

[54] IMPLEMENT FOR PIERCING EAR-LOBES

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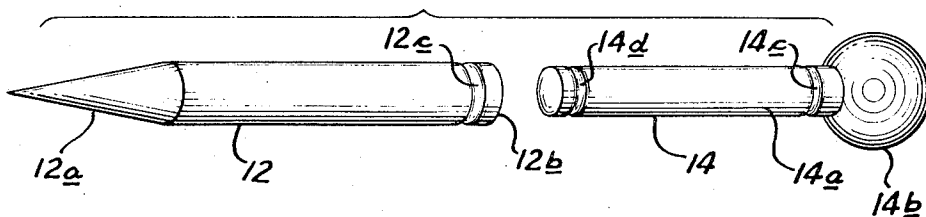
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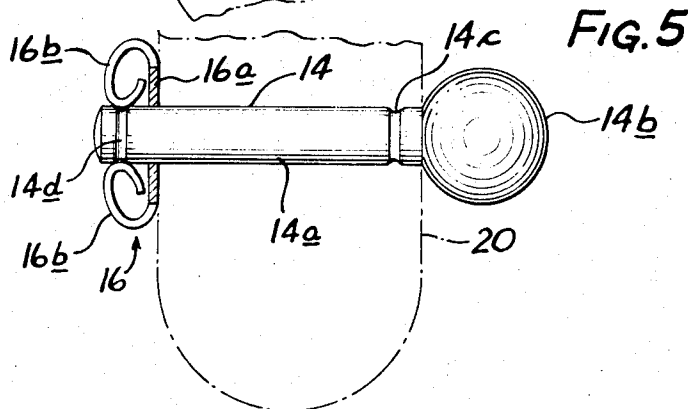
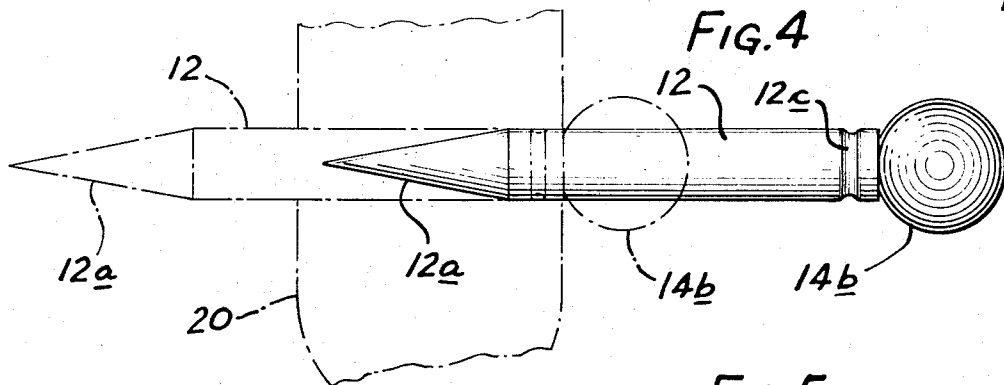
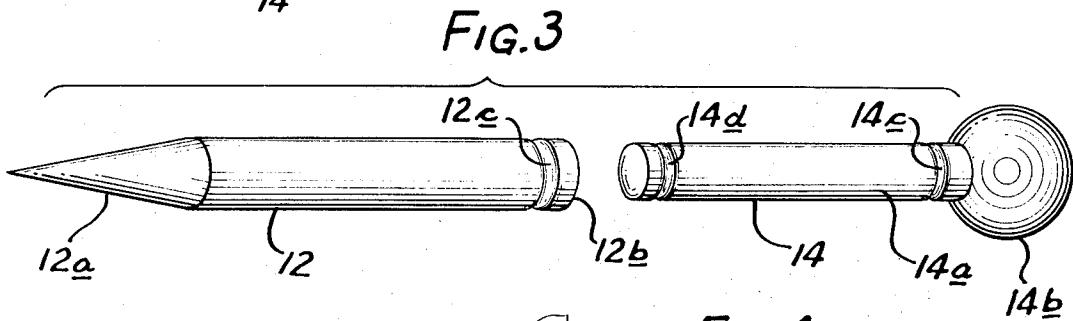
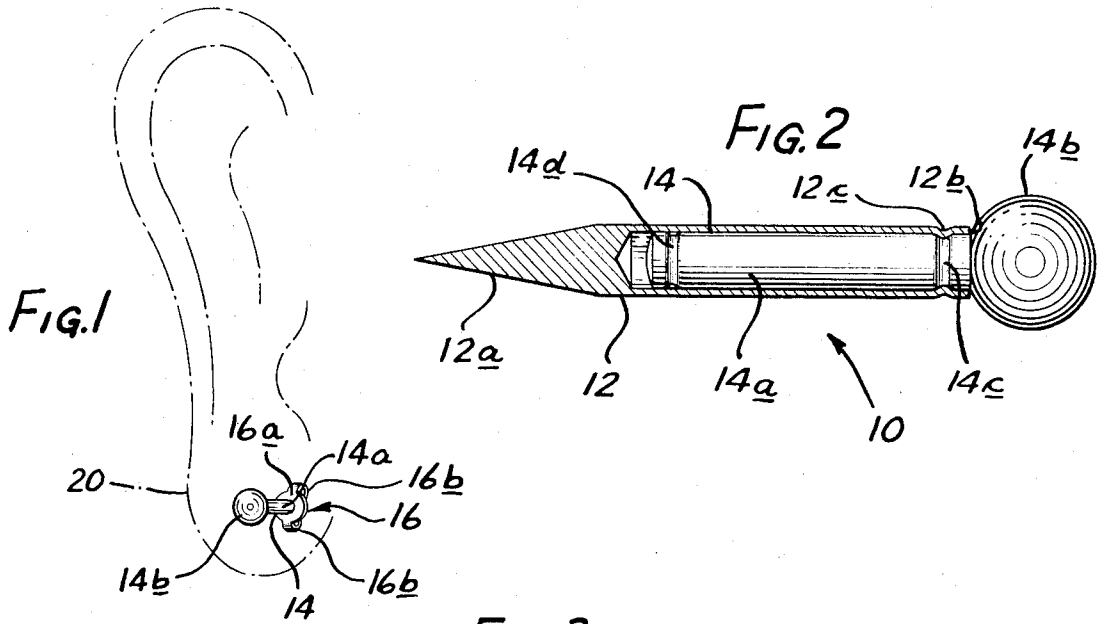
Primary Examiner—Channing L. Pace
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[57] ABSTRACT

