-\gamma$ to $+\gamma$ (or the range from an angle x to the angle $x + \gamma$) are deflected toward the side faces of light guide **80**.

[0114] Light guide **80** may be made of any clear light-transmitting material such as clear plastic or clear glass. Persons skilled in the art will recognize that prism light guide **80** may have any geometric shape, size, and/or configuration that achieves total internal reflection as described elsewhere herein. For example, surfaces **82**, **83**, **84**, and **85** of light guide **80** may define an elliptical or circular cross-section. Where the cross-section of light guide **80** is elliptical or circular, aperture **25** is also elliptical or circular.

[0115] In some other embodiments, light guide **80** is replaced with a light reflector, such as a V-shaped mirror **170** as shown in Figures 13 and 14. Light rays from the mobile device light source are reflected by the light reflector and delivered to the second light guide **110**. V-shaped mirror **170** includes an inner surface **171** and an outer surface **172**. Each surface **171** and **172** is made of a reflective material. By reflecting light, the light delivered to the second light guide is not focused in any one spot and, accordingly, may be uniformly distributed about the second light guide. In some embodiments, at least about 50% of light from the light source is reflected by outer surface **172**, preferably at least 60% is reflected, more preferably at least about 70% is reflected. An angle θ defined by V-shaped mirror **170** may be selected to optimize the amount of reflected light distributed by light guide **110**. To optimize the amount of light that is reflected, angle γ is determined as described elsewhere herein. Based on angle γ , angle θ may be selected so that light rays having angle γ are reflected in a direction that is almost parallel to the plane defined by end **22** of body **20**. Thus, to optimize the amount of light uniformly distributed by mirror **170**, angle θ is based on the angular distribution of the mobile device light source.

[0116] In the example embodiment shown in Figures 5, 7, and 8, light guide **110** is hollow, partially toroidal and is defined by the interior of body **20** adjacent to second end **22**. Light guide **110**, being partially toroidal, defines a conical interior **112** and an annular opening **113** at a first end **114** thereof. Annular opening **113** allows light to exit light guide **110** to illuminate an object to be imaged. Light guide **110** includes an interior surface **111** that is reflective. In some

embodiments, interior surface **111** is at least about 90% reflective. In some embodiments, interior surface **111** comprises diffused reflective material or specular reflective material. Light from mobile device light source **92** enters the light guide through aperture **25** and is deflected sideways by the beam splitter, either **80** or **170**, and thus is uniformly distributed within light guide **110** before exiting light guide **110** via opening **113**.

[0117] In some other embodiments, light guide **110** comprises a toroidal light guide, which may be solid or hollow. For example a solid toroidal light guide **180** is shown in Figure 9. Light guide **180** is housed by body **20**. Body **20** defines a conical interior **185**. Lens **70** is housed in interior **185**. Interior **185** can be substantially identical in shape to interior **112** of light guide **110** as described elsewhere herein. Light guide **180** includes a first surface **181** and a second surface **182** for collecting light from a mobile device light source. Light is emitted from light guide **180** via first surface **181** to enter light cap **220**. Light from mobile device light source **92** enters the housing and is received into toroidal light guide **180**. A significant amount of light that enters toroidal light guide **180** is totally internally reflected within light guide **180** and thus remains within light guide **180**. To enhance the efficiency of light guide **180**, an outer surface **183** of light guide **180** may be coated with a material having a refractive index that is higher than the refractive index of light guide **180**. First surface **181** is, however, not coated with the higher refractive index material. An inner surface of body **20** housing light guide **180** may be coated with a reflective material. Light that enters light guide **180** from light source **92** is uniformly distributed within light guide **180** before exiting light guide **180** via first surface **181**. Light guide **180** may be made of a solid piece of clear material, including but not limited to plastic and/or glass.

[0118] To control the amount of light that exits light guide **180** and/or to enhance uniform light distribution within light guide **180**, light guide **180** may include a diffused surface **184** and/or a diffuser film (not shown) adjacent to first surface **181**. A significant proportion of the light rays that hit diffused surface **184** do not undergo Total Internal Reflection and thus exit light guide **180**. The area and/or texture of diffused surface **184** may vary with position along light guide **180**. For example, the area of diffused surface **184** may increase as it gets further from aperture **25** of body **20**. This may be done in such a manner that the intensity of light emitted from light guide **180** is substantially uniform with position along light guide **180**.

[0119] In some other embodiments, light guide **110** is replaced with a fiber-optic light guide, for example fiber-optic light guide **190** shown in Figure 10. Light guide **190** is housed by body **20** and includes a plurality of fibers **191** that merge at aperture **25** of body **20**. A second end **193** of each fiber **191** captures light from the mobile device light source. Light is internally reflected within fibers **191** and delivered to a first end **194** of each fiber **191** opposed to second ends **193**. First ends **194** are circumferentially spaced about a conical interior **192** of fiber-optic light guide **190**. Light is emitted from first ends **194** and enters light cap **220**. Interior **192** may be substantially identical to interior **112** of light guide **110** as described elsewhere herein. Fiber-optic light guide **190** may be used where, for example, the distance between a mobile device attached to apparatus **10** and an object to be imaged is relatively large (for example, where the object to be imaged is the inner ear of a patient). Fibers **191** are made of a clear material, including but not limited to plastic and/or glass. Each fiber **191** may be coated with a material having a refractive index that is higher than the refractive index of fiber **191** to enhance the efficiency of light guide **190**. An inner surface of body **20** housing light guide **190** may be coated with a reflective material.

[0120] Light cap **220** provides enough space for the light exiting from the light guide to mix and provide a uniform light for illuminating skin to be imaged. In the example embodiment shown in Figures 5, 7, and 8, light cap **220** is defined by the interior of body **20** adjacent to first end **21**. Light cap **220** includes an inner surface **223** that is coated with a light-absorptive material, such as a matte black material, to prevent stray light from being reflected towards aperture **24**. A distance **210** (see Figure 5) between a first end **221** of light cap **220** and a second end **222** opposed to first end **221** is selected to uniformly mix the light emitted by aperture **113** of light guide **110** before the light exits light cap **220** via aperture **23** without significant intensity losses. Light cap **220** also blocks external light from interfering with the object to be imaged.

[0121] One advantage of blocking ambient light and illuminating the object to be imaged (e.g. a subject's skin) only with light from apparatus as described herein is that it can be assured that 'standard' lighting is used for illumination of each acquired image. This is important for ABCD image analysis (i.e. "Asymmetry, Border, Colors, and Dermoscopic structures").

[0122] When light cap **220** contacts the object it fixes the distance between the mobile device and the object and stabilizes the mobile device relative to the object. This facilitates obtaining

high quality images of the object.

[0123] First end **221** of light cap **220** defines an annular surface **160** (see Figure 7) that surrounds aperture **23**. Annular surface **160** is at least partially in the field of view of the mobile device imaging system and, accordingly, may be used as a reference point to, for example, crop an acquired digital image. Annular surface **160** may include a reference ruler **161** and/or a reference colour chart or colour palette (not shown) to be used for calibration analysis and/or controlling exposure time. Where the object to be imaged, for example skin, is contacted by apparatus **10**, the object may share approximately the same plane as ruler **161**. Thus, ruler **161** may be used to measure the dimensions of the object and/or any feature of the object.

[0124] In some embodiments imaging software provided on a mobile device is configured to capture an image of ruler **161** from an image acquired using device **10** and to create an image overlay that includes the image of ruler **161**. The image overlay may be displayed superposed on the desired image. Since the image of ruler **161** is obtained using the same optical system used to obtain an image of a subject's skin (or another object of interest) any magnification provided by the optical system is automatically accounted for. User interface controls may allow a user to position the image of ruler **161** in the image overlay at a desired position relative to the main image to allow measuring the dimensions of objects in the acquired image. In some embodiments the user interface controls allow a user to rotate the image overlay relative to the acquired image. Ruler **161** may be detected in an acquired image based on a known position of ruler **161** and/or by processing the acquired image to locate features characteristic of ruler **161** and/or by allowing a user to select the location of ruler **161** in the acquired image.

[0125] A reference colour palette (not shown) comprising one or more patches of known colours may be used to check the colour fidelity in images recorded by the mobile device. For example, images including the reference colour palette may be used to check for colour distortions that could occur if the mobile device over compensates a colour.

[0126] Light exiting light cap **220** via aperture **23** illuminates skin to be imaged with light that is suitable for imaging skin, including skin lesions and/or features below the surface of the skin. Light is reflected by the skin and re-enters apparatus **10** via aperture **23**. The light travels through light cap **220** to a conduit, such as light conduit **120**. Light conduit **120** delivers reflected light to a mobile device imaging system. Light conduit **120** may be defined by interior **112** of light guide

110. In the example embodiment shown in Figures 5, 7, and 8, light conduit **120** is conical and widens from a second end **122** adjacent second end **22** of body **20** to a first end **121** opposed to second end **122** adjacent light cap **220** such that the field of view of the mobile device imaging system is not blocked when apparatus **10** is attached to the mobile device. The extent of tapering of light conduit **120** may defines the field of view of apparatus **10**. Light conduit **120** includes an inner surface **123** that is coated with a light-absorptive material to prevent stray light from reaching the mobile device imaging system. The outer surface of light conduit **120** (ie. interior **112**) may be coated with a reflective material. Light conduit **120** blocks light from the mobile device light source from directly reaching the mobile device digital camera. Persons skilled in the art will recognize that light conduit **120** may be replaced with one or more light guides including, but not limited to, one or more optical fibers.

