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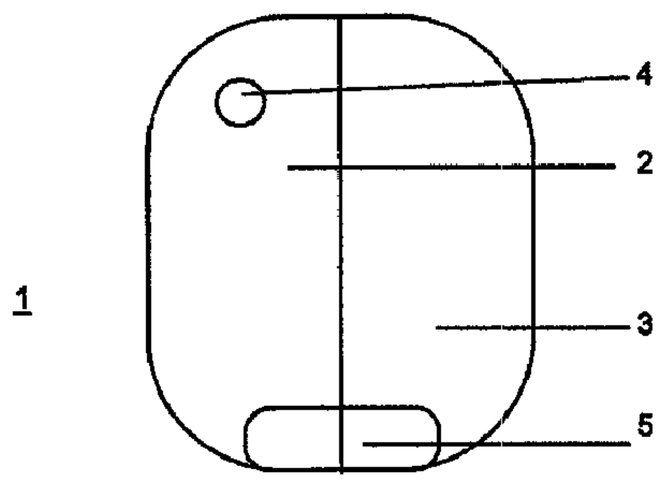
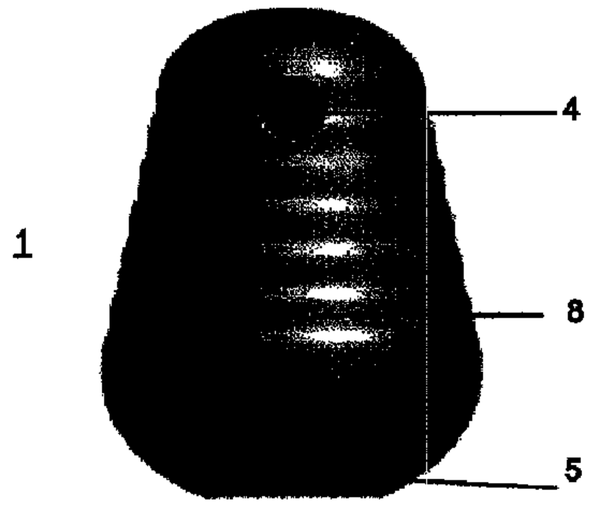
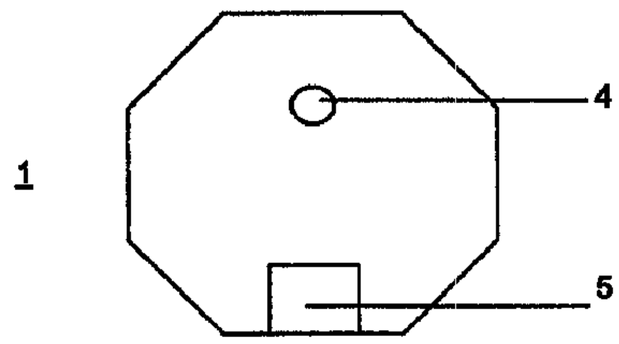
(54) Titre : ACTIVATEUR LESTE POUR ANIMAUX
(54) Title: WEIGHTED ANIMAL ACTIVATOR







(57) Abrégé/Abstract:
A known animal activator (1) has the form of a ball provided with a number of holes (4) utilized to fill the activator with units for animal consumption. An animal tries to dispense one unit at a time from the filled activator by rolling it. The activator (1) may then

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(57) Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):
roll to somewhere the animal cannot it. The purpose of the present invention is to limit mobility by providing the activator with a body (5) on the inside of its wall, the body having such weight that the activator (1) is merely subjected to a rocking or displacement movement.

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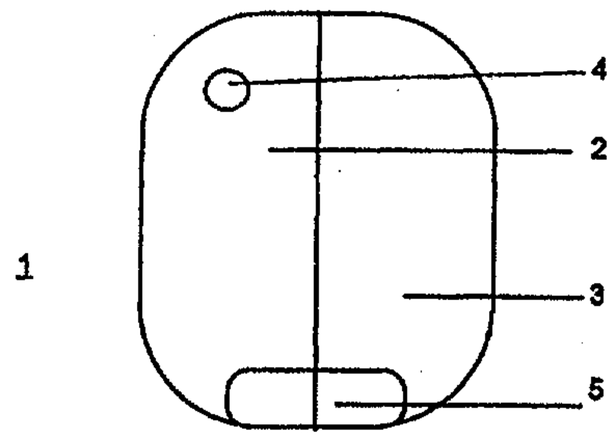
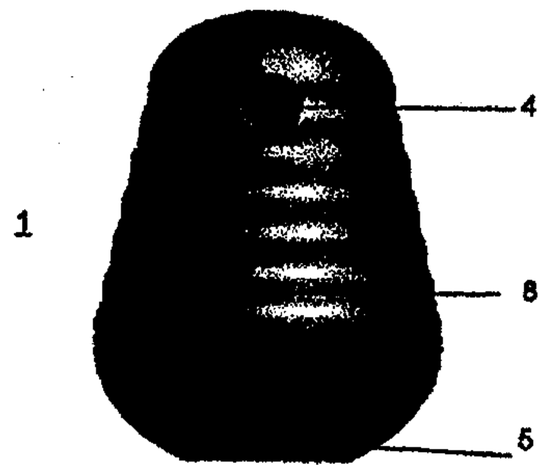
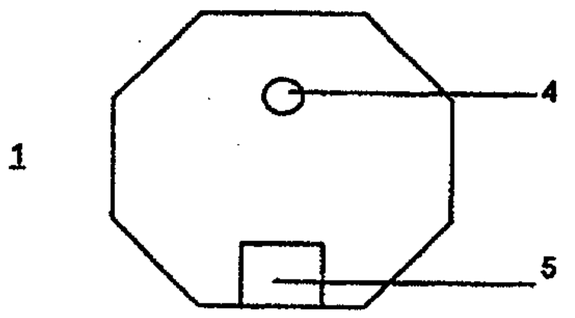
(54) Title: WEIGHTED ANIMAL ACTIVATOR

(57) Abstract

A known animal activator (1) has the form of a ball provided with a number of holes (4) utilized to fill the activator with units for animal consumption. An animal tries to dispense one unit at a time from the filled activator by rolling it. The activator (1) may then roll to somewhere the animal cannot it. The purpose of the present invention is to limit mobility by providing the activator with a body (5) on the inside of its wall, the body having such weight that the activator (1) is merely subjected to a rocking or displacement movement.







