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(54) **RECTAL PROBE WITH DISPOSABLE  
BALLOON ASSEMBLY**

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(51) **Int. Cl.**

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**A61B 1/04** (2006.01)  
**A61B 1/00** (2006.01)  
**A61M 29/00** (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **600/549**; 600/115; 600/116; 600/121;  
606/192; 606/197; 606/198

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600/549; 604/101.01, 101.02, 912, 915;  
606/192, 193, 195-198; 383/3, 38-40  
See application file for complete search history.

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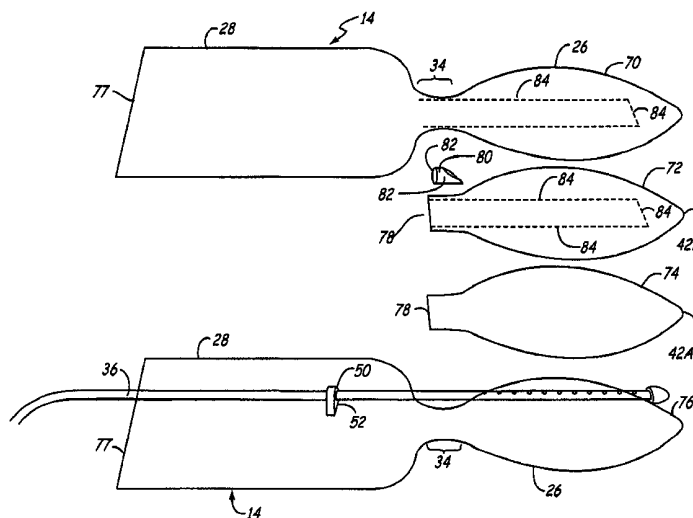
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A reusable temperature sensing probe assembly comprises a temperature sensor strip extending from one end of a handle. The temperature sensor strip carries at least one temperature sensor for measuring temperature within a body cavity of a person, such as the rectum. The handle/temperature sensor strip is reversibly positionable within a unitary balloon/sleeve assembly comprised of a balloon portion and a sleeve portion. The balloon portion is comprised of a first interior space configured to hold the temperature sensor strip and a second interior space separate from the first interior space that is configured for inflation. An inflation tube has one portion sealed within the second interior space of the balloon portion and a second portion which extends through the sleeve portion for connection to a fluid source.