[0127] In some embodiments, light guide **120** includes a lens **70** at a second end **122** thereof. Lens **70** is concentrically aligned with a lens of a mobile device imaging system to minimize optical aberration when apparatus **10** is removably attached to the mobile device. The focal length and f-number of lens **70** may be selected such that a desired magnification of an object with minimal optical aberration is acquired. For example, in some embodiments, the focal length of lens **70** is between about 15 and about 20 mm and/or the optical magnification of lens **70** is between about 7x and 10x. Lens **70** may include, but is not limited to, a double-convex lens, a plano-convex lens, a Fresnel lens, a doublet lens, an achromatic lens, and a meniscus lens. Where magnification is not required of apparatus **10**, lens **70** is not magnifying. Lens **70** may comprise a plurality of lenses. Lens **70** may be coated with an anti-reflection coating to improve image quality.

[0128] In some embodiments, apparatus **10** includes one or more filters. The one or more filters may be used to filter and/or polarize the light emitted by apparatus **10** and/or the light that is reflected by an object to be imaged. For example, as shown in the example embodiment illustrated in Figures 7 and 8, apparatus **10** includes a polarizer filter **130**, a diffuser film **140**, and a polarizer filter **150**. Filter **130** is positioned at a first end **121** of light guide **120**. Film **140** and filter **150** are positioned between light guide **110** and light cap **220** at opening **113**. Film **140** faces second end **22** of body **20** and filter **150** faces first end **21** of body **20**. In some embodiments, diffuser film **140** is used to diffuse light emitted by light guide **110**. Diffuser film **140** may be used to reduce glare and/or increase the uniformity of light distribution.

[0129] In some embodiments, polarizer filter **150** polarizes light emitted by light guide **110**.

Polarizer filter **150** may be a linear polarizer or a circular polarizer (for example, a filter that polarizes light in the clockwise or counterclockwise direction). In some embodiments, polarizer filter **130** is used to filter unwanted light rays as described elsewhere herein. Polarizer filter **130** is of the same type as polarizer filter **150** (e.g. polarizer filters **130** and **150** may both be circular polarizers or may both be linear polarizers).

[0130] Light emitted from apparatus **10** illuminates skin to be imaged. Light is reflected by the skin as specular reflection and/or by diffuse reflection. Light rays that are reflected from the surface of an object via specular reflection may create glare in the acquired image. Specular reflected light often causes the imaged skin to appear shiny. Specular reflected light interferes with the acquisition of an image showing detailed features of the skin. Specular reflected light tends to have substantially the same polarization as the incident light emitted by apparatus **10**. In contrast, diffused light is not polarized. Since skin is partially translucent, some light hitting the surface of the skin is reflected as diffuse light by the skin's deeper layers. Diffuse light may contain useful information about the skin and its features. Diffused reflected light passes through filter **130**. Filter **130** may be used to substantially block specular reflected light rays, remove glare, and/or acquire a digital image of a feature below the surface of skin. For example, if filter **150** is a linear polarizer, then to block specular reflected light rays, filter **130** may be set with its polarization axis rotated 90° relative to that of filter **150**. If filter **150** is a circular polarizer that polarizes light in the clockwise direction, then to block specular reflected light rays, filter **130** can be a circular polarizer that polarizes light in the counterclockwise direction. If filter **150** is a circular polarizer that polarizes light in the counterclockwise direction, then to block specular reflected light rays, filter **130** can be a polarizer that polarizes light in the clockwise direction. Where specular reflected light is not problematic, filter **130** may not be required and may be omitted.

[0131] In some embodiments, apparatus **10** may include a filter (not shown) for providing structured precision lighting to the object to be imaged. Light reflected by the object may have a pattern that differs from the pattern of the structured precision lighting emitted by apparatus **10**. This pattern may be compared to that of the emitted light to measure and/or analyze three-dimensional characteristics of the imaged skin such as skin wrinkle.

[0132] To remove the glare reflection from the surface of imaged skin, a gel or other liquid may be applied to the surface of the skin. The gel or liquid may be used in addition to or alternatively to filters (such as filters **130** and **150**) for removing glare. Contact lens **30** may be attached to apparatus **10** as described elsewhere herein and may function to protect apparatus **10** from the gel/liquid. Contact lens **30** attached to apparatus **10** is pressed into the gel/liquid and an image is acquired. Contact lens **30** may be disposed of following use.

[0133] To acquire a high quality and/or magnified digital image, apparatus **10** is attached to a mobile device, such as mobile device **90** shown in Figures 3, 4, and 5, as described elsewhere herein. Light from a light source **92** of the mobile device is collected and internally reflected by light guide **80**. Light received by light guide **110** from light guide **80** is uniformly distributed before it enters light cap **220**. In some embodiments, the light travels through polarizer filter **150** and/or diffuser film **140** before entering light cap **220**. The light mixes uniformly within light cap **220** before exiting apparatus **10** through aperture **23**. Light that is reflected by the object to be imaged re-enters apparatus **10** through aperture **23** and enters light conduit **120** via light cap **220**. In some embodiments, the light travels through filter **130** before entering light conduit **120**. Light exiting apparatus **10** via aperture **24** enters the mobile device digital camera via a lens **91**. In some embodiments, light travels through lens **70** before exiting light conduit **120**. The mobile device acquires an image of the skin as is conventionally known.

[0134] To acquire a digital image of an eye, an eye cap **230** (see Figure 15) may be removably attached to first end **21** of apparatus **10**. Eye cap **230** may be removably attachable to apparatus **10** in a substantially identical fashion as contact lens **30** as described elsewhere herein. Eye cap **230** may be made of a flexible, elastic material that comfortably fits around the eye.

[0135] To acquire a digital image of an inner ear, an ear cap **240** (see Figure 16) may be removably attached to first end **21** of apparatus **10**. Ear cap **240** may be removably attachable to apparatus **10** in a substantially identical fashion as contact lens **30** as described elsewhere herein. Ear cap **240** is configured to fit into the inner ear of a human and/or animal.

[0136] Where eye cap **230** or ear cap **240** is removably attached to apparatus **10**, apparatus **10** lacks contact lens **30** and light cap **220**.

[0137] Computer software may be used with apparatus **10** to acquire, store, process, manage, and/or manipulate digital images. The software may be stored on a mobile device and/or a

desktop computer. The software may be used to improve image quality. For example, the software may be used to control illumination and/or colour, bring an object to be imaged into focus, and/or correct image defects (for example, by making corrections for artifacts such as oil or gel bubbles, hair, and/or shadows). The software may use the mobile device's graphics processing unit and/or central processing unit to process images in real-time. The software may check the border of aperture **23** and alert a user if apparatus **10** is being improperly used (e.g. because apparatus **10** is not properly aligned to the camera of a mobile device).

[0138] Where apparatus **10** is used to digitally image skin, the software may be used to label, archive, monitor, and/or analyze skin features including, but not limited to, lesions, psoriasis, eczema, wounds, and wrinkles. For example, the software may be used to monitor changes in the height, diameter, and/or pigmentation of such skin features by comparing two or more digital images acquired at different times. The appearance and/or disappearance of skin features may be monitored in this way.

[0139] In some embodiments, the software is configured to process image data to calculate an ABCD (i.e. "Asymmetry, Border, Colors, and Dermoscopic structures") score and/or other conventional dermoscopic criteria. Such processing may be used to analyze skin features such as moles. The ABCD value may be used to determine if the mole is prone to be benign or malignant and if further treatment and examination is recommended. The software may also recommend a personalized skin care and/or treatment plan. The software can also generate a report to be sent to a specialist for further examination and monitoring. This data can be highly helpful for detecting skin cancer or other skin diseases at early stage.

[0140] The software may provide a database of images for comparison and diagnostic purposes. Diagnosis may be performed automatically by the software and/or performed by a user or the user's physician.

[0141] In some embodiments, the software may be used to acquire one or more digital images (including, but not limited to, panoramic images) to generate a two-dimensional or three-dimensional map of a human and/or animal body, body part, and/or skin feature.

[0142] In some embodiments, the software provides a virtual image or 'ghost' of a human and/or animal body and/or body part that can be used to guide the user as the user acquires images (including, but not limited to, panoramic images) of the body and/or body part using apparatus

10. In some embodiments, a drone or a stationary device may be used with apparatus **10** to acquire the digital images.

[0143] As described elsewhere herein, digital images may be acquired with or without contacting the object to be imaged. The acquired digital images may be polarized, cross-polarized, or non-polarized.

[0144] Persons skilled in the art will recognize that:

- the position of the lens and light source of different mobile devices may differ. Apparatus **10** may be configured to accommodate a variety of lens and light source positions. For example, light guide **80** (or mirror **170**) may be sized, shaped, and/or configured to accommodate mobile devices having a variety of lens and light source positions. Where the distance between the lens and light source of a mobile device is large, a larger light guide **80** (or mirror **170**) may be used.
- body **20** may have other shapes, sizes, and configurations than those described elsewhere herein. For example, body **20** may be rectangular.
- by using the light source of the mobile device, apparatus **10** does not require an internal light source, power supply, or printed circuit board.
- apparatus **10** has many different applications, including but not limited to applications in clinical lab examinations (such as dermatology, trichology, nail circulation, iridology, and veterinary lab examinations), in science and education (such as entomology, botany, archeology, and minerology), and in quality control and inspection (such as in circuit boards, printing, jewelry, and collectibles). Accordingly, unless the context dictates otherwise, “apparatus” (as used herein) refers to an optical system, the use of which should not be limited to dermoscopic applications.