Weighted animal activator

It is previously known that animals are activated in the following way. A round activator is filled with feeding stuff for animals. The animal then rolls the activator or turns it in some other way so that the feeding stuff is dispensed through a hole in the activator. The animal thus has to roll the activator back and forth several times over a large area before all the feeding stuff has been dispensed from the activator.

Many animal owners, especially dog owners, consider it a problem that the dog has to roll the activator over a large area to gain access to the feeding stuff. When the activator is used indoors, it frequently rolls or is moved in under chairs and sofas and becomes lodged there. This results in the dog becoming annoyed that the activator has disappeared and in the owner having to find it for the dog. Another problem is that the activator makes a noise when it is rolled over the floor; it rattles when it rolls and neighbours living in a flat below can be irritated by the noise.

The rolling activator also results in scratches on floors, especially parquet and wooden floors, which in turn results in the dog not being able to use the activator indoors. When the dog rolls the activator outdoors, this may present a problem if the ground is sloping. The activator rolls away and may disappear by rolling in under shrubs or into tall grass. The activator can also present a danger to the life of the dog in that it can roll out onto the road, as many dog owners have experienced.

All known devices presume that the animal must roll the activator or turn it in some other way to access the feeding stuff inside the activator. The present invention relates to a device which activates animals but within a limited area and the device gives the animal a greater challenge and is thereby a development of that which is already known.

The device consists of a container, which has favourably a rounded oblong or conical shape but also works in other shapes, such as angular or rounded, and can be opened by having parts in threaded screw engagement or has a hole where feeding stuff can be admitted to the activator. A weight is attached to the base, resulting in the activator always having the same initial position, i.e. it with the weight at the base. The weight acts as a counterbalance when the animal hits the

activator to portion the feeding stuff out through said hole. This results in it not rolling across large areas but moving back and forth within a small area, with the weight in the base towards the floor. This results in the animal, especially a dog, having to work harder and use its paw to press the activator down towards the supporting surface for a piece of feed to be dispensed from the hole. When the dog removes its paw, the activator rocks back and forth a few times before resuming its initial resting position.

In one aspect, there is provided an activator for an animal, in which a container cavity is formed by at least one wall that completely encompasses the cavity, the at least one wall being provided with at least one hole through which the activator is supplied with units for animal consumption, the activator being forced to a movement depending on curiosity of the animal whereby the movement of the activator can dispense one or more units for the animal consumption through the at least one hole, wherein a body is attached inside the cavity at a location which makes the activator stable in one position but when the activator is moved by the animal, the activator becomes unstable and swing in at least one among an oscillating and a sliding movement.

In another aspect, there is provided a dispenser for use by an animal comprising: a base portion and an upper portion defined by at least one wall enclosing a container cavity, said at least one wall including at least one opening providing access to the container cavity, said at least one opening being disposed in the upper portion of the at least one wall and being constructed and arranged for placement in and removal from the container cavity of units to be obtained by the animal; and a weighted body fixed to the at least one wall of the dispenser in the base portion, the weighted body providing means for return of the dispenser after movement to a position defined as an upright position with the upper portion above the base portion, whereby the dispenser can be moved by the animal on a surface in at least one among an oscillating and a sliding motion for dispensing one of the units from the at least one opening.

In another aspect, there is provided a method to activate an animal to obtain feeding stuff from a container cavity, which is formed by a wall or walls that completely encompass a cavity, which wall or walls are provided with one or more holes for supplying feeding stuff to the cavity and to deliver feeding stuff from the cavity,

wherein a container cavity is used, which has a body with a weight that the container cavity placed on supporting surface always tends to assume a certain initial position so that the container cavity, when the wall or walls are touched by the animal, is forced into at least one of an oscillating and a sliding movement, within a limited area.

The weighted activator enables the animal, a dog in particular, to be activated indoors as well as outdoors within a limited area without being interrupted by the activator rolling away and disappearing under a chair or shrub. Floors are not scratched, the noise is eliminated and neighbours are therefore not disturbed. The dog can use the device outdoors without danger to its life. The device results in the dog having a greater challenge and a more difficult task to perform.

The device has favourably a contoured surface to provide grip for paws when used.

The device can be provided with partition walls to make the dispensing of the feed through said hole more difficult.

The weight of the counterbalance of the device is adapted to that of the device to provide the correct counterbalance.

The device can further be provided with noise-insulating material for noiseless activation. This can be achieved by a suspension device such as suspension studs distributed around the lower part of the outer casing on which noise-insulating material, e. g. felt fabric, can be attached. The felt fabric can be provided with holes that are threaded over the protruding suspension studs. Alternatively, a felt bag can be slipped over the device from beneath with an elastic ribbon enabling attachment over the suspension studs.

The device can also be provided with other noise-insulating material, for instance rubber, that in one way or another is placed on or over the device or, alternatively, attached to the suspension studs.

The weight of the device can be made of magnetic material, such as steel, for instance. This enables the device to be placed on a supporting surface that is favourably magnetic, for instance to increase the degree of difficulty with which the animal can set the device in motion and thereby dispense the pieces of feed.

The present invention will be further described with reference to the accompanying drawings, where

Figure 1 shows an animal activator,

Figure 2 shows the outer surface of an animal activator,

Figure 3 shows an animal activator where the inner space is partitioned by two walls,

Figure 4 shows an animal activator provided with noise-insulating material, and

Figure 5 shows an animal activator provided with another noise-insulating material.

Figure 1 shows an activator 1, consisting of two parts 2 and 3. These parts can be joined to each other by welding or by some other arrangement such that the parts can be detached from each other, if need be. The activator is in the form of a cylinder with two end parts of a substantially spherical shape. The activator has a hole 4 in its wall, through which units for animal consumption can be inserted and through which such units can be dispensed during manipulation of the activator by an animal. The activator has at its base a body 5 of such weight that the activator 1 will always, because of the weight, assume a pre-determined position, an upright vertical position in the present case. The outer surface 8 of the activator 1 is rough or uneven so that, when an animal paw contacts the outer surface, the paw will not slide but will remain located where the paw contacts the surface. To make it more difficult to dispense units for animal consumption, the container space of the activator 1 can be divided into several sections and this can be done in any

appropriate way whatsoever. In the present case, the use of two walls 6 and 7 perpendicular to each other has been chosen.

