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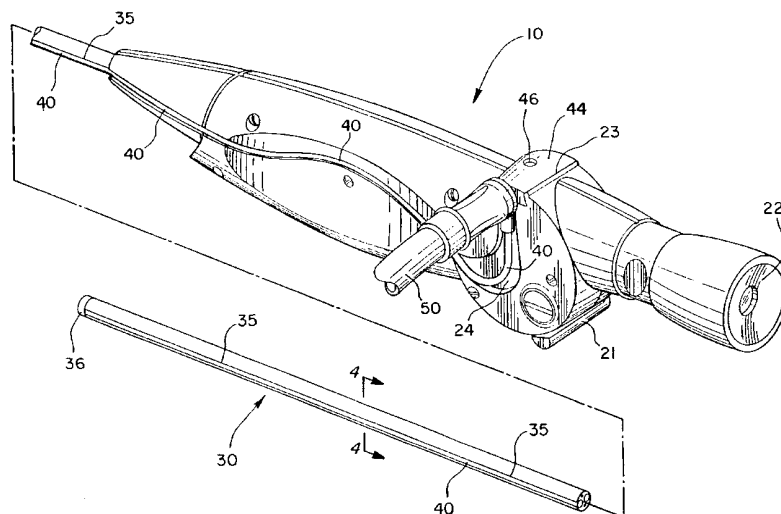
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(54) Title: **ENDOSCOPE WITH A REMOVABLE SUCTION TUBE**



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(57) Abstract: An endoscope has a removable suction tube (40) to facilitate cleaning and reduce the risk of patient infection. The endoscope includes an elongated flexible probe (30) with a slot (35) extending along its length and an opening on the distal end of the probe (30). The housing (10) at the proximal end of the probe (30) is used to control the direction and operation of the probe (30), and for viewing images from the distal end of the probe (30). The suction tube (40) can be removably inserted into the slot (35) on the probe (30). Optionally, the distal tip of the probe (30) can be equipped with a connector (38) within the slot (35) that removably secures with a connector (38) within the slot (35) that removably secures the distal opening of the suction tube (40) in communication with a suction opening (37) on the distal tip of the probe (30). A suction tube connector (44) at the proximal end of the suction tube (40) allows the suction tube (40) to be removably secured to the housing (10) and also provides a connector for removable attachment to an external suction line (50).

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
IPC(7) : A61B 1/015		
US CL : 600/156, 128, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158		
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. : 600/156, 128, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5,944,654 A (Crawford) 31 August 1999 (31.08.99), see entire document.	1-18
A	US 4,646,722 A (Silverstein et al) 03 March 1987 (03.03.87), Figure 3.	1-18
A	US 4,616,631 A (Takahashi), 14 October 1986 (14.10.86), see entire document.	1-18
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
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