Interpretation of Terms

[0145] Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, throughout the description and the claims:

- “comprise”, “comprising”, and the like are to be construed in an inclusive sense, as

opposed to an exclusive or exhaustive sense; that is to say, in the sense of “including, but not limited to”;

- “connected”, “coupled”, or any variant thereof, means any connection or coupling, either direct or indirect, between two or more elements; the coupling or connection between the elements can be physical, logical, or a combination thereof;
- “herein”, “above”, “below”, and words of similar import, when used to describe this specification, shall refer to this specification as a whole, and not to any particular portions of this specification;
- “or”, in reference to a list of two or more items, covers all of the following interpretations of the word: any of the items in the list, all of the items in the list, and any combination of the items in the list;
- the singular forms “a”, “an”, and “the” also include the meaning of any appropriate plural forms.

[0146] Words that indicate directions such as “vertical”, “transverse”, “horizontal”, “upward”, “downward”, “forward”, “backward”, “inward”, “outward”, “left”, “right”, “front”, “back”, “top”, “bottom”, “below”, “above”, “under”, and the like, used in this description and any accompanying claims (where present), depend on the specific orientation of the apparatus described and illustrated. The subject matter described herein may assume various alternative orientations. Accordingly, these directional terms are not strictly defined and should not be interpreted narrowly.

[0147] Where a component (e.g. a substrate, assembly, device, manifold, etc.) is referred to above, unless otherwise indicated, reference to that component (including a reference to a “means”) should be interpreted as including as equivalents of that component any component which performs the function of the described component (i.e., that is functionally equivalent), including components which are not structurally equivalent to the disclosed structure which performs the function in the illustrated exemplary embodiments described herein.

[0148] Specific examples of systems, methods, and apparatus have been described herein for purposes of illustration. These are only examples. The technology provided herein can be applied

to systems other than the example systems described above. Many alterations, modifications, additions, omissions, and permutations are possible within the practice of this invention. This invention includes variations on described embodiments that would be apparent to the skilled addressee, including variations obtained by: replacing features, elements and/or acts with

- 5 equivalent features, elements and/or acts; mixing and matching of features, elements and/or acts from different embodiments; combining features, elements and/or acts from embodiments as described herein with features, elements and/or acts of other technology; and/or omitting combining features, elements and/or acts from described embodiments.

CLAIMS:

1. An apparatus for use with a mobile device, the apparatus comprising:
a body having a first end defining a first aperture and a second end opposed to the first end, the second end defining a lens aperture and a light guide aperture, wherein the
5 lens aperture is configured to align with a mobile device lens and the light guide aperture is configured to align with a mobile device light source when the apparatus is removably attached to the mobile device, the body comprising an optical system for illuminating an object to be imaged and a light conduit for delivering light reflected by the object to the mobile device lens; and
10 a connector connected to the body, the connector operable for removably attaching the apparatus to the mobile device.
2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the optical system comprises a light source light guide positioned in the light source aperture and operative to collect light from the
15 mobile device light source.
3. An apparatus according to claim 1 or 2 comprising a beam splitter that is positioned to receive light incident from the mobile device light source at the light source aperture, the beam splitter operative to deflect and split light received from the mobile device light
20 source.
4. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the beam splitter comprises a prism light guide.
- 25 5. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the beam splitter comprises a light reflector.
6. An apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the light reflector comprises a V-shaped mirror.
7. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein the optical system for
30 illuminating the object to be imaged comprises a first light guide that extends in a ring around the light conduit.

8. An apparatus according to claim 7 wherein the first light guide comprises a partially toroidal light guide configured to distribute light received from the mobile device light source uniformly along a surface facing the first aperture.
- 5
9. An apparatus according to claim 8 wherein the partially toroidal light guide is hollow.
10. An apparatus according to claim 8 wherein the partially toroidal light guide is solid.
- 10 11. An apparatus according to any one of claims 8 to 10, wherein the partially toroidal light guide comprises a reflective interior surface and an annular opening for allowing light to exit therefrom.
12. An apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the first light guide comprises a solid toroidal light guide configured to distribute light received from the mobile device light source uniformly along a surface facing the first aperture.
- 15
13. An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the solid toroidal light guide comprises a first flat surface for allowing light to exit therefrom and a second flat surface for capturing light from the mobile device light source.
- 20
14. An apparatus according to claim 12 or 13, wherein the toroidal light guide comprises a ring-shaped body of a material having a first index of refraction and an outer surface coated with a material having an index of refraction that is greater than the first index of refraction.
- 25
15. An apparatus according to any one of claims 12 to 14, wherein the toroidal light guide comprises a diffused surface and/or a diffuser film adjacent to the first flat surface.
- 30 16. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the optical system comprises one or more fiber-optic light guides arranged to uniformly distribute light from the mobile device light

source.

17. An apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the fiber-optic light guide comprises a plurality of fibre-optic fibers that merge at the light source aperture to capture light from the mobile device light source.
18. An apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the plurality of fibers are circumferentially distributed about the light conduit.
19. An apparatus according to claim 17 or 18, wherein the plurality of fibers are each coated with a material having a refractive index that is greater than the refractive index of each fiber.
20. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 19, further comprising an eye cap removably attachable to the first end of the body.
21. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 20, further comprising an ear cap removably attachable to the first end of the body.
22. An apparatus according to any one of claims 8 to 19, wherein the body further comprises a light cap for uniformly mixing light from the optical system.
23. An apparatus according to claim 22, wherein a distance between a first end of the light cap and a second end of the light cap opposed to the first end is selected to mix the light uniformly.
24. An apparatus according to claim 22 or 23, wherein an interior surface of the light cap is coated with a light-absorptive material.
25. An apparatus according to any one of claims 22 to 24, wherein the light cap includes a reference ruler.

26. An apparatus according to any one of claims 22 to 25, wherein the light cap includes a reference colour chart.
- 5 27. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 26, wherein the optical system comprises a first light guide configured to collect light emitted by the mobile device light source and to direct the collected light into a second light guide.
- 10 28. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 27, wherein an interior surface of the light conduit is coated with a light-absorptive material.
29. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 28, wherein the connector comprises a bracket extending outwardly from the second end of the body, the bracket defining a first opening between the bracket and the body for receiving the mobile device.
- 15 30. An apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the bracket is removably attachable to the second end of the body.
31. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 28, wherein the connector comprises a plurality of brackets, each bracket removably attachable to the second end of the body.
- 20 32. An apparatus according to claim 31, wherein each bracket extends outwardly from the second end of the body to define an opening between the bracket and the body for receiving the mobile device.
- 25 33. An apparatus according to claim 29 or 30, wherein the connector further comprises an adapter configured to friction-fit inside the first opening, the adapter defining a second opening for receiving the mobile device.
- 30 34. An apparatus according to claim 29 or 30, wherein the connector further comprises a plurality of adapters, each adapter configured to friction-fit inside the first opening and

defining an opening for receiving the mobile device.

35. An apparatus according to claim 29 or 34, wherein the adapter is C-shaped and defines an aperture configured to align with the first aperture of the body and the mobile device lens.

5

36. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 28, further comprising a mobile device case, wherein the connector includes a magnetic piece that is magnetically attracted to the case for removably attaching the apparatus to the case.

- 10 37. An apparatus according to claim 36, wherein the case defines an aperture configured to align with the mobile device lens and the mobile device light source when the mobile device is inserted into the case.

- 15 38. An apparatus according to claim 37, wherein the case comprises a magnetic piece adjacent to the aperture for aligning the mobile device lens with the lens aperture and the mobile device light source with the light source aperture.

39. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 38, further comprising at least one filter.

- 20 40. An apparatus according to claim 39, wherein the at least one filter comprises a diffuser film.

41. An apparatus according to claim 39 or 40, wherein the at least one filter comprises a first polarizer filter.

25

42. An apparatus according to claim 41, wherein the at least one filter further comprises a second polarizer filter.

- 30 43. An apparatus according to claim 42, wherein the first and second polarizer filters comprise linear polarizers having polarization axes rotated by 90° relative to one another.

44. An apparatus according to claim 42, wherein the first and second polarizer filters comprise circular polarizers, the first polarizer filter is polarized clockwise and the second polarizer filter is polarized counterclockwise.
- 5 45. An apparatus according to claim 42, wherein the first and second polarizer filters comprise circular polarizers, the first polarizer filter is polarized counterclockwise and the second polarizer filter is polarized clockwise.
- 10 46. An apparatus according to any one of claims 39 to 45, wherein the at least one filter comprises a filter having spatially-varying light transmission properties for providing structured precision lighting.
47. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 46, further comprising a contact lens removably attachable to the first end of the body.
- 15 48. An apparatus according to claim 47 comprising a colour palette on the contact lens.
49. An apparatus according to claim 47 or 48 comprising a scale marked on the contact lens.
- 20 50. An apparatus according to claim 47, wherein the contact lens is disposable.
51. An apparatus according to claim 47 or 50, wherein the contact lens is magnifying.
- 25 52. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 51 wherein the connector comprises a resilient arm.
- 30 53. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 51 wherein the connector defines an opening for receiving a body of the mobile device and an adapter configured to be received in the opening, the adapter dimensioned to grip the body of the mobile device.
54. An apparatus according to claim 53 wherein the adapter is resiliently compressable.