**18 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets**



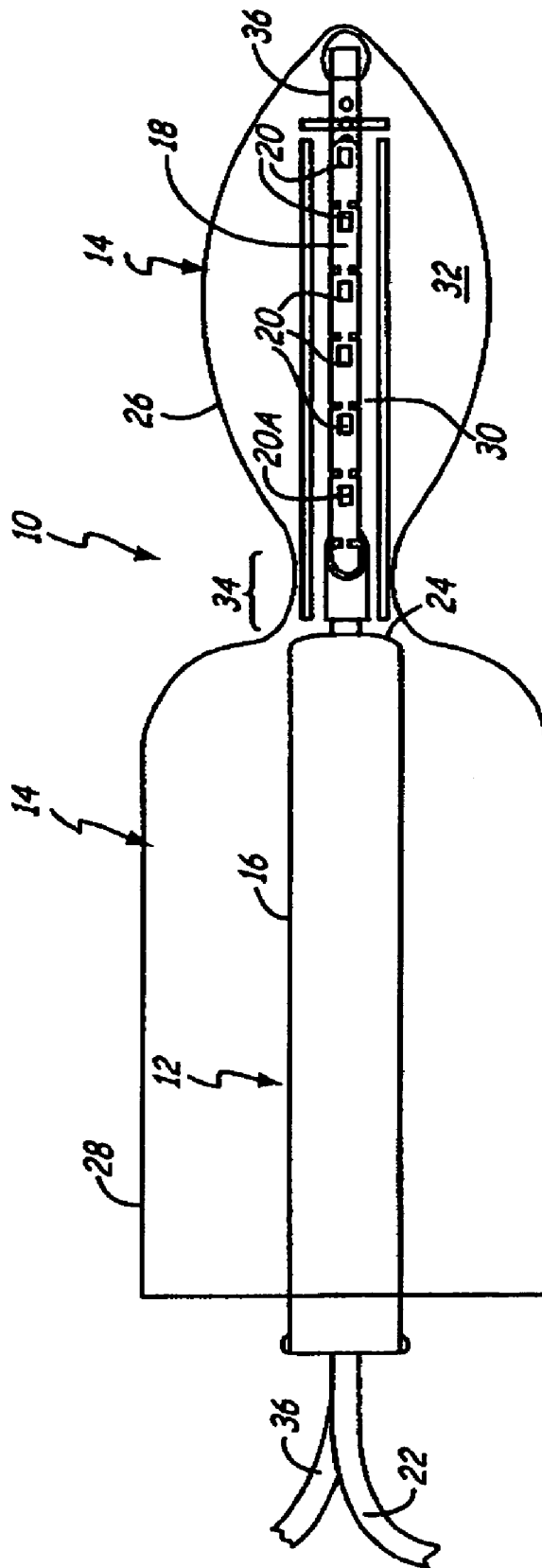


Fig. 1