An implement or device for piercing ear-lobes and forming an opening therethrough for receiving ear rings which comprises a pointed, hollow, sheath-like ear-lobe piercing member and a separable, ear-lobe opening stabilizing member. The stabilizing member is carried by the piercing member as the latter is passed through the ear-lobe and is adapted to be temporarily retained in the opening formed by the piercing member after the piercing member is separated from the stabilizing member.

2 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures





IMPLEMENT FOR PIERCING EAR-LOBES

This invention relates to an implement or device for piercing and forming an ear ring receiving opening in ear-lobes.

Heretofore, the piercing of ear-lobes to enable ear rings to be engaged in the aperture or opening formed by the piercing operation was accomplished by first piercing the ear-lobes with a pointed instrument such as a needle, and then threading, or inserting, a metal post through the aperture or opening formed in each ear-lobe by the needle. The metal posts are permitted to remain in place in the ear-lobes for several weeks in order to assure some permanence to the aperture or opening. This prior practice, apart from the fact that it required a person to suffer the discomfort of having first a needle and then a metal post separately passed through each ear-lobe, was, especially during the placement of the metal posts, an uncertain and sometimes lengthy procedure which resulted in trauma to the ear-lobes, and, on occasion, the development of infections.

In accordance with the present invention, there is provided an implement or device for piercing ear-lobes and forming an aperture or opening therethrough for receiving ear rings which enables, in a single step, the formation of an aperture or opening in an ear-lobe and the positioning of a metal post in the aperture or opening. Because the device enables the operation to be achieved in a single step, discomfort to the person is substantially reduced, and the uncertainty, tediousness and trauma associated with the prior practice of separately threading, or inserting, the metal posts in the ear-lobes are eliminated.