55. An apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 54 wherein a distance between the first and second ends of the body is 15mm or less.
- 5 56. An apparatus for use with a mobile device, the apparatus comprising:
an optical system arranged to capture and direct light from a mobile device light source to illuminate an object to be imaged;
a light conduit arranged to deliver light reflected by the object to a mobile device lens; and
10 a connector adapted for removably attaching the apparatus to the mobile device.
57. An apparatus according to claim 56, wherein the optical system comprises a light source light guide positioned in the light source aperture and operative to collect light from the mobile device light source.
- 15 58. An apparatus according to claim 56 or 57 comprising a beam splitter that is positioned to receive light incident from the mobile device light source at the light source aperture, the beam splitter operative to deflect and split light received from the mobile device light source.
- 20 59. An apparatus according to claim 57, wherein the beam splitter comprises a prism light guide.
60. An apparatus according to claim 59, wherein the beam splitter comprises a light reflector.
- 25 61. An apparatus according to claim 60, wherein the light reflector comprises a V-shaped mirror.
- 30 62. An apparatus according to any one of claims 56 to 61 wherein the optical system for illuminating the object to be imaged comprises a first light guide that extends in a ring around the light conduit.

63. An apparatus according to claim 7 wherein the first light guide comprises a partially toroidal light guide configured to distribute light received from the mobile device light source along a surface facing toward the object to be imaged.

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64. An apparatus according to claim 8 wherein the partially toroidal light guide is hollow.

65. An apparatus according to claim 8 wherein the partially toroidal light guide is solid.

10 66. An apparatus according to any one of claims 53 to 65, wherein the partially toroidal light guide comprises a reflective interior surface and an annular opening for allowing light to exit therefrom.

15 67. An apparatus according to claim 62, wherein the first light guide comprises a solid toroidal light guide configured to distribute light received from the mobile device light source along a surface facing the object to be imaged.

20 68. An apparatus according to claim 67, wherein the solid toroidal light guide comprises a first flat surface for allowing light to exit therefrom and a second flat surface for capturing light from the mobile device light source.

25 69. An apparatus according to claim 67 or 68, wherein the toroidal light guide comprises an outer surface coated with a material having a refractive index that is greater than the refractive index of the toroidal light guide.

30 70. An apparatus according to any one of claims 67 to 69, wherein the toroidal light guide comprises a diffused surface and/or a diffuser film adjacent to the first flat surface for controlling the amount of light that exits the toroidal light guide and/or for enhancing uniform light distribution.

71. An apparatus according to claim 56, wherein the optical system comprises one or more

fiber-optic light guides arranged to uniformly distribute light from the mobile device light source.

5 72. An apparatus according to claim 71, wherein the one or more fiber-optic light guides comprise a plurality of fibre-optic fibers that merge at the light source aperture to capture light from the mobile device light source.

73. An apparatus according to claim 72, wherein ends of the plurality of fibers are circumferentially distributed about the light conduit.

10 74. An apparatus according to claim 72 or 73, wherein the plurality of fibers are each coated with a material having a refractive index that is greater than the refractive index of a body of each fiber.

15 75. An apparatus according to any one of claims 56 to 74, further comprising a removably attachable eye cap.

76. An apparatus according to any one of claims 56 to 75, further comprising a removably attachable ear cap.

20 77. An apparatus according to any one of claims 63 to 74, further comprising a light cap arranged for uniformly mixing light from the optical system.

25 78. An apparatus according to claim 77, wherein a distance between a first end of the light cap and a second end of the light cap opposed to the first end is selected to mix the light uniformly.

79. An apparatus according to claim 77 or 78, wherein an interior surface of the light cap is coated with a light-absorptive material.

30 80. An apparatus according to any one of claims 77 to 79, wherein the light cap includes a

reference ruler.

81. An apparatus according to any one of claims 77 to 80, wherein the light cap includes a reference colour chart.

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82. An apparatus according to any one of claims 57 to 81, wherein the light conduit comprises at least one lens.

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83. An apparatus according to any one of claims 57 to 82, wherein an interior surface of the light conduit is coated with a light-absorptive material.

84. An apparatus according to any one of claims 56 to 81, wherein the connector comprises a bracket extending outwardly from the apparatus, the bracket defining a first opening between the bracket and the apparatus for receiving the mobile device.

15

85. An apparatus according to claim 84, wherein the bracket is removably attachable to the apparatus.

20

86. An apparatus according to any one of claims 56 to 83, wherein the connector comprises a plurality of brackets, each bracket removably attachable to the apparatus.

87. An apparatus according to claim 86, wherein each bracket extends outwardly from the apparatus to define an opening between the bracket and the apparatus for receiving a body of the mobile device.

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88. An apparatus according to claim 84 or 85, wherein the connector further comprises an adapter configured to friction-fit inside the first opening, the adapter defining a second opening for receiving the mobile device.

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89. An apparatus according to claim 84 or 85, wherein the connector further comprises a plurality of adapters, each adapter configured to friction-fit inside the first opening and

defining an opening for receiving the mobile device.

90. An apparatus according to claim 88 or 89, wherein the adapter is C-shaped and defines an aperture configured to align with the mobile device lens.

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91. An apparatus according to any one of claims 56 to 83, further comprising a mobile device case, wherein the connector includes a magnetic piece that is magnetically attracted to the case for removably attaching the apparatus to the case.

- 10 92. An apparatus according to claim 91, wherein the case defines an aperture configured to align with the mobile device lens and the mobile device light source when the mobile device is inserted into the case.

- 15 93. An apparatus according to claim 92, wherein the case comprises a magnetic piece adjacent to the aperture for aligning the mobile device lens with the lens aperture and the mobile device light source with the light source aperture.

94. An apparatus according to any one of claims 56 to 93, further comprising at least one filter.

- 20 95. An apparatus according to claim 94, wherein the at least one filter comprises a diffuser film.

96. An apparatus according to claim 93 or 94, wherein the at least one filter comprises a first polarizer filter.

25

97. An apparatus according to claim 96, wherein the at least one filter further comprises a second polarizer filter.

- 30 98. An apparatus according to claim 97, wherein the first and second polarizer filters comprise linear polarizers having polarization axes rotated by 90° relative to one another.

99. An apparatus according to claim 97, wherein the first and second polarizer filters comprise circular polarizers, the first polarizer filter is polarized clockwise and the second polarizer filter is polarized counterclockwise.
- 5 100. An apparatus according to claim 97, wherein the first and second polarizer filters comprise circular polarizers, the first polarizer filter is polarized counterclockwise and the second polarizer filter is polarized clockwise.
- 10 101. An apparatus according to any one of claims 95 to 96, wherein the at least one filter comprises a filter having spatially-varying light transmission properties for providing structured precision lighting.
102. An apparatus according to any one of claims 56 to 101, further comprising a contact lens removably attachable to the first end of the body.
- 15 103. An apparatus according to claim 102, wherein the contact lens is disposable.
104. Apparatus having any new and inventive feature, combination of features, or sub-combination of features as described herein.
- 20 105. Methods having any new and inventive steps, acts, combination of steps and/or acts or sub-combination of steps and/or acts as described herein.