The activator can have any desired shape whatsoever. Thus, it can be spherical but it can also consist of a number of flat surfaces. Thanks to the body 5, which has a certain weight, the activator, in the absence of any influence, will always assume a pre-determined vertical position. When the animal tries to influence the activator 1, the animal can only give the activator an oscillating movement around the centre of gravity located in the body 5. The animal can further subject the activator 1 to a displacement movement. Without any influence, the activator will always assume a vertical position.

The surface 8 of the activator 1 can be of several different designs, all fulfilling the requirement that a paw will not slide along the outer surface.

The activator has been provided with a hole 4, but it is obvious that it can be provided with any desired number of holes. Units for animal consumption are inserted through the hole 4 and, when the activator is full and placed on a supporting surface, an animal will immediately try to attack the activator and try to dispense a unit for animal consumption. In the present case, the animal can only achieve rocking movements and displacement movements and this means that the activator 1 will remain in the immediate vicinity of the animal throughout the attack period, thus avoiding the above-mentioned disadvantages.

CLAIMS

1. An activator for an animal, in which a container cavity is formed by at least one wall that completely encompasses the cavity, the at least one wall being provided with at least one hole through which the activator is supplied with units for animal consumption, the activator being forced to a movement depending on curiosity of the animal whereby the movement of the activator can dispense one or more units for the animal consumption through the at least one hole, wherein a body is attached inside the cavity at a location which makes the activator stable in one position but when the activator is moved by the animal, the activator becomes unstable and swing in at least one among an oscillating and a sliding movement.

2. The animal activator as claimed in claim 1, wherein the activator has an outer surface comprising means for preventing an animal paw from sliding along the outer surface.

3. The animal activator as claimed in claim 1, wherein the container cavity is divided into several subspaces and the at least one wall has more than one hole, each subspace being in communication with a respective one of the holes.

4. The animal activator as claimed in claim 1, wherein the activator comprises two parts united with each other in a lockable association.

5. The animal activator as claimed in claim 1, wherein the activator has a cylindrical middle part with two spherical end parts.

6. A dispenser for use by an animal comprising: a base portion and an upper portion defined by at least one wall enclosing a container cavity, said at least one wall including at least one opening providing access to the container cavity, said at least one opening being disposed in the upper portion of the at least one wall and being constructed and arranged for placement in and removal from the container cavity of units to be obtained by the animal; and a weighted body fixed to the at least one wall of the dispenser in the base portion, the weighted body providing means for return of the dispenser after movement to a position defined as an upright position with the

upper portion above the base portion, whereby the dispenser can be moved by the animal on a surface in at least one among an oscillating and a sliding motion for dispensing one of the units from the at least one opening.

7. The dispenser as claimed in claim 6, wherein the dispenser has an outer surface comprising means for preventing an animal paw from sliding along the outer surface.

8. The dispenser as claimed in claim 6, wherein the container cavity comprises at least one internal wall to divide the cavity into a plurality of subspaces, each subspace being in communication with at least one of the at least one opening.

9. The dispenser as claimed in claim 6, comprising two body portions united with each other in a lockable association.

10. The dispenser as claimed in claim 6, comprising a cylindrical middle portion with two spherical end portions, the weighted body being fixed to one of the spherical end portions.

11. A method to activate an animal to obtain feeding stuff from a container cavity, which is formed by a wall or walls that completely encompass a cavity, which wall or walls are provided with one or more holes for supplying feeding stuff to the cavity and to deliver feeding stuff from the cavity, wherein a container cavity is used, which has a body with a weight that the container cavity placed on supporting surface always tends to assume a certain initial position so that the container cavity, when the wall or walls are touched by the animal, is forced into at least one of an oscillating and a sliding movement, within a limited area.

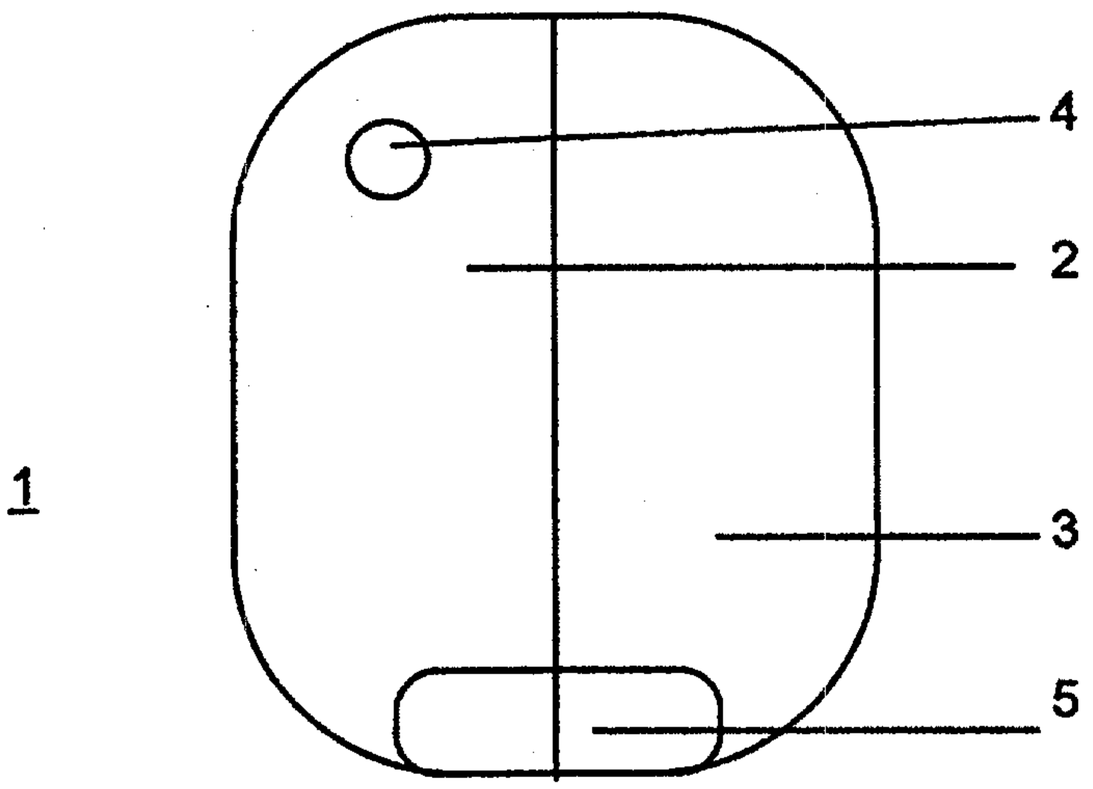
12. The method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the container cavity has an outer surface comprising means for preventing a paw of the animal from sliding along the outer surface.