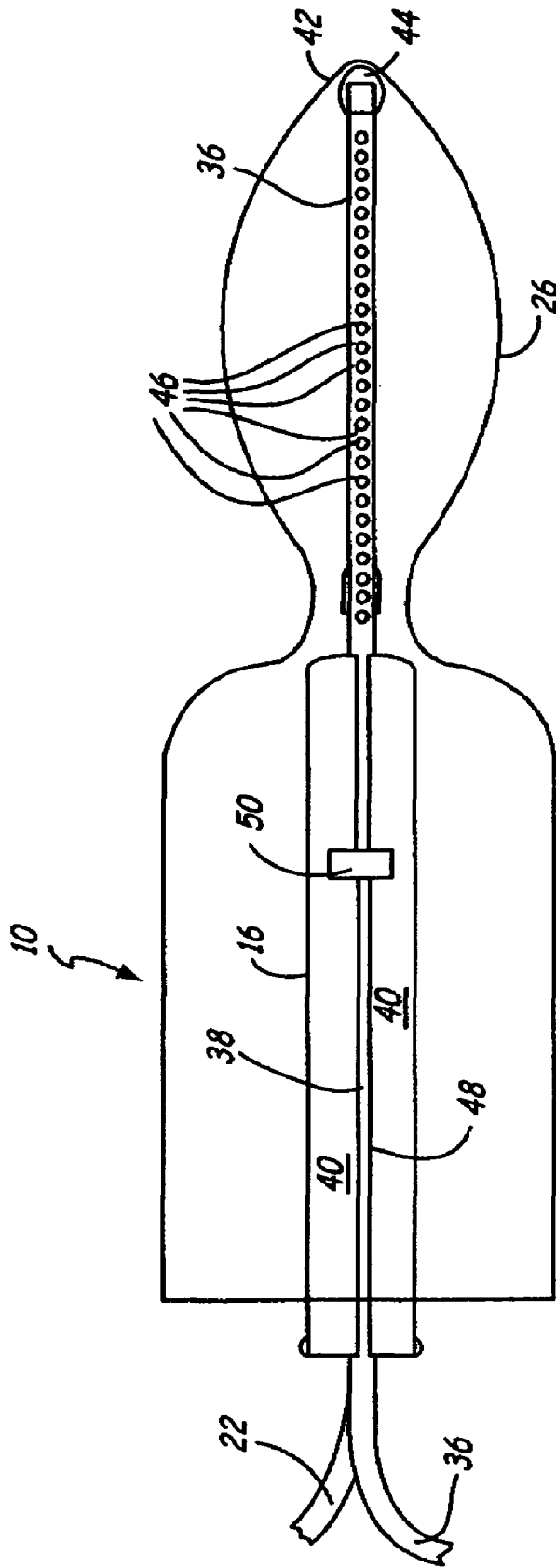
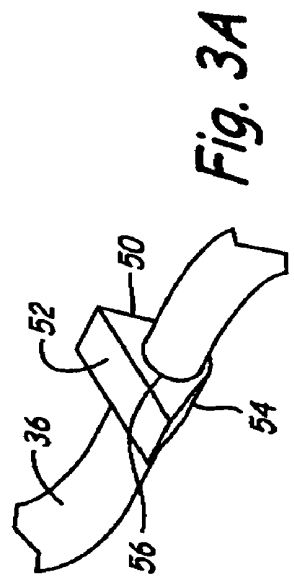
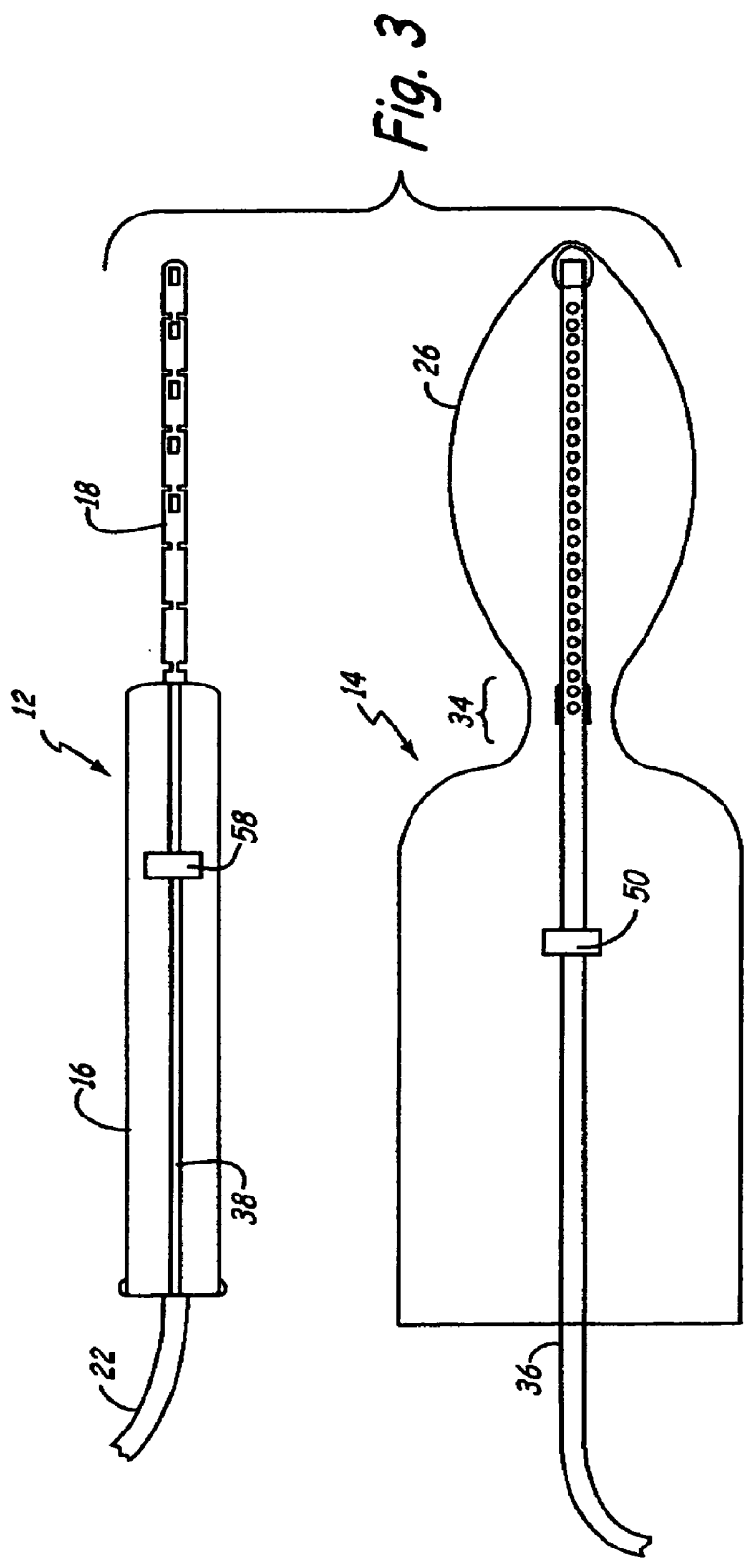