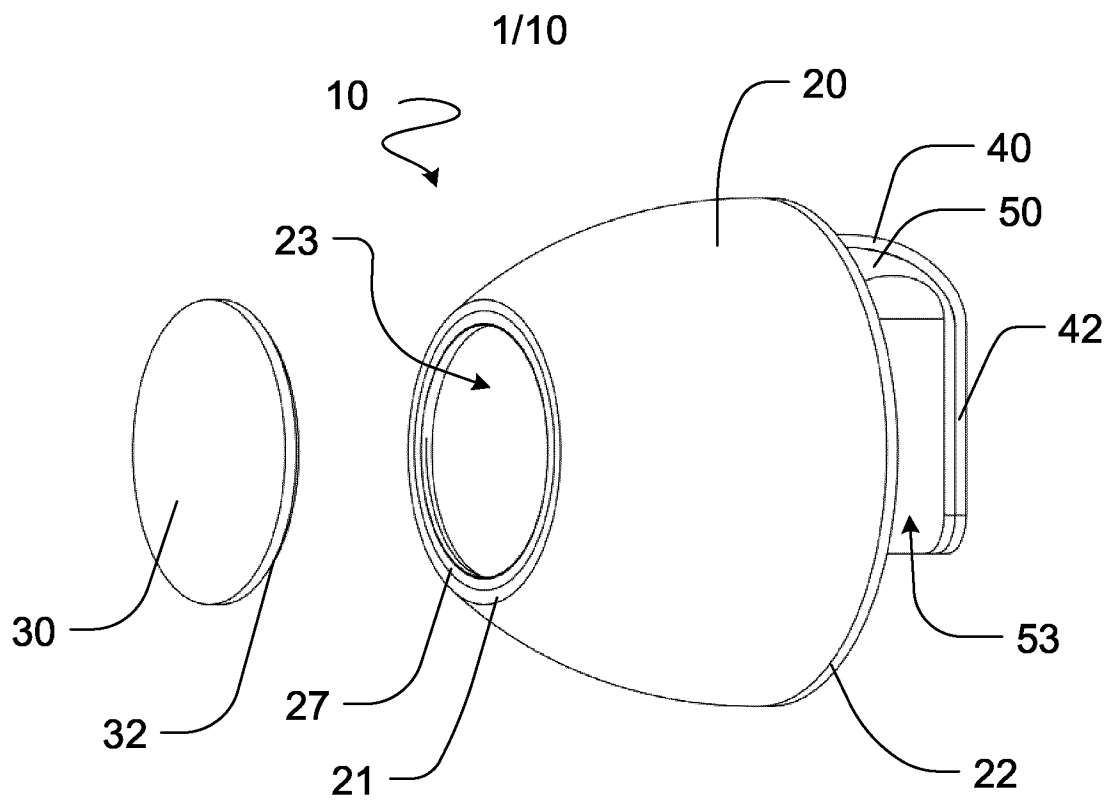


FIG. 1

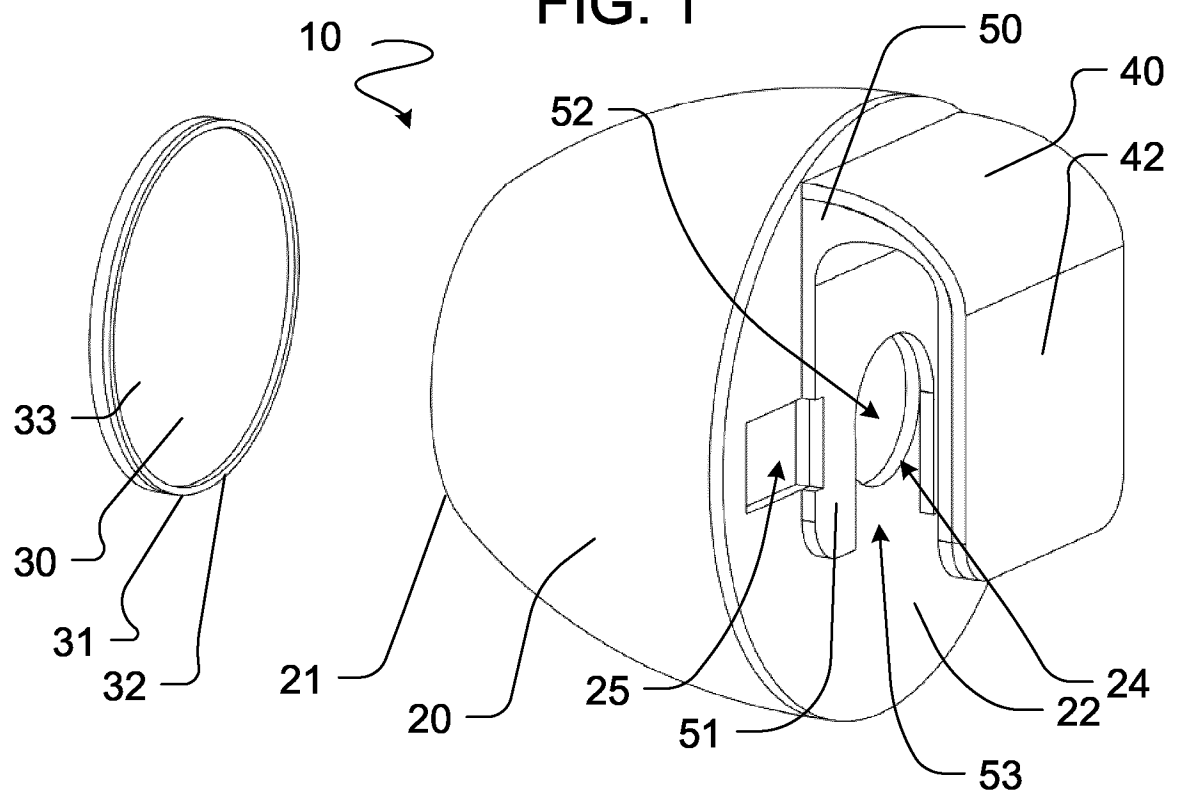


FIG. 2

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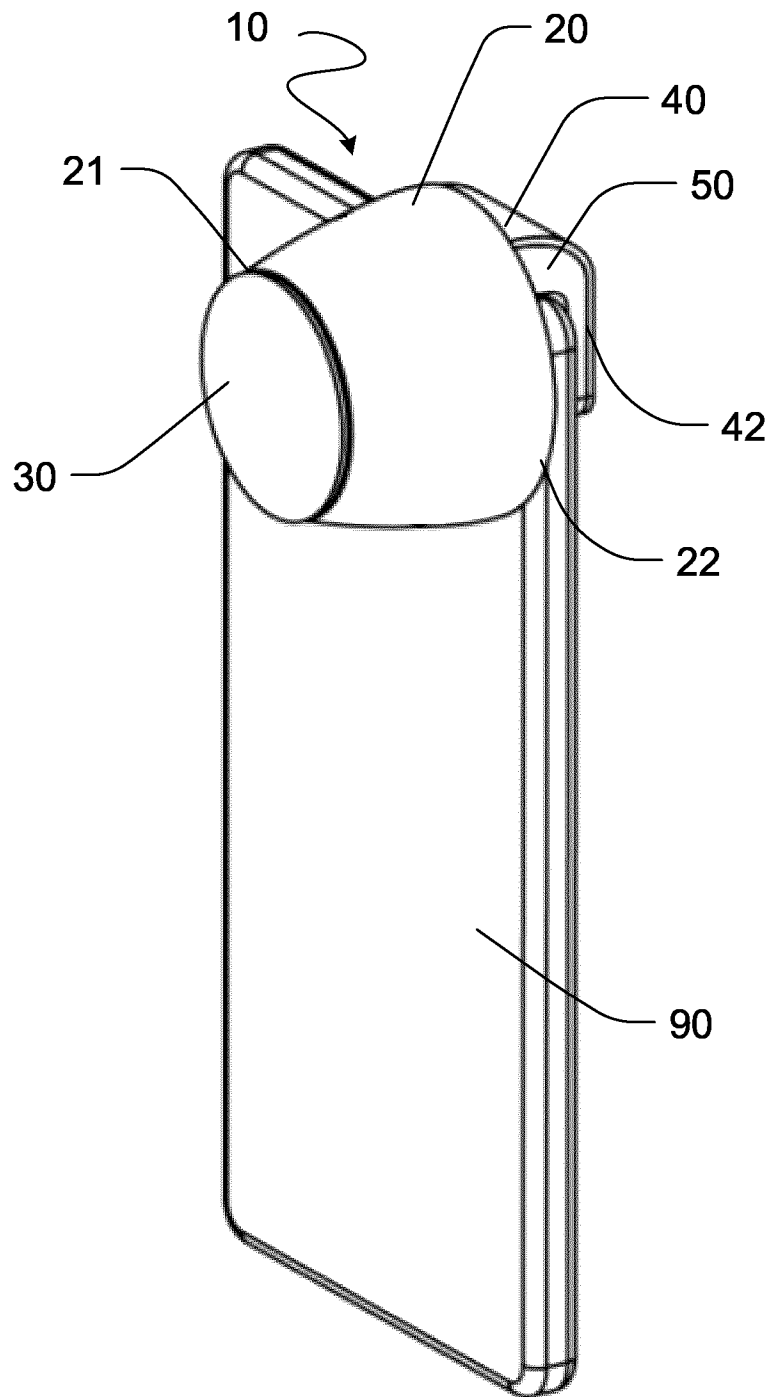


FIG. 3

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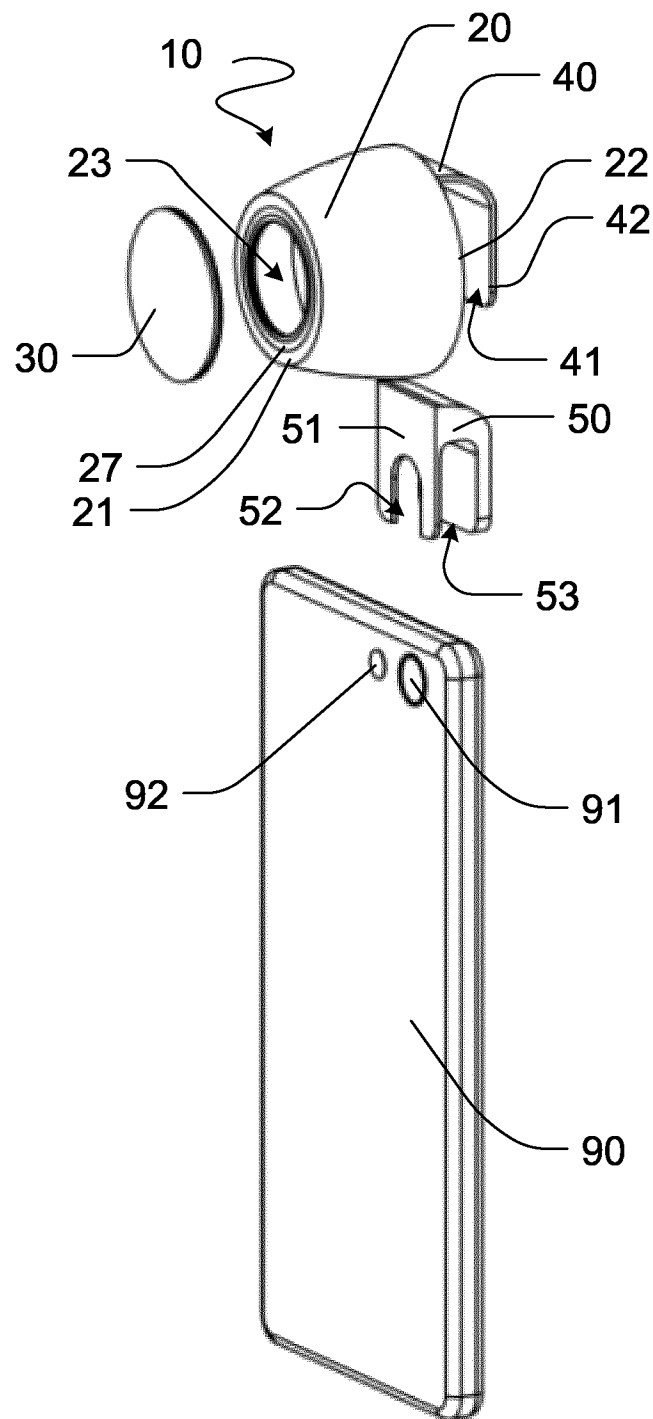