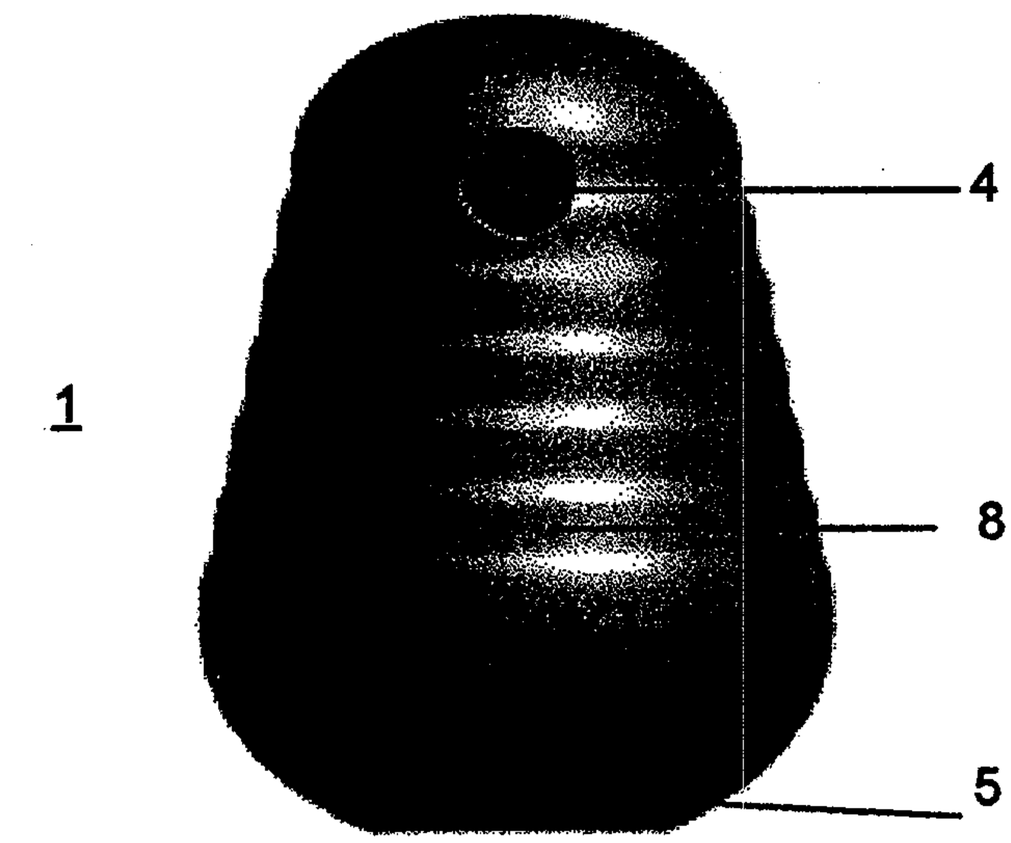
13. The method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the container cavity is divided into several subspaces.

14. The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the container cavity includes two parts united with each other in a lockable association.

15. The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the container cavity includes a cylindrical middle part with two spherical end parts.