Fig. 2



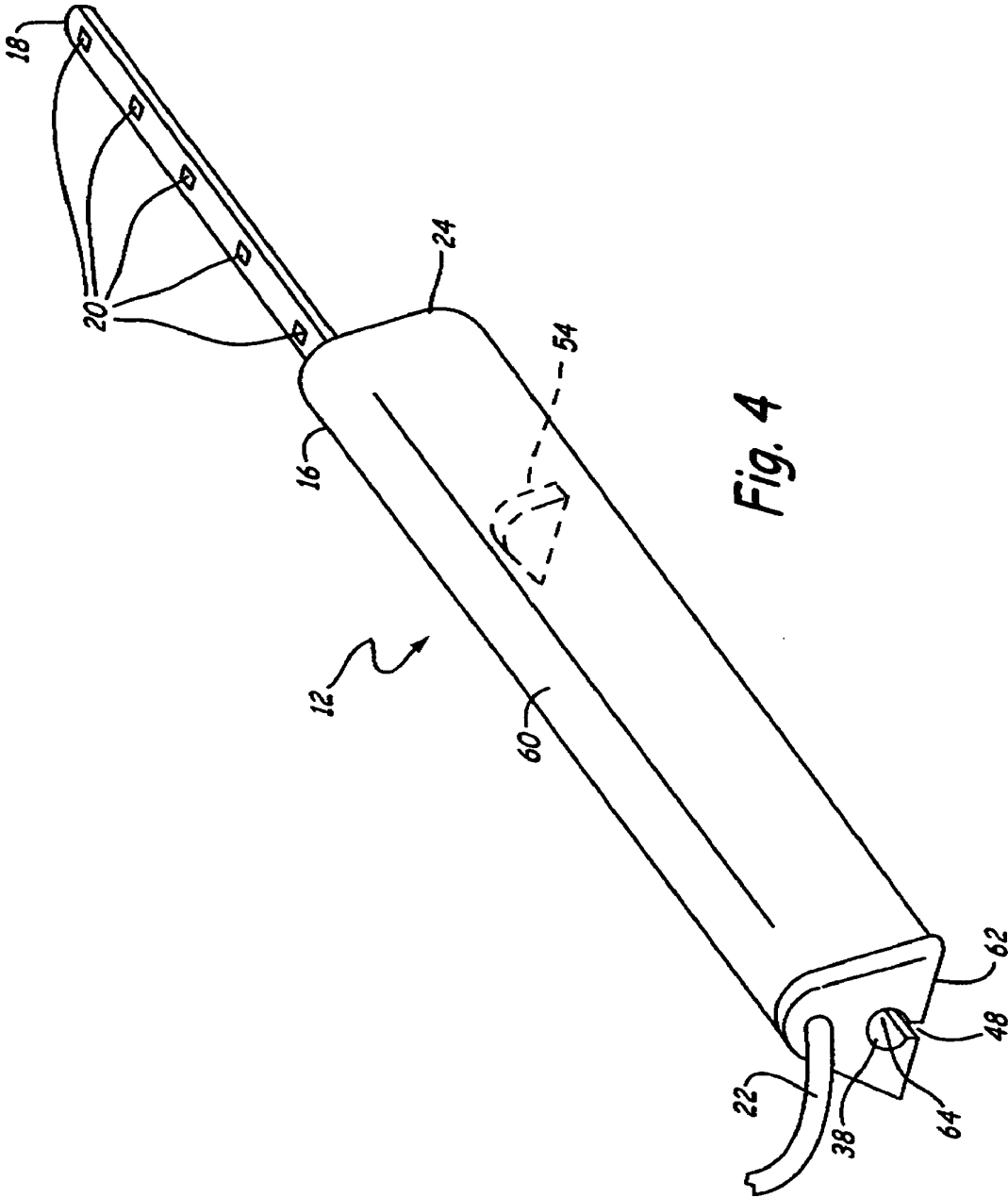
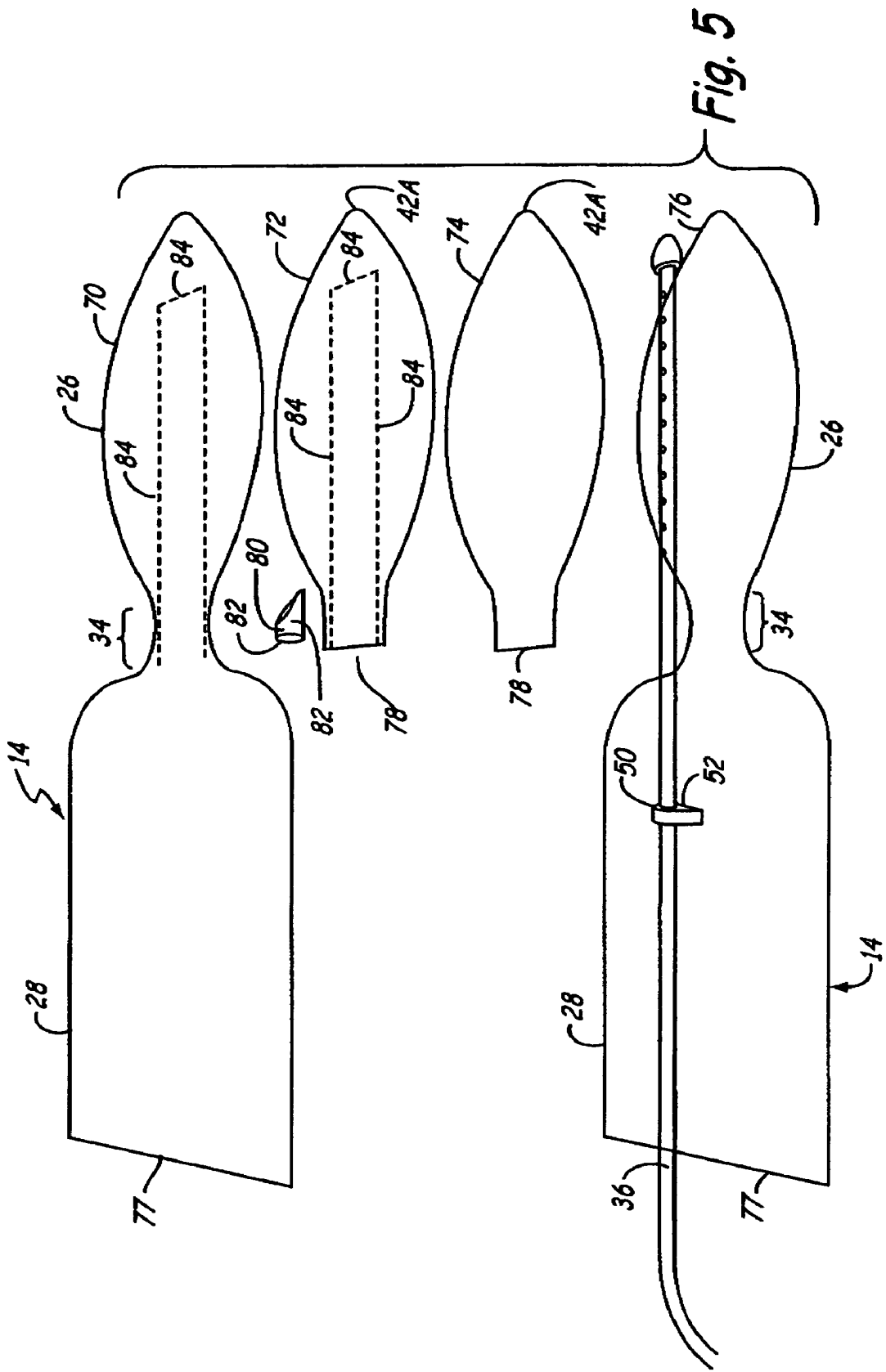