FIG. 4

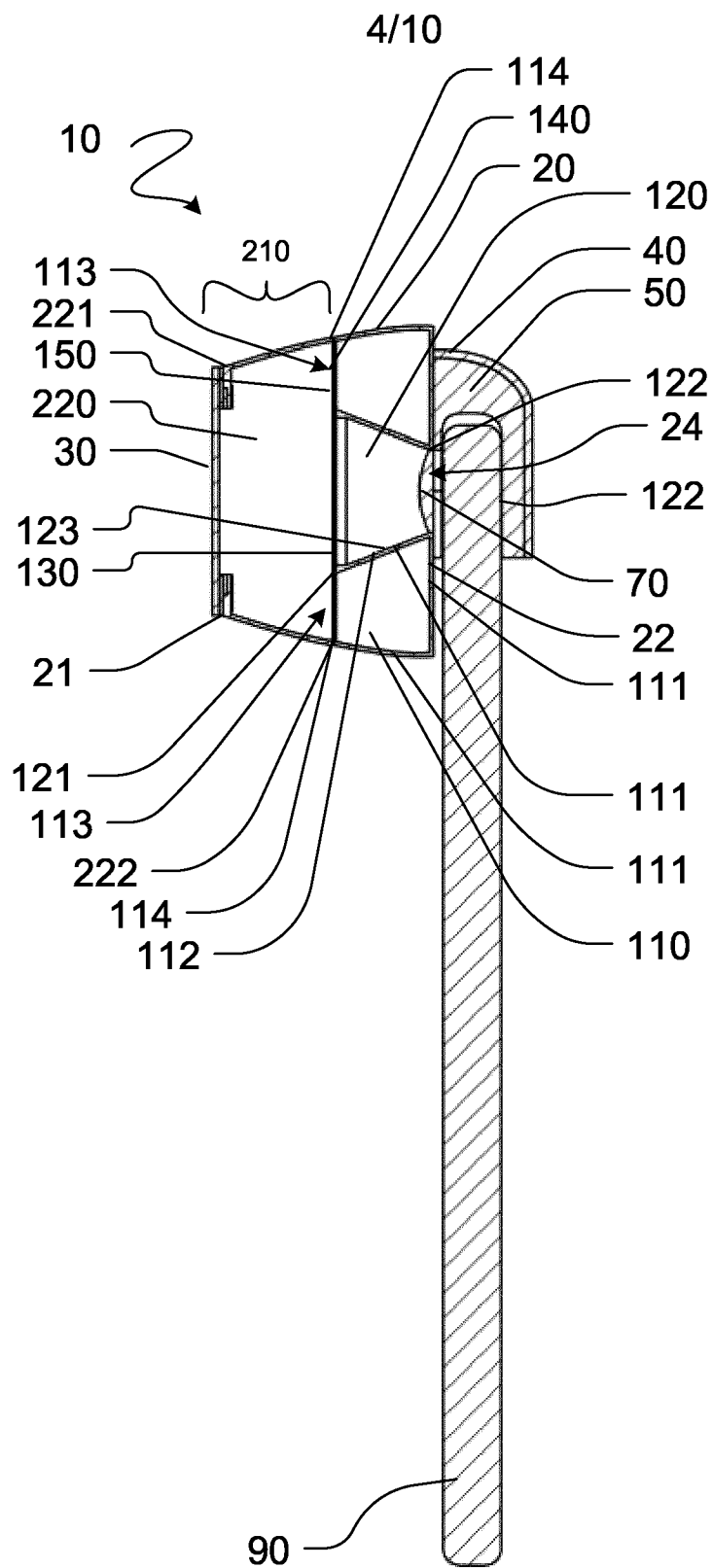


FIG. 5

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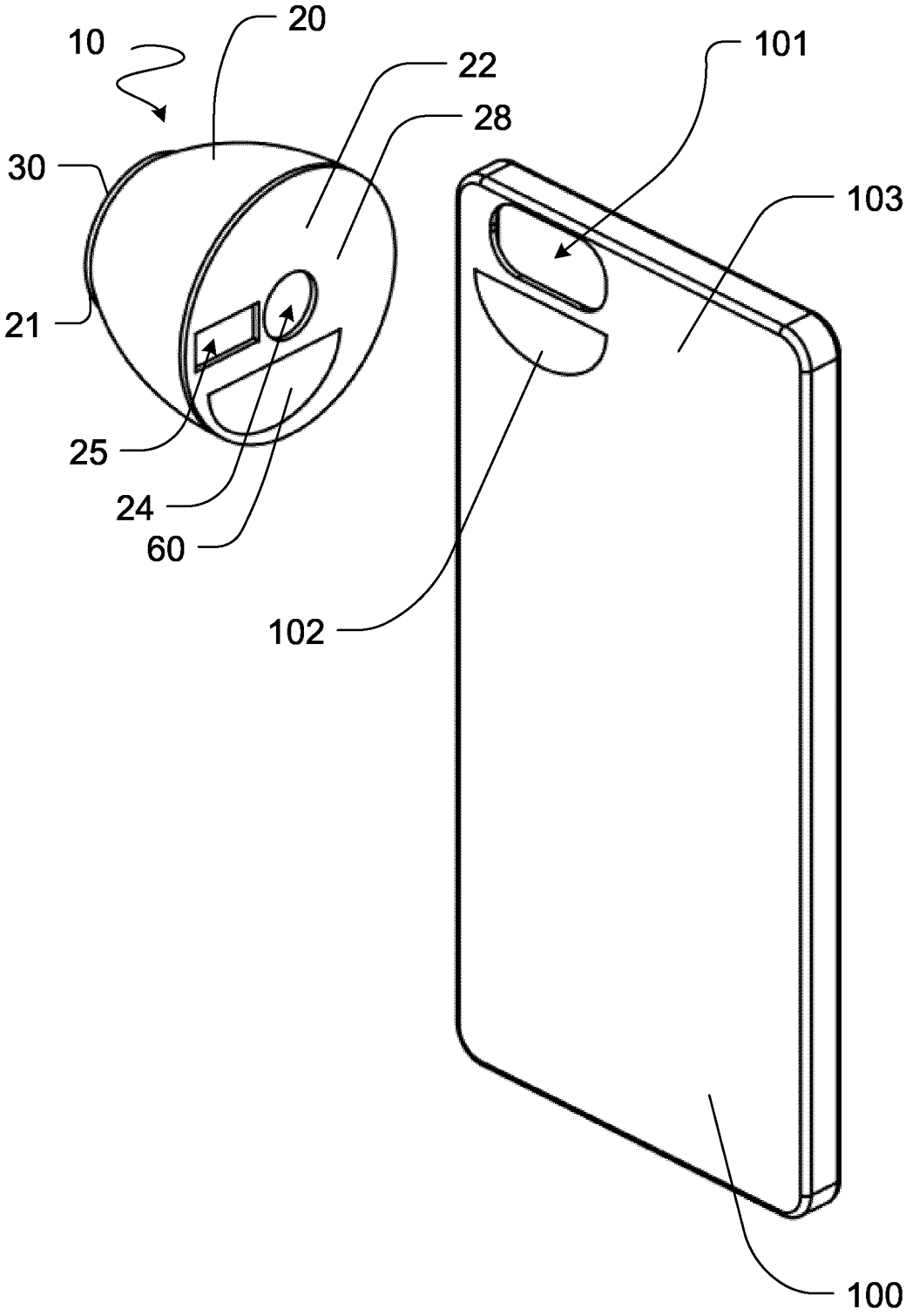


