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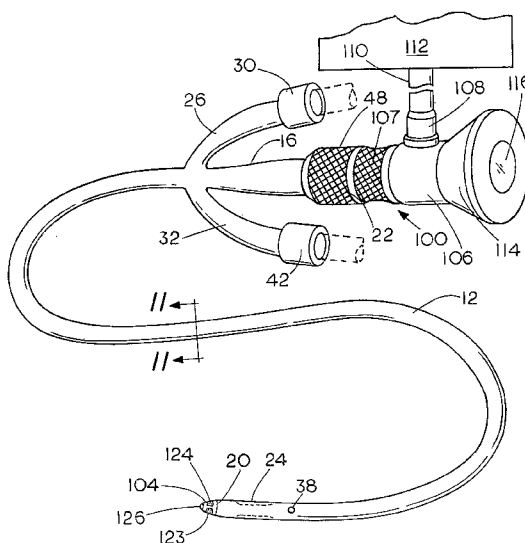
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(54) Title: APPARATUS FOR FACILITATING UROLOGICAL PROCEDURES



(57) Abstract: A flexible direct vision fiberoptical viewing or cable (80) is provided for placement within a urinary catheter (10) with its tip located at a distal end of the catheter (10) such that the surfaces of the distal end of both the viewing cable (80) and the catheter (10) are aligned as to fit together to form a composite smoothly curved surface to facilitate negotiating obstructions. The cable (80) is maintained in this position such that the catheter (10) with the surfaces that comprise the tip of the instrument are maintained in alignment. The urethra can be viewed therethrough during all or part of the insertion procedure for observing and identifying obstructions that may be present and thereafter the cable (80) is withdrawn while allowing the catheter (10) to remain in place within the urethra. The invention also includes a catheter (10) that serves as a working sheath and an obturator (50). The invention facilitates endoscopic examination and can be used for performing surgical procedures through the sheath.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 IPC(7) : A61B 1/00
 US CL : 600/105
 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)
 U.S. : 600/105, 109, 114-116, 135; 604/164.05, 164.03, 161

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Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
 EAST

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X --- Y	US 4,738,659 A (SLEIMAN) 19 April 1988 (19.04.1988), see entire document.	1, 3, 5-7, 9, 10, 24, 26, 27, 29-31 ----- 2, 11, 13-15, 19, 20, 25, 28, 32-34
Y	US 3,496,930 A (WAPPLER) 24 February 1970 (24.02.1970), see Figures 1 and 2.	2, 11, 13-15, 19, 20, 25, 28, 32-34
Y	US 4,612,939 A (ROBERTSON) 23 September 1986, see Figure 1.	20

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

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"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"X"	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
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"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
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