Fig. 4



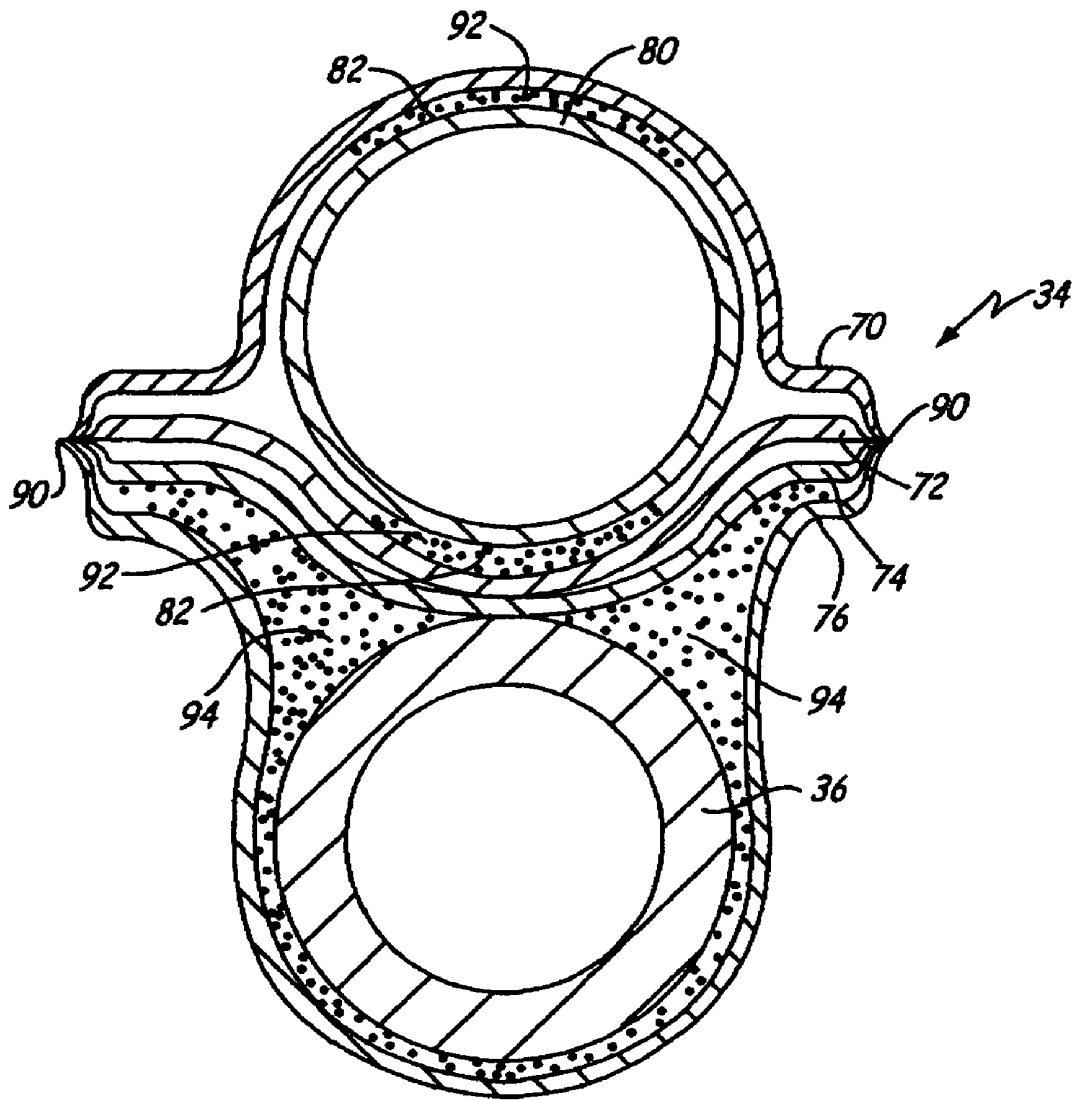


Fig. 6

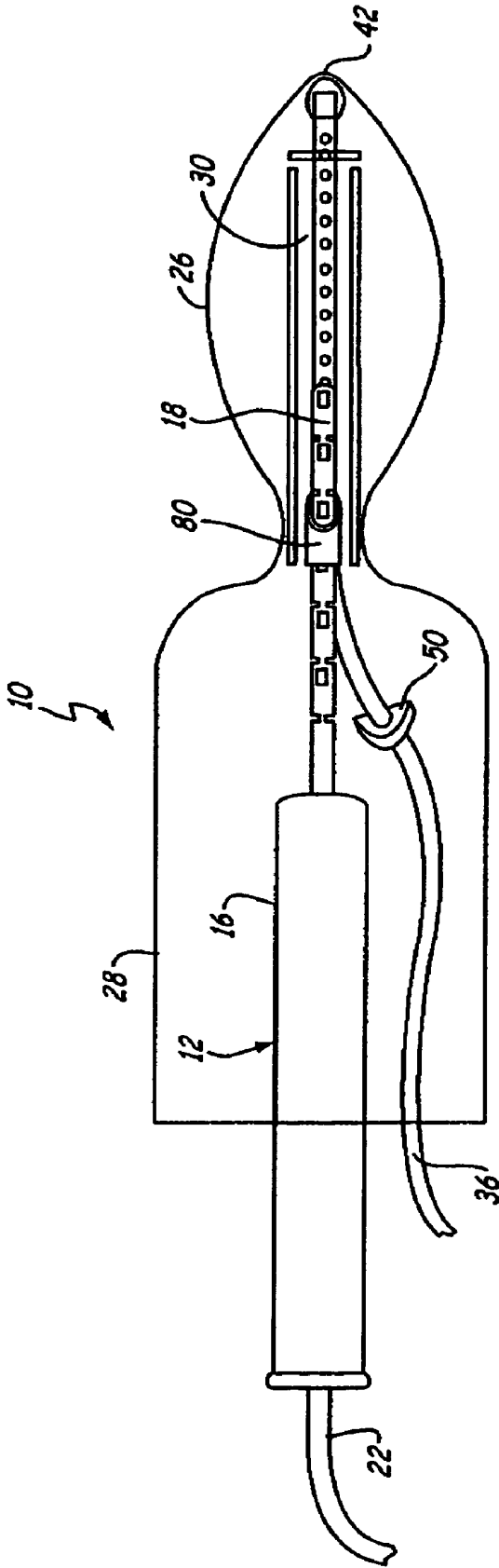


Fig. 7

## RECTAL PROBE WITH DISPOSABLE BALLOON ASSEMBLY

### CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION(S)

This application claims the benefit of Provisional Application No. 60/558,746 filed Apr. 1, 2004 for RECTAL PROBE WITH DISPOSABLE BALLOON ASSEMBLY”.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a temperature sensing probe for sensing rectal temperature of a patient. In particular, the present invention relates to a temperature sensing probe comprising a reusable handle and sensor array with a disposable balloon/sleeve assembly.

The prostate gland is a complex, chestnut-shaped organ which encircles the urethra immediately below the bladder and lies immediately adjacent the rectum. This relatively small organ, which is the most frequently diseased of all internal organs, is the site of a common affliction among older men, benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), as well as a more serious affliction, cancer. BPH is a non-malignant, bilateral nodular tumorous expansion of prostate tissue occurring mainly in the transition zone of the prostate. Left untreated, BPH causes obstruction of the urethra which usually results in increased urinary frequency, urgency, incontinence, nocturia and slow or interrupted urinary stream. BPH may also result in more severe complications, such as urinary tract infection, acute urinary retention, hydronephrosis and uraemia.