FIG. 6

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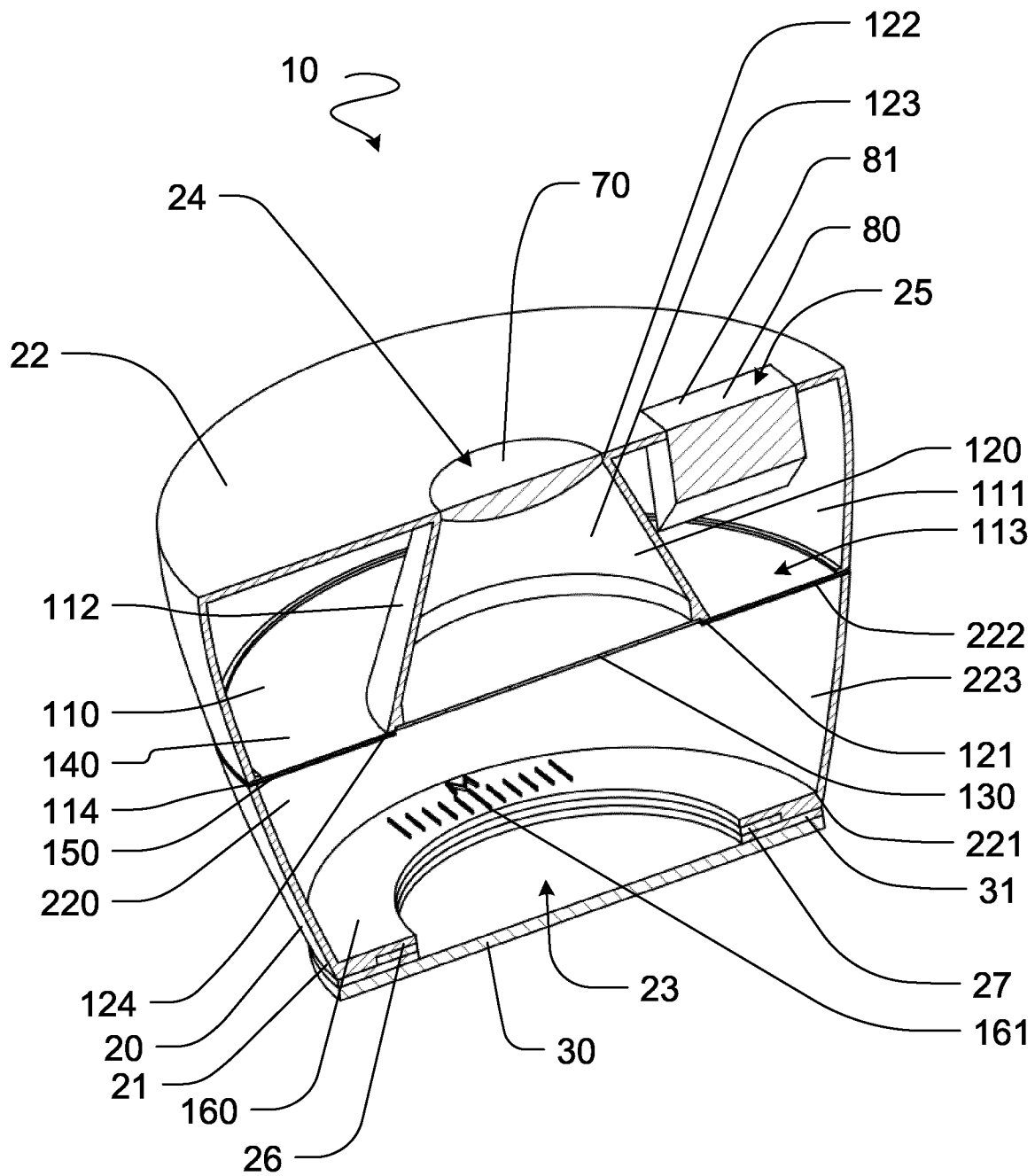


FIG. 7

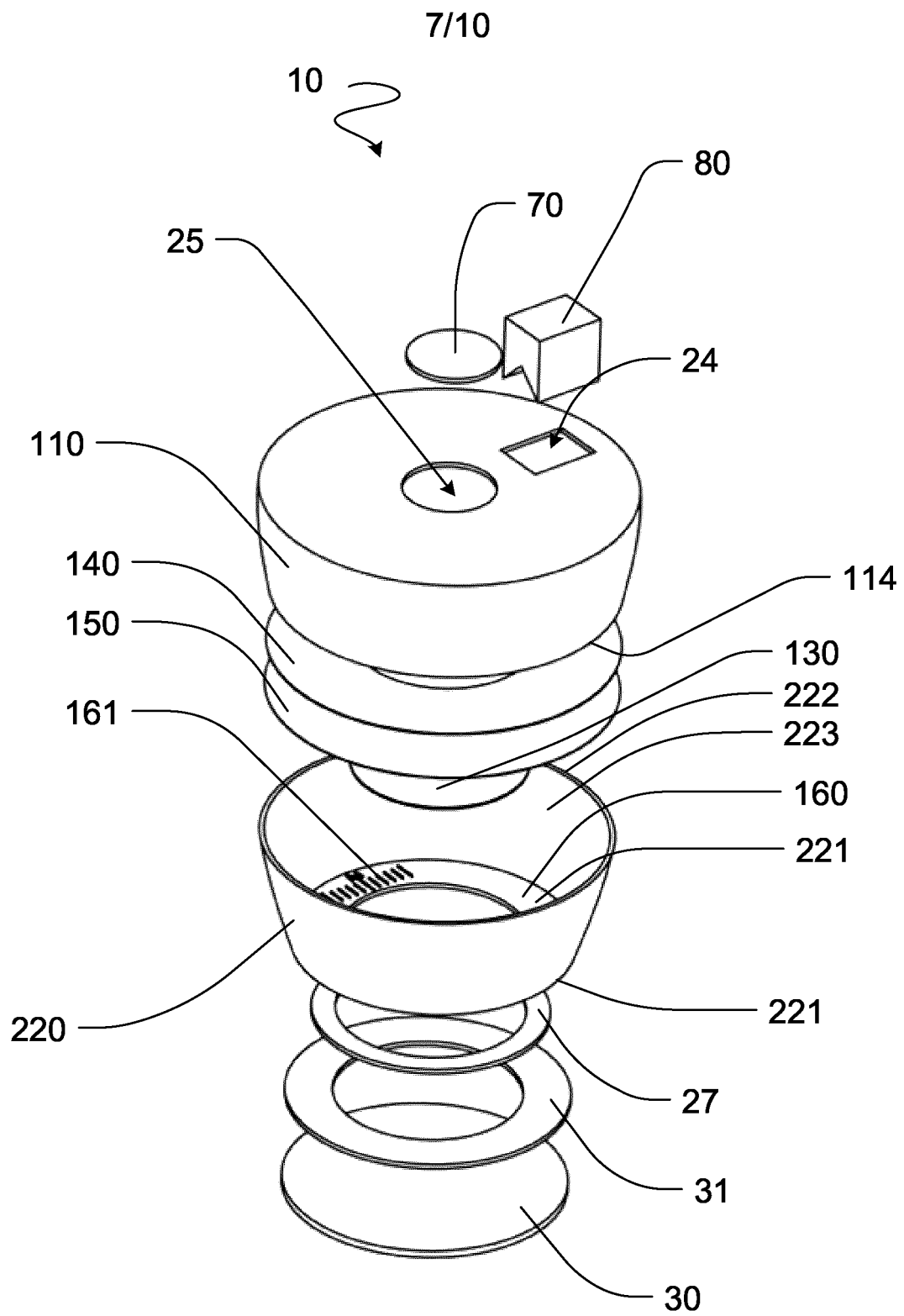
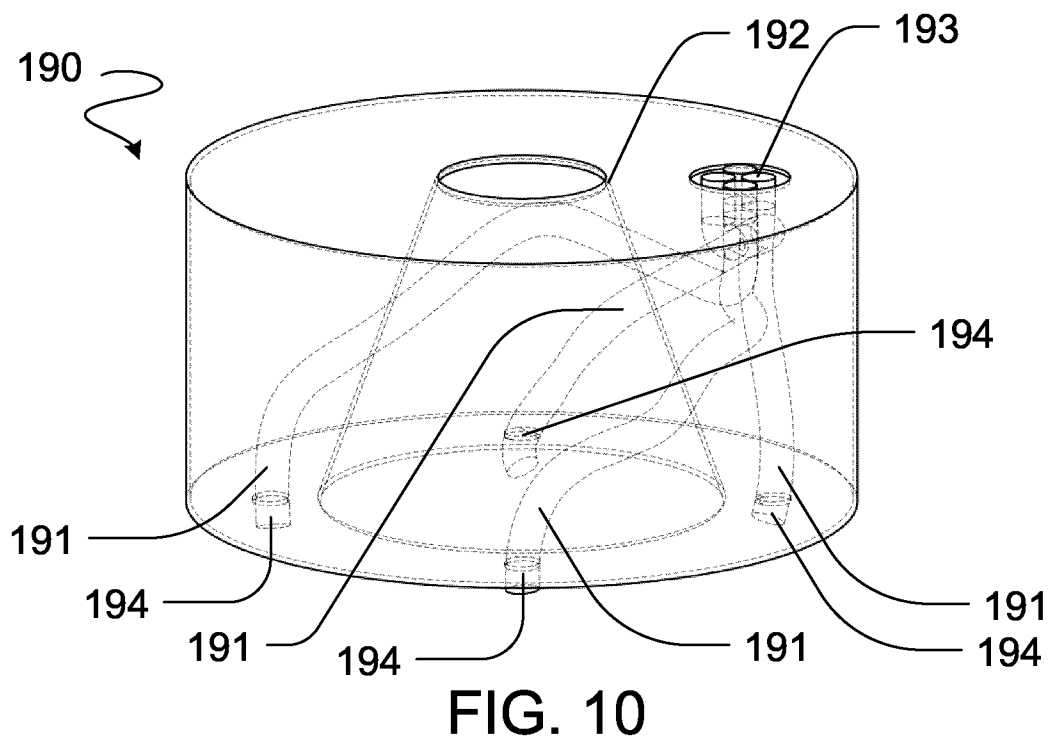
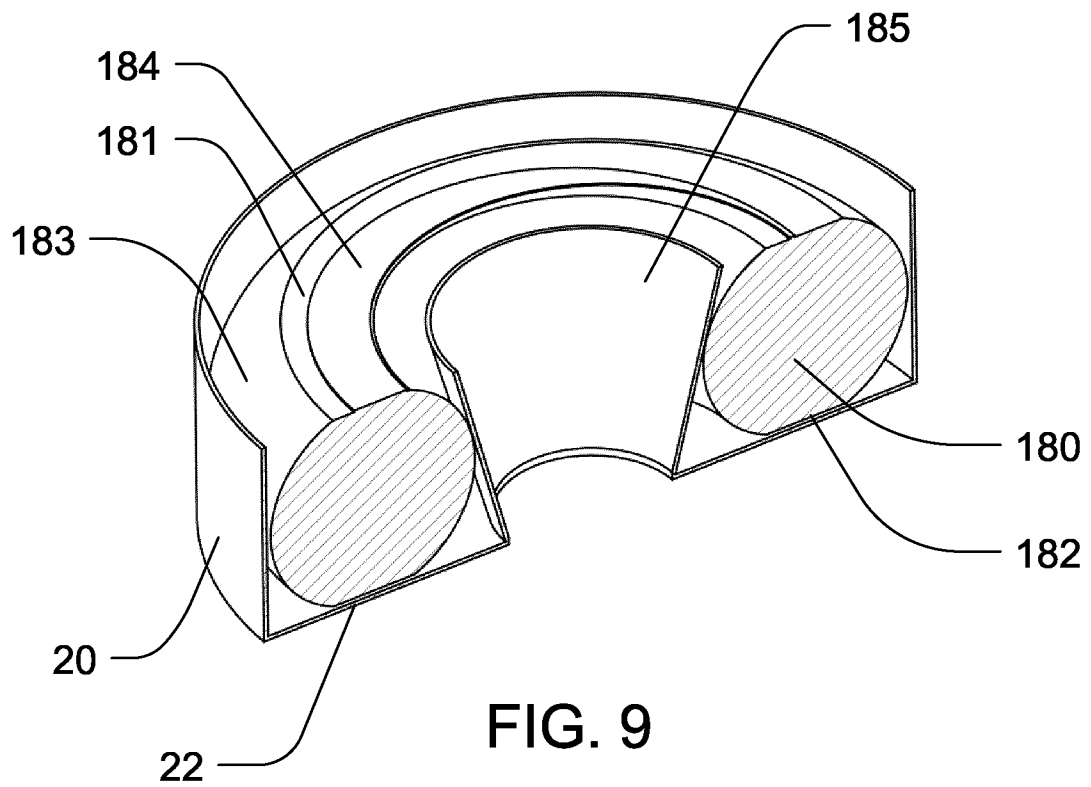