Briefly, the implement of the present invention comprises an elongated, hollow, sheath-like, ear-lobe piercing member and a separable, elongated, ear-lobe aperture, or opening, stabilizing member. The piercing member is formed with a sharp, needle-like point at one end thereof, and has an opening at the other end thereof for admitting the stabilizing member into the piercing member. The piercing member and the stabilizing member advantageously are provided with cooperating, releasable interlocking means to enable the stabilizing member to be retained in the piercing member as the latter is passed through the ear-lobe to form the aperture, or opening. The stabilizing member preferably has handle means at one end thereof which, among other things, enables the implement or device to be held with the fingers, and the pointed end of the piercing member to be guided through the ear-lobe. Stabilizing member retaining means are provided for engagement with the other end of the stabilizing member after the piercing member has been separated from the stabilizing member. The retaining means and the handle means of the stabilizing member cooperatively act to prevent inadvertent dislodgement of the stabilizing member from the aperture, or opening, formed in the ear-lobe during the healing, and aperture, or opening, stabilizing period. The stabilizing member, together with the retaining means, are of a size and shape such that no discomfort is experienced by the wearer during the period that the stabilizing member remains in place in the aperture, or opening, and they are fashioned to give them the appearance of decorative jewelry of the type normally worn on the ear-lobes.

The foregoing, and other features and advantages of the invention will be more fully understood from the

description to follow taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing wherein:

FIG. 1 is a view in perspective showing an embodiment of the stabilizing member and the retaining means in position on an ear-lobe which has been pierced by the implement of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged side view in elevation, partly in section, of an embodiment of the implement of the present invention;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged exploded view showing the ear-lobe piercing member and the aperture, or opening, stabilizing member of said embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 4 is an enlarged side view in elevation showing said embodiment as it moves through an ear-lobe; and

FIG. 5 is an enlarged side view in elevation showing the stabilizing member and the retaining means in place after the piercing member has been separated from the stabilizing member.

Referring, now, in greater detail to FIGS. 2, 3, and 4 of the drawing, the embodiment of the implement 10, as illustrated, comprises an elongated, generally cylindrically shaped, hollow, sheath-like, ear-lobe piercing member 12 and a separable, elongated, generally cylindrically shaped, ear-lobe aperture, or opening, stabilizing member 14. The piercing member 12 is provided with a sharp, needle-like point 12a at one end thereof, and has an opening 12b at the other end thereof through which the stabilizing member 14 is inserted into the piercing member 12.

The stabilizing member 14 comprises a cylindrical, solid shaft, or rod, portion 14a to one end of which is joined a handle portion 14b. The handle portion 14b, as shown, is ball-shaped. However, the portion 14b may be any shape desired, the only requirement being that it be of a size and shape to enable it to be gripped with the fingers of an operator, and to permit easy manipulation of the implement throughout the ear-lobe piercing operation.

The diameter of the shaft, or rod, portion 14a of the stabilizing member 14 is slightly less than the internal diameter of the hollow, sheath-like, ear-lobe piercing member 12 to permit easy insertion of the stabilizing member 14 into, and separation of the stabilizing member 14 from, the piercing member 12. In order to maintain the stabilizing member 14 in somewhat rigid, or fixed, engagement with the piercing member 12 as the latter is passed through an ear-lobe to form an aperture, or opening, therethrough, the piercing member 12 and the shaft, or rod, portion 14a advantageously are provided with cooperating, releasable interlocking means. In the embodiment of the invention illustrated, the interlocking means comprises an annular recess 14c provided at the proximal, or handle-bearing, end of the shaft, or rod, 14a of the stabilizing member 14, and a cooperating, inwardly extending, annular rib 12c formed in the inner wall at the open end of the piercing member 12. Various other means for releasably interlocking the members 12 and 14 can, of course, be employed. Thus, for example, threads could be used instead of the annular rib 12c and the recess 14c. Also, a simple detent arrangement could be employed.