A fairly recent treatment method for BPH involves microwave thermal therapy, in which microwave energy is employed to elevate the temperature of tissue surrounding the prostatic urethra above about 45° C., thereby thermally damaging the tumorous BPH tissue. Delivery of microwave energy to tumorous prostatic tissue is generally accomplished by a microwave antenna-containing applicator, which is positioned within a body cavity adjacent the prostate gland. The microwave antenna, when energized, heats adjacent tissue due to molecular excitation and generates a radiation pattern which encompasses and necroses the tumorous prostatic tissue. The necrosed intraprostatic tissue is subsequently reabsorbed by the body, thereby relieving an individual from the symptoms of BPH.

One type of thermal therapy treatment of BPH is transurethral microwave thermotherapy. This method of treatment positions a Foley-type catheter containing a microwave antenna within the urethra adjacent to the prostate gland. The microwave antenna is energized to heat a selected volume of tumorous prostatic tissue surrounding the urethra to about 45° C. for a time sufficient to necrose the selected volume of tissue.

Due to the relatively close proximity of the rectum to the urethra, it is critically important in the course of transurethral microwave thermotherapy that the temperature of the rectum is maintained below a threshold temperature. Rectal temperatures greater than the threshold may cause damage to the rectum.

Typically, the temperature of rectal tissue adjacent the prostate is measured and monitored with a rectal temperature sensing probe. The probe supports one or more temperature sensing elements against a wall of the rectum adjacent to the prostate to provide the physician with essential information for controlling the location and degree of heat induced in the prostate. In providing a rectal probe to measure the tempera-

ture of rectal tissue adjacent the prostate, it is desirable to maintain the position of a temperature sensing device supported by the probe directly adjacent to the rectal wall to provide optimally accurate temperature readings. There is a continuing need for an improved rectal temperature sensing probe.

### BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is a temperature sensing probe assembly comprising a reusable temperature sensor/handle assembly and a balloon/sleeve assembly. The temperature sensor/handle assembly is comprised of a handle having a length, a width, a first end and a second end, and a temperature sensor strip carried by the handle and extending from the first end of the handle. The temperature sensor strip comprises a temperature sensor spaced from the first end. The temperature sensor is configured for connection to a thermometry device. The balloon/sleeve assembly comprises opposing first and second polymeric layers configured to define a balloon portion and a sleeve portion. The balloon portion further comprising a first interior space in communication with an interior space of the sleeve portion, and a second interior space isolated from the first interior space and the interior space of the sleeve portion. A first tube portion of an inflation tube is sealingly connected within the second interior space of the balloon portion and is configured with an inflation port. A second tube portion of the inflation tube extends through the sleeve portion and is configured for connection to a fluid source. The handle is reversibly positionable within the sleeve portion and the temperature sensor strip is reversibly positionable within the first interior space of the balloon portion.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top view of the rectal temperature sensing probe of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a bottom view of the rectal temperature sensing probe of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a bottom exploded view of the rectal temperature sensing probe of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged perspective view of the reusable probe handle and temperature sensor array of the rectal temperature sensing probe of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is an exploded perspective view of the single use balloon/sleeve assembly of the rectal temperature sensing probe of the present invention.

FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view of the balloon/sleeve assembly of the present invention taken along line 6-6 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 7 is a top view of the rectal temperature sensing probe of the present invention with the temperature sensing array partially inserted in a guide tube of the balloon/sleeve assembly.

While the above-identified drawing figures set forth preferred embodiments of the invention, other embodiments are also contemplated, as noted in the discussion. In all cases, this disclosure presents the present invention by way of representation and not limitation. It should be understood that numerous other modifications and embodiments can be devised by those skilled in the art which fall within the scope and spirit of the principles of this invention. It should be specifically noted that the figures have not been drawn to scale, as it has been necessary to enlarge certain portions for clarity.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

FIG. 1 is a top view of the rectal temperature sensing probe 10 of the present invention. As shown in FIG. 1, probe 10 is

generally comprised of a probe handle **12** and a balloon/sleeve assembly **14**. The probe handle **12** includes a handle body **16** and a temperature sensor array **18** which carries a plurality of longitudinally spaced temperature sensors **20**. In one embodiment, handle **16** is preferably formed of silicone in a molding process that captures a sensor cable **22**, which is electrically connected to sensor array **18**. Handle body **16** has a length of about 6.0 inches to about 6.5 inches and a nominal diameter of about 0.5 inches.

Temperature sensor array **18** is comprised of the plurality of temperature sensors **20** bonded to a flexible circuit which is housed within a protective strip. A suitable temperature sensor array is fully described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,792,070, which is incorporated herein by reference. In one embodiment, temperature sensor array **18** extends from a proximal end **24** of handle body **16**, with temperature sensor **20A** positioned approximately 1.75 inches to about 2.15 inches from proximal end **24**. Temperature sensor array **18** has a length extending from proximal end **24** of handle body **16** of about 4.4 inches to about 4.6 inches. Temperature sensors **20** are oriented and spaced to sense a temperature of a wall of the rectum facing the prostate when probe **10** is properly positioned within the rectum of a patient undergoing a heat treatment of the prostate. Sensor cable **22** is configured for connection to a rectal thermometry unit to transmit a signal representative of the sensed wall temperature, as is fully described in the aforementioned U.S. Pat. No. 5,792,070.