Fig.1





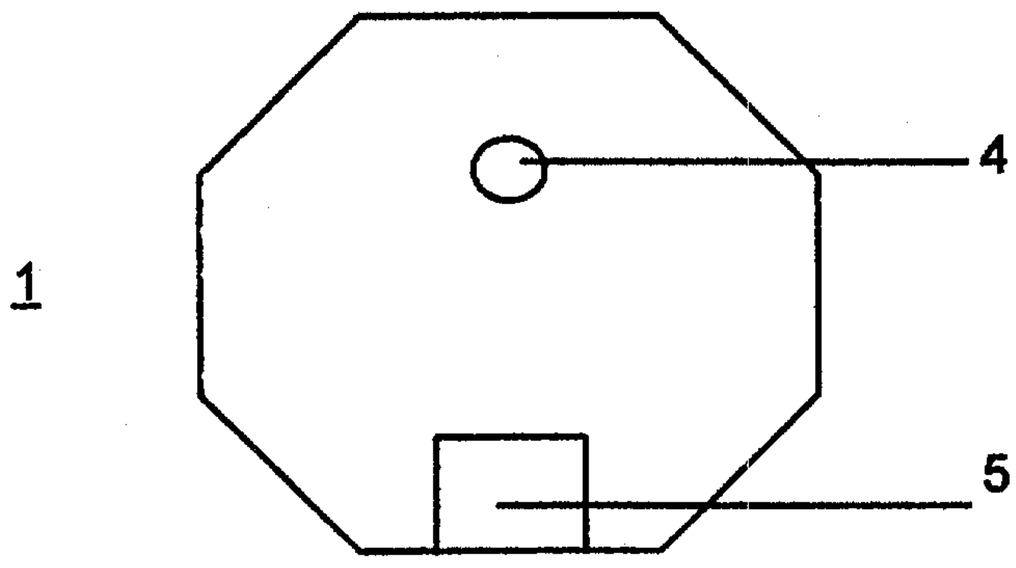


Fig. 2

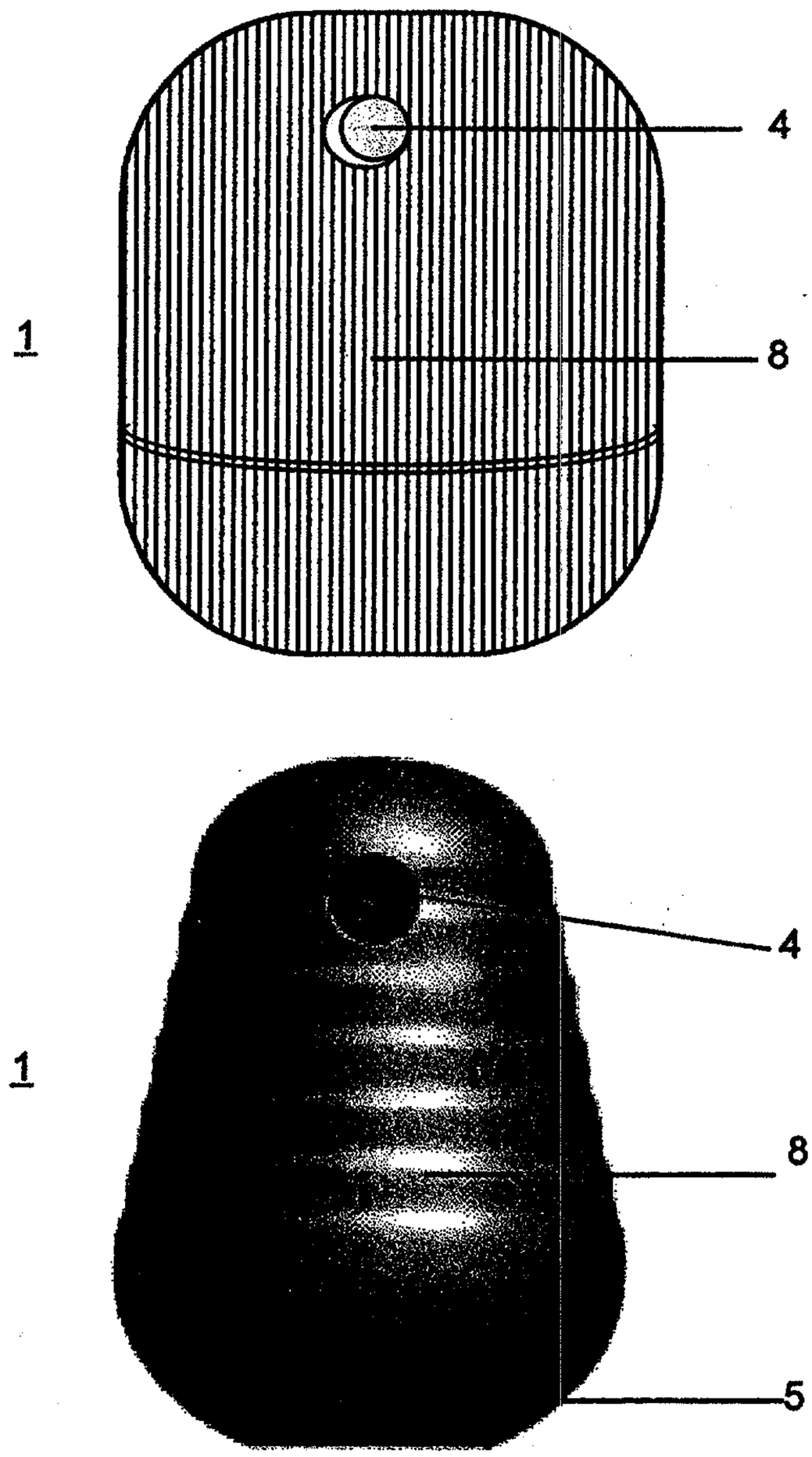