As best shown in FIG. 5 of the drawing, the shaft, or rod 14a, at its distal end has an annular recess 14d adapted to engage retaining means such as the clip 16. The clip 16 comprises a circular body portion 16a having a pair of oppositely disposed spring members

16b—16b joined to the periphery thereof. The spring members 16b—16b snap into engagement with the recess 14d. The clip 16 and the handle portion 14b of the stabilizing member 14 cooperate to maintain the shaft, or rod, 14a in place in the aperature, or opening, formed in the ear-lobe, designated by reference numeral 20 in the drawing, during the aperature, or opening, stabilizing period. As in the case of the interlocking rib 12c and recess 14c, other means can be employed in place of the clip 16 to aid in retaining the member 14 in place. Thus, for instance, threads can be provided at the distal end of the shaft, or rod, 14a for receiving a threaded, washer-like nut,

In utilizing the implement of the present invention, standard preliminary medical practices used in preparing the ear-lobe for piercing are first carried out. The implement is then simply quickly passed through the ear-lobe as illustrated in FIG. 4 until the handle portion 14b of the stabilizing member 14 makes contact, or nearly so, with the skin of the lobe 20. The length of the implement is such that the pointed end 12a of the piercing member 12 will pass completely through the ear-lobe. While still holding the implement by means of the handle portion 14b, the operator takes hold of the pointed end 12a of the member 12 with his fingers, or a suitable tool, and separates the piercing member 12 from the stabilizing member 14, leaving the shaft, or rod, 14a of the stabilizing member 14 in place in the ear-lobe. The clip 16 is then positioned on the distal end of the shaft, or rod, 14a to aid in maintaining the stabilizing member 14 in place. Following the normal healing period, the clip 16 is removed, and the shaft, or rod, 14a is gently withdrawn from the aperature, or opening, in the ear-lobe. Ear rings of the type used on pierced ear-lobes can then be worn.

The implement of this invention is constructed of materials which, of course, are non-toxic and substantially inert with respect to body tissues and fluids. Gold-plated metals, or gold-filled alloys, are preferred.

While for purposes of illustration a preferred embodiment of this invention has been shown and described, other forms thereof may become apparent to those skilled in the art upon reference to this disclosure and, therefore, it should be understood that any such

departures from the specific embodiment shown and described are intended to fall within the spirit and scope of this invention.

I claim:

1. An implement for piercing ear-lobes and forming an opening therethrough for receiving ear rings comprising an elongated, hollow, substantially cylindrical, ear-lobe piercing member adapted to be completely passed through an ear-lobe, said ear-lobe piercing member having an opening in one end thereof and a needle-like point at the other end thereof, an ear-lobe opening stabilizing member adapted to be carried by the ear-lobe piercing member as the piercing member is passed through the ear-lobe, said stabilizing member comprising an elongated, substantially cylindrical, solid, smooth-surfaced shaft adapted to be releasably received in the hollow ear-lobe piercing member and to be retained in the opening formed by the ear-lobe piercing member after the ear-lobe piercing member has been completely passed through the ear-lobe and separated by pulling from the stabilizing member, said shaft having a recess formed at one end thereof for engaging a retaining clip and an enlarged, solid, handle portion at the other end thereof for manipulating the implement as the ear-lobe piercing member is passed through the ear-lobe and for cooperating with a retaining clip for maintaining the smooth-surfaced shaft in the opening formed in the ear-lobe by the ear-lobe piercing member, and a retaining clip adapted to engage the recess formed in the shaft of the ear-lobe opening stabilizing member after the ear-lobe piercing member has been passed completely through the ear-lobe and has been separated by pulling from the shaft of the ear-lobe opening stabilizing member.

2. An implement according to claim 1 wherein the smooth-surfaced shaft of the stabilizing member and the inner wall of the hollow piercing member are provided with cooperating interlocking means for retaining the piercing member on the shaft of the stabilizing member as the piercing member is passed through the ear-lobe and for enabling the piercing member to be readily pulled free from the smooth-surfaced shaft after the ear-lobe has been pierced by the piercing member.

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