The balloon/sleeve assembly **14** includes a balloon portion **26**, which holds and carries temperature sensor array **18**, and a sleeve portion **28**, which enshrouds a portion of the handle body **16**. The balloon/sleeve assembly **14** is designed to be a disposable unit that can be separated from the probe handle **12** after use of probe **10**. The balloon portion **26** and sleeve portion **28** are formed from layers of a flexible, biocompatible polymer, such as polyurethane, in a manner to be more fully described. As shown in FIG. 1, the balloon portion **26** and sleeve portion **28** may be transparent to enable verification of a proper positioning of the temperature sensor array **18** within the balloon portion **26**. The balloon portion **26** is formed with a central channel **30**, which positions temperature sensor array **18** in a proper orientation relative to an outer surface **32** of the balloon portion **26**. With temperature sensor array **18** properly positioned within channel **30**, proximal end **24** of the probe handle **12** lies generally adjacent to a waist **34** of the balloon portion **26**, which is a point of transition from the balloon portion **26** to the sleeve portion **28**. Balloon portion **26** is dimensioned to fit within the rectum of a patient and engage the rectal wall when the balloon portion **26** is inflated, with the proximal end **24** of the probe handle **12** remaining external to the rectum. An inflation tube **36**, which is in communication with a fluid source, extends along the probe handle **12** and into the balloon portion **26** to inflate the balloon portion **26**. The sleeve portion **28** is sized to permit easy assembly and disassembly of the probe handle **12** from the balloon/sleeve assembly **14** and to cover the handle body **16** when probe **10** is in use.

FIG. 2 is a bottom view of the probe **10** of FIG. 1. As shown in FIG. 2, inflation tube **36** extends along the probe handle body **16** within a channel **38** formed relative to a bottom surface **40** of handle body **16**. Inflation tube **36** extends to a tip **42** of balloon portion **26** and is configured with a bulbous end **44** in contact with the tip **42**. The bulbous end **44** is fixed relative to the inflation tube **36** to provide a blunt surface in contact with an inner surface of balloon portion **26** for the safety of the patient in the event tip **42** contacts patient tissues. In one embodiment, inflation tube **36** is provided with a plurality of openings **46** within balloon portion **26** for the

introduction of an inflation medium. The plurality of openings **46** are oriented on opposite sides of inflation tube **36** to provide flexibility in a preferred plane to allow for anterior rectal wall contact of temperature sensors **20** while maintaining column strength/flexural rigidity of inflation tube **36** sufficient for insertion of balloon portion **26** into the rectum. For increased flexibility at waist **34**, the size of openings **46** at or near to waist **34** may be increased or elongated.

Channel **38** of handle body **16** is dimensioned to secure inflation tube **36** relative to handle body **16** when inflation tube **36** is positioned therein. Accordingly, the elongated opening **48** of channel **38** has a width that is less than an outer diameter of inflation tube **36** when handle body **16** is unstressed. Owing to the flexible characteristics of the silicone material forming handle body **16**, the opening **48**, however, can yield sufficiently to permit the inflation tube **36** to be press fit into and removed from channel **38** with an application of sufficient force. In the absence of such force, the edges of opening **48** slightly overlap opposite sides of inflation tube **36** to retain inflation tube **36** within channel **38**.

A longitudinal movement of inflation tube **36** relative to handle body **16** is prevented by means of a lock assembly formed between a key **50** secured to inflation tube **36** and a corresponding key slot formed in handle body **16** transverse to channel **38**. The key slot in handle body **16** is positioned to align with the key **50** when temperature sensing array **18** is fully inserted into central channel **30**. The lock assembly further ensures that a precise location of the temperature sensor array **18** within channel **30** (shown in FIG. 1) is maintained when probe **10** is in use.

FIG. 3 is an exploded bottom view of probe **10** with the probe handle **12** separated from the balloon/sleeve assembly **14**. As shown in FIG. 3, probe handle **12** is removable and separable from the balloon/sleeve assembly **14** to permit probe handle **12**, i.e., and the temperature sensing array **18**, to be reused with a new sterile balloon/sleeve assembly. The balloon/sleeve assembly **14** includes the inflation tube **36**, which is connected between layers of the polymer material forming a balloon at the waist **34** of the balloon portion **26**, as will be described in greater detail. As shown in FIG. 3A, the key **50** consists of a polymeric member having a flat edge portion **52**, a curved edge portion **54** and a hole **56** passing through the member to permit key **50** to be slid into a position on inflation tube **36** corresponding to key slot **58** in handle body **16**. Once key **50** is properly positioned, it is secured to inflation tube **36** by a suitable adhesive.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged perspective view of the probe handle **12**, which shows that the handle body **16** is configured with a curved upper surface **60** and a flat lower surface **62**. This configuration of handle body **16** facilitates a proper orientation of the probe **10** relative to a patient and monitoring of the proper orientation during use. In a proper orientation, the flat lower surface **62** of handle body **16** contacts a treatment surface occupied by a patient in the supine position and is maintained in contact with the treatment surface by the weight of the patient on the handle body **16**. The configuration of handle body **16** thus inhibits any twisting of probe **10** by minor changes of position of the patient on the treatment surface.

As shown in FIG. 4, temperature sensor array **18** extends from the proximal end **24** of handle body **16** at an upper extent of handle body **16**, and sensor cable **22** extends rearward of handle body **16** at a comparable upper extent. Temperature sensor array **18** is oriented in a plane that is generally parallel with the flat lower surface **62** of handle body **16**, with sensors **20** oriented on the upper surface of the flexible circuit.

Channel 38 is generally centrally located relative to the flat lower surface 62. Channel 38 is defined by a curved inner wall 64 which has an inner diameter that approximates the outer diameter of the inflation tube 36 for retaining the inflation tube 36 in channel 38. The width of opening 48 of channel 38 is smaller than the inner diameter of inner wall 64, which aids in the retention of inflation tube 36 within channel 38. As shown in phantom, the key slot 54 is dimensioned and configured complimentary to key 50 to form a friction fit with key 50 when it is position within key slot 54.