Fig. 3

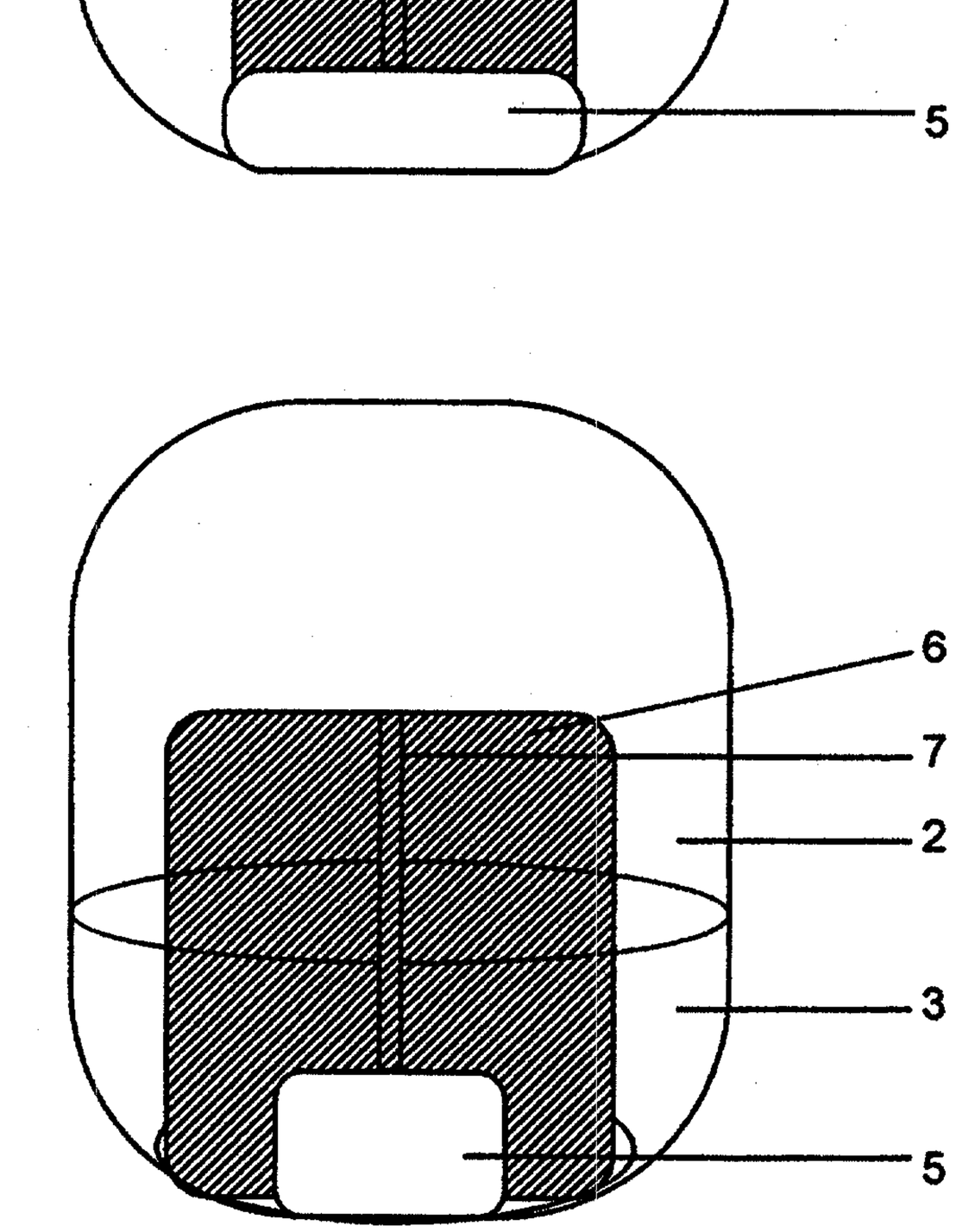


Fig 4

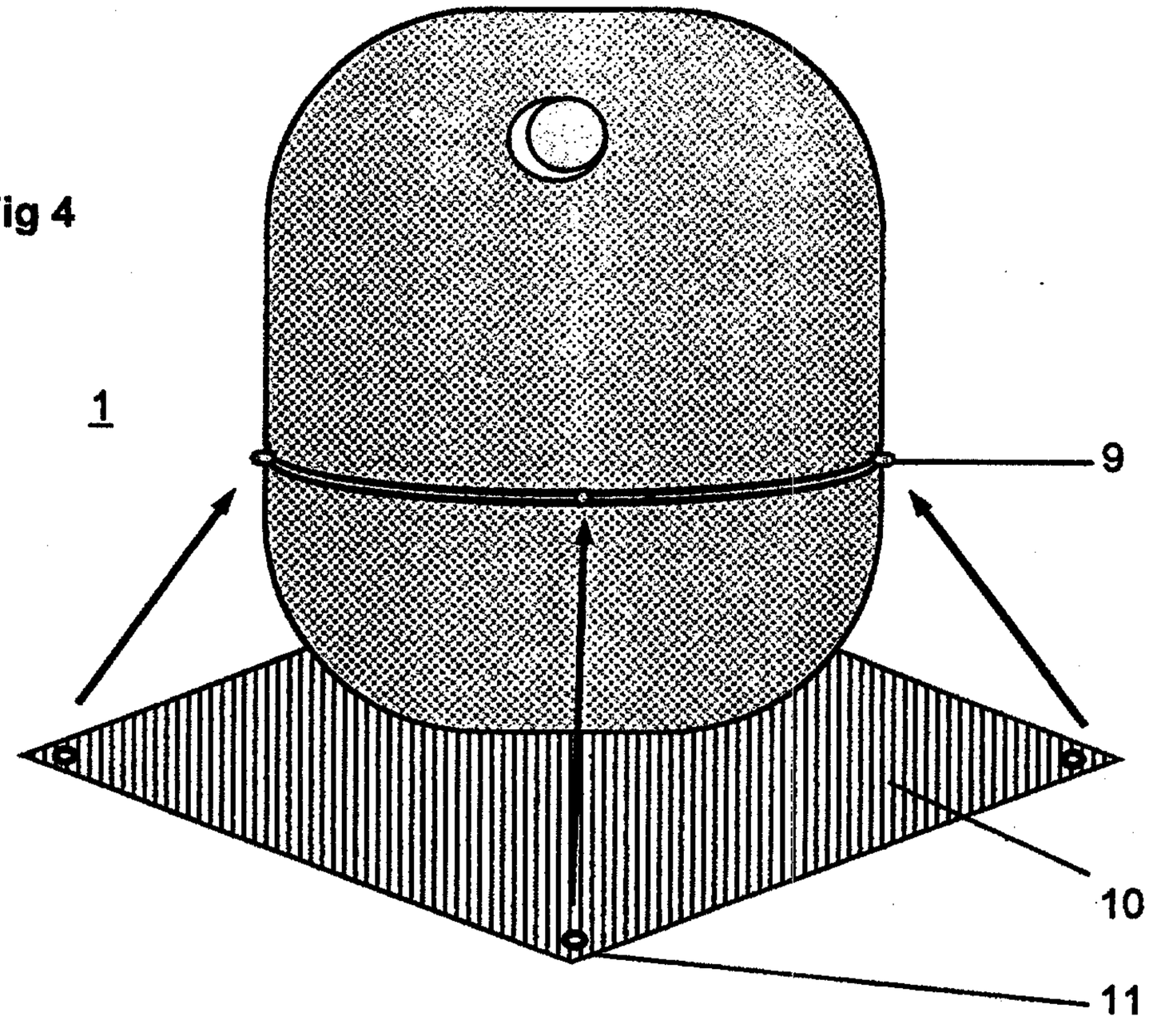