FIG. 8

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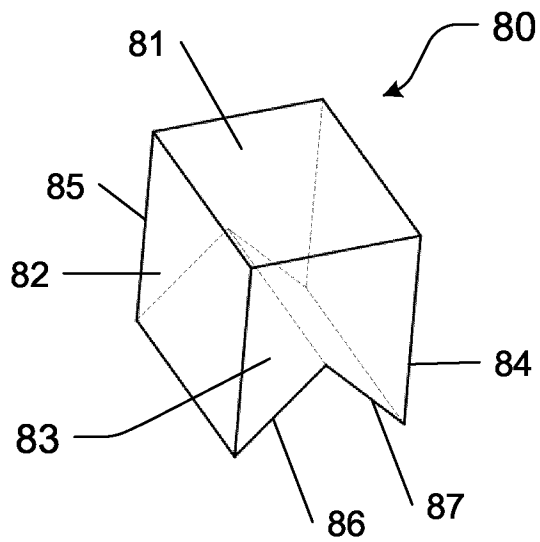


FIG. 11

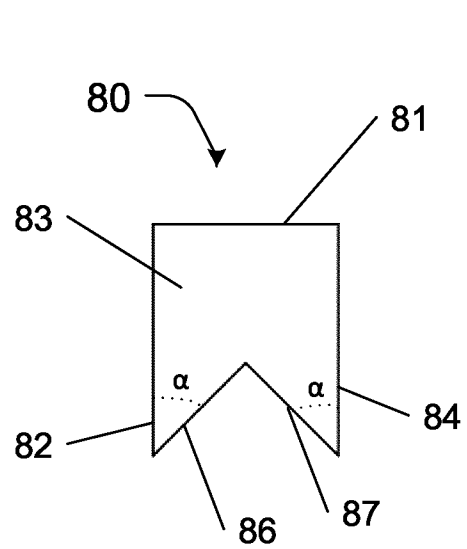


FIG. 12

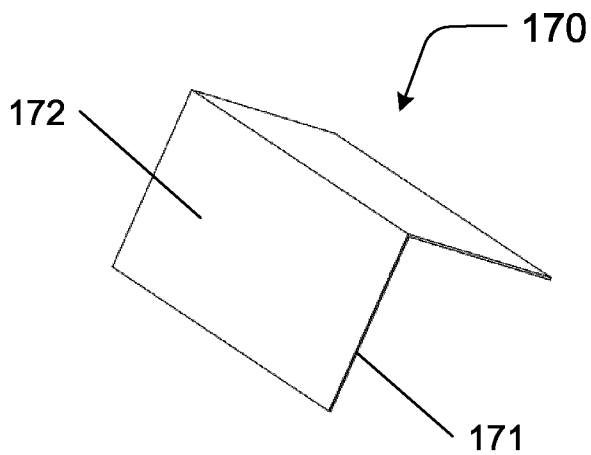


FIG. 13

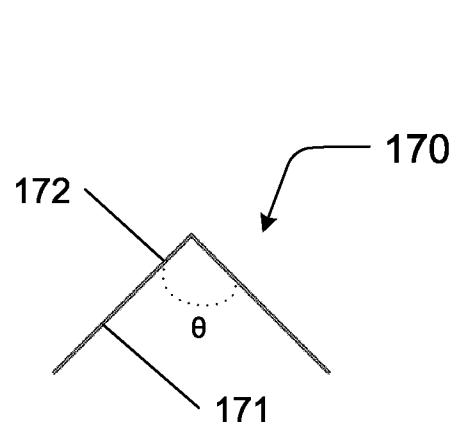


FIG. 14

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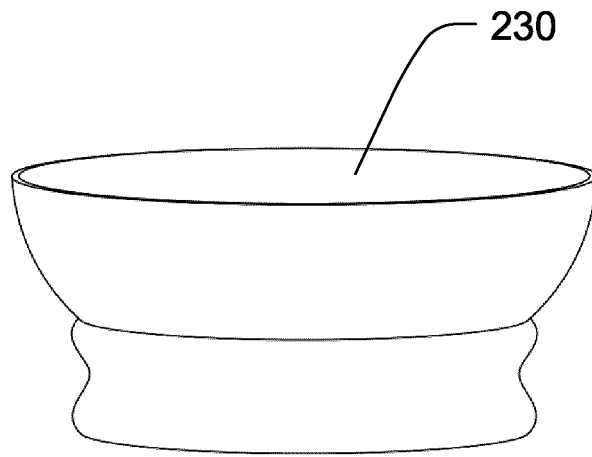


FIG. 15

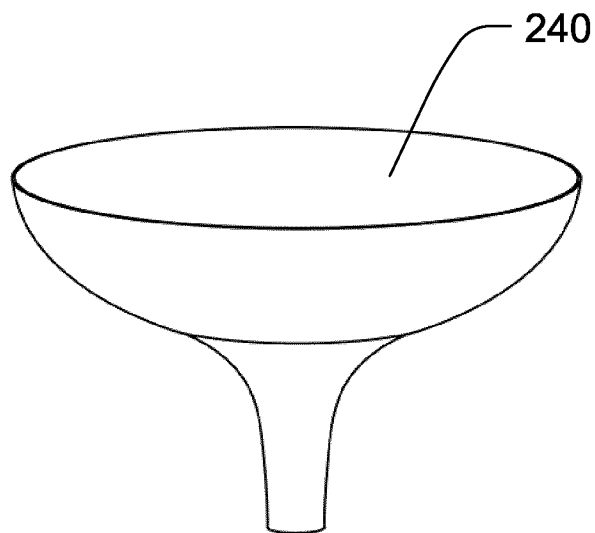


FIG. 16

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/CA2016/050743

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC: **A61B 5/00** (2006.01), **A61B 90/00** (2016.01), **G02B 13/24** (2006.01), **G03B 17/56** (2006.01),
H04W 88/02 (2009.01)

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC: **A61B 5/00** (2006.01), **A61B 90/00** (2016.01), **G02B 13/24** (2006.01), **G03B 17/56** (2006.01),
H04W 88/02 (2009.01)

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic database(s) consulted during the international search (name of database(s) and, where practicable, search terms used)

Databases: CPD (Canadian Patent Database), Questel Orbit, Google Patents, IEEE Xplore

Keywords: skin , imaging, illuminate, mobile, lens, light, guide, aperture, connector, optical, system, conduit, toroidal, use, device

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	JP 2011123085 (A) 23 Jun. 2011 (23-06-2011) by Hiroyoshi et al. ** see abstract, entire application**	1-103
A	WO2010110096 (A1) 30 Sept. 2010 (30-09-2010) by Hideji et al. ** see abstract, entire application**	1-103

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☒ See patent family annex.

* "A" "E" "L" "O" "P"	Special categories of cited documents: document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	"T" "X" "Y" "&"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art document member of the same patent family
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Date of the actual completion of the international search
13 September 2016 (13-09-2016)

Date of mailing of the international search report
15 September 2016 (15-09-2016)

Name and mailing address of the ISA/CA
Canadian Intellectual Property Office
Place du Portage I, C114 - 1st Floor, Box PCT
50 Victoria Street
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0C9
Facsimile No.: 819-953-2476

Authorized officer

Karen Oprea (819) 639-8255

Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of the first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claim Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. ☐ Claim Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. ☒ Claim Nos.: 104,105 because they are directed to omnibus claims
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying additional fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claim Nos.:

4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claim Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/CA2016/050743

Patent Document Cited in Search Report	Publication Date	Patent Family Member(s)	Publication Date
JP2011123085A	23 June 2011 (23-06-2011)	JP2011123085A JP5534162B2	23 June 2011 (23-06-2011) 25 June 2014 (25-06-2014)
WO2010110096A1	30 September 2010 (30-09-2010)	WO2010110096A1 JP5623385B2	30 September 2010 (30-09-2010) 12 November 2014 (12-11-2014)