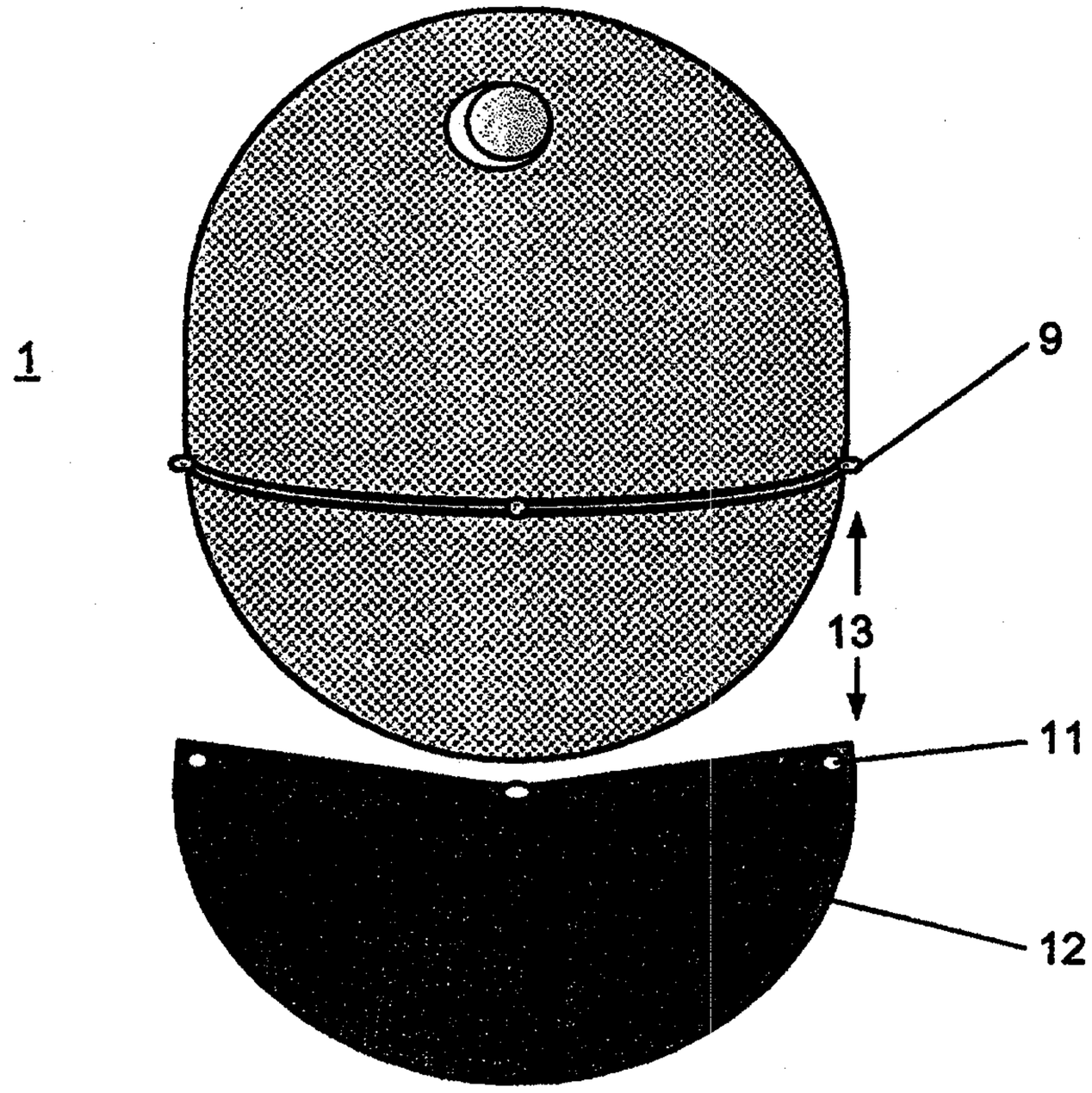
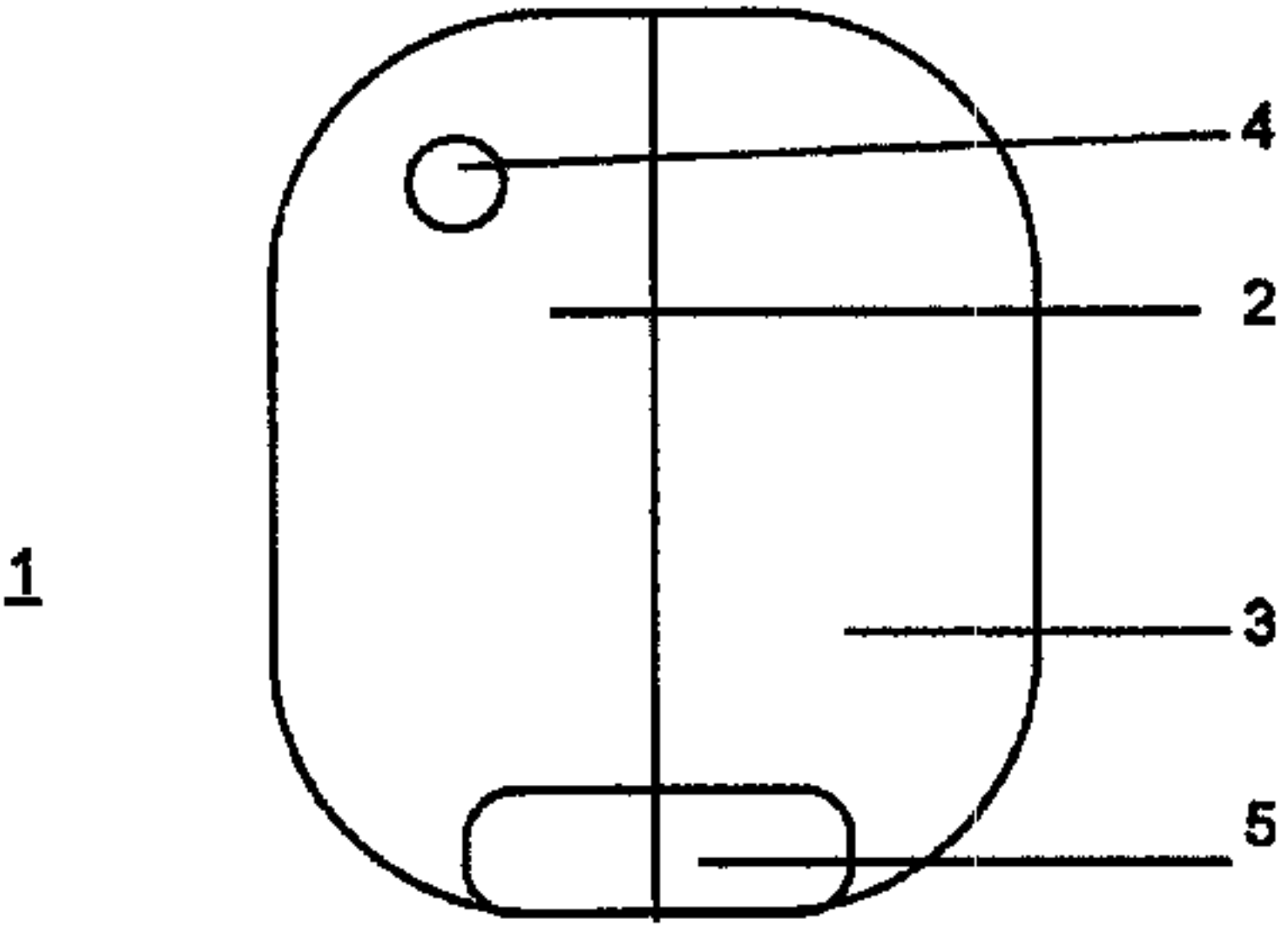


Fig 5

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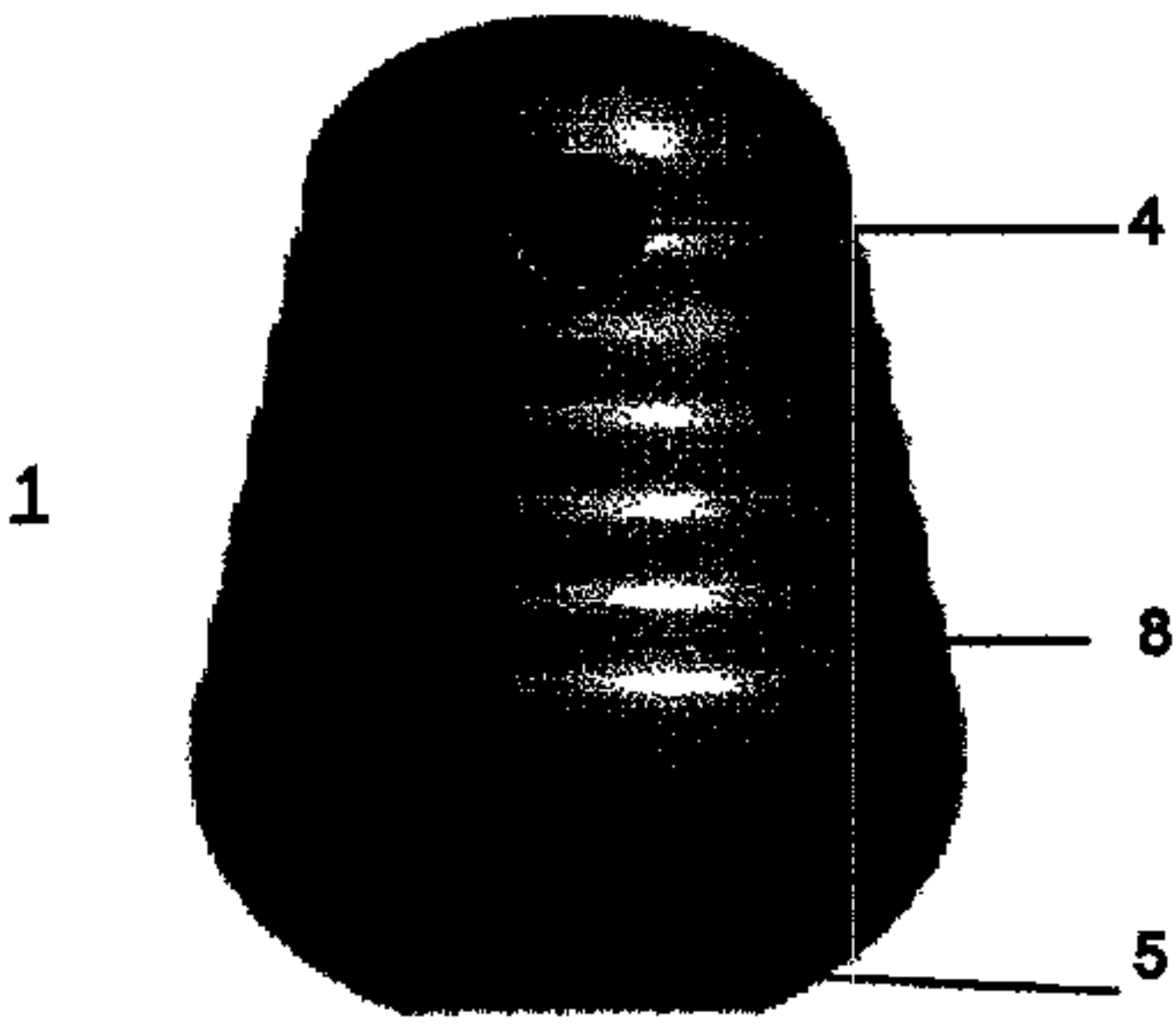
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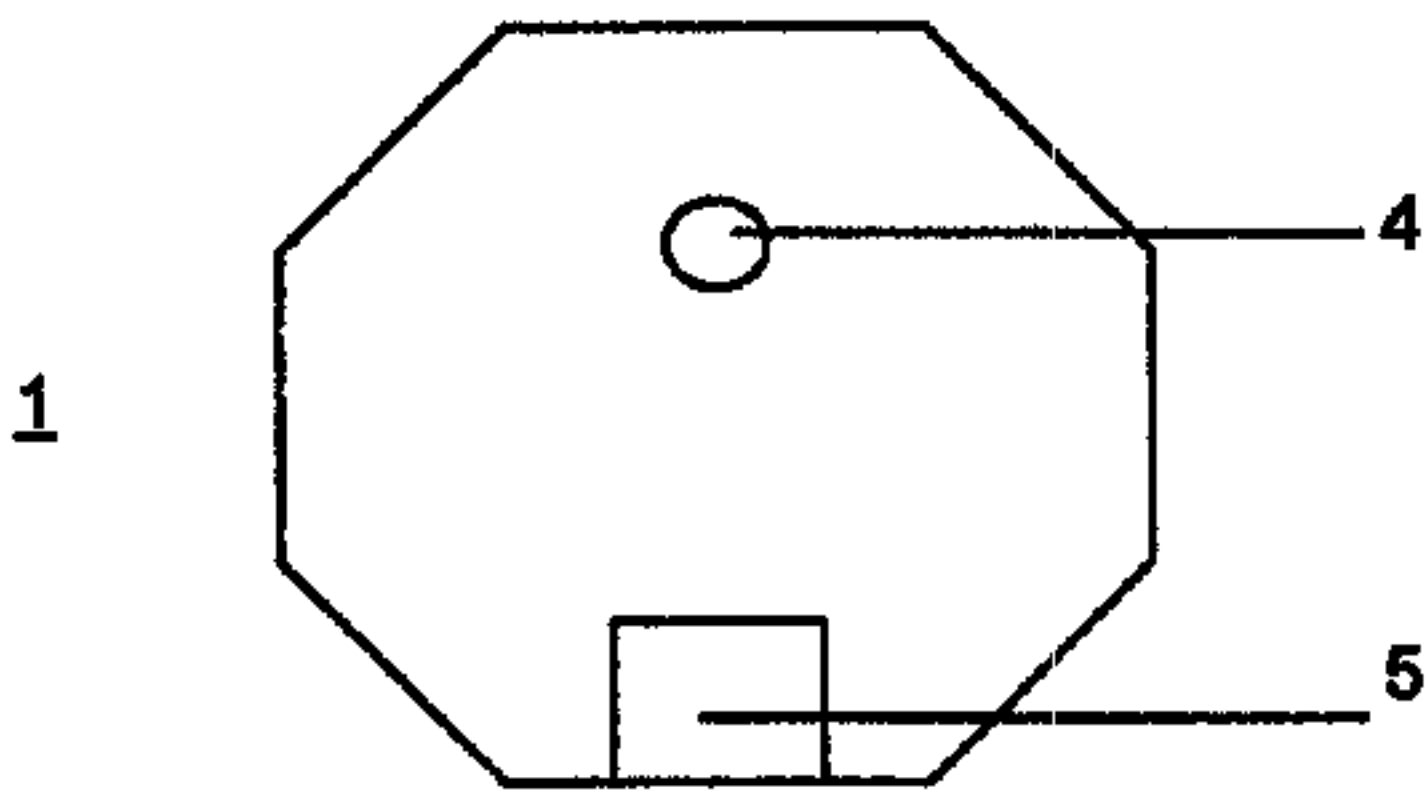
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