FIG. 5 is an exploded view of the balloon/sleeve assembly 14. As shown in FIG. 5, in one embodiment, the balloon/sleeve assembly 14 is comprised of a plurality of overlying and interconnected layers 70, 72, 74 and 76 which are connected together along a common peripheral edge such as by heat welding. Layers 70 and 76 are each a unitary layer of polymer that defines the top and bottom layers, respectively, of balloon portion 26 and the sleeve portion 28 of the balloon/sleeve assembly 14. Edge portion 77 of layers 70 and 76 remain unconnected for inserting and removing probe handle 12 from the balloon/sleeve assembly 14. Layers 72 and 74 are also each a unitary layer of polymer that is a postage stamp of balloon portion 26, extending from a first end 42A to an opposite end 78 corresponding to waist 34 of balloon/sleeve assembly 14.

Positioned between layers 70 and 72 adjacent to end 78 of layer 72 is a guide tube 80, which facilitates insertion of the temperature sensor array 18 into the balloon portion 26. Guide tube 80 is formed of a flexible polymer, such a Fluorinated Ethylene Plastic or Fluorinated Ethylene Propylene and is skived along a portion of the tube wall facing layer 70 to minimize the amount of material of balloon portion 26 that gets positioned within a patient, i.e., for patient comfort. Opposing edge portions 82 of guide tube 80 are secured to the peripheral edge regions of layers 70 and 72 to hold guide tube 80 in place. End 78 of layer 72 is left unconnected relative to layer 70, such that guide tube 80 separates layers 70 and 72 slightly for easy insertion of the temperature sensor array 18. Layers 70 and 72 are further interconnected by heat welding along seal lines 84 which define channel 30 for the temperature sensor array 18.

Positioned between layers 74 and 76 is the inflation tube 36. Inflation tube 36 is oriented with the flat edge portion 52 of key 50 facing layer 76 and the axis of openings 46 perpendicular to the flat edge portion 52 of key 50. Inflation tube 36 is sealingly connected between layers 74 and 76 at the waist 34 and along end 78. Layers 74 and 76 thereby define an inflatable balloon, which when inflated results in layer 74 bearing directly against layer 72 and indirectly against layer 70 to urge the temperature sensor array 18 in close proximity to the wall of the rectum to be monitored. Layer 76 in turn bears against an opposite rectal wall portion to secure the balloon portion 26 in place in the rectum. In a preferred embodiment layers 70, 72, 74 and 76 have a wall thickness of about 0.2 mil (i.e., about 0.002 inches), which provides for good heat transfer across layer 70 to sensors 20 of the temperature sensor array 18.

In an alternate embodiment, balloon/sleeve assembly 14 may comprise only three layers consisting of layers 70, 72 and 76 that are connected in the manner described above. In such an embodiment, layers 70 and 72 are secured together about the perimeter and guide tube 80 is secured therebetween as previously described. Layers 70 and 72 are then heat sealed along seal lines 84 to form channel 30. Thereafter, inflation tube is positioned between layers 76 and 72 and

secured by sealing layer 76 to layer 72 about the perimeter and by sealing the side of layer 72 facing layer 76 to layer 76 along end 78.

In yet another alternate embodiment, layer 72 may be sized and shaped to define channel 30 and sealed about its perimeter to layer 70, with guide tube 80 positioned as previously described between layers 70 and 72. Inflation tube is positioned between layers 70 and 76 and secured by sealing layer 70 to layer 76 about the perimeter and by sealing the side of layer 70 facing layer 76 to layer 76 along end 78.

FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view of the waist 34 of balloon portion 26, which shows the peripheral heat welds 90 that interconnect peripheral edge portions of layers 70, 72, 74 and 76. FIG. 6 also shows adhesive layers 92, which secure the opposing edge portions 82 of guide tube 80 to layers 70 and 72. Finally, adhesive layer 94 is shown interconnecting end 78 of layer 74 to layer 76 and inflation tube 36 to create a fluid-tight seal at end 78 and thereby form a balloon between layers 74 and 76 that is inflatable and deflatable via the inflation tube 36.

FIG. 7 is a top view of probe handle 12 being introduced into balloon/sleeve assembly 14 for assembly of rectal temperature sensing probe 10. As shown in FIG. 7, probe handle 12 is inserted through sleeve portion 28 and temperature sensor array 18 is positioned within guide tube 80. Sleeve portion 28 may be folded back over balloon portion 26 to facilitate locating guide tube 80. In one embodiment, guide tube 80 is formed from a distinct color that is readily detectable through the transparent material forming balloon/sleeve assembly 14, which makes the opening for temperature sensor array 18 into channel 30 easy to identify. Probe handle 12 is advanced until temperature sensor array 18 is completely within channel 30, which occurs when key 50 on inflation tube 36 is aligned with the key slot 54 in the handle body 16. Inflation tube 36 is then press fit through opening 48 and into channel 38 along the length of handle body 16 and key 50 is press fit into key slot 54. With sleeve 28 covering handle body 16, temperature sensing probe 10 is then ready for insertion and use in a patient.

Inflation tube 36 is flexible but with sufficient longitudinal stiffness to enable advancement of tip 42 of balloon portion 26 into the desired position within the rectum of a patient. Balloon portion 26 is sized to engage the rectal wall when an inflation medium is introduced via the inflation tube 36 between layers 74 and 76 of the balloon portion 26. With the inflation medium evacuated from the balloon formed by layers 74 and 76, balloon portion 26 reduces to a more compact dimension for easy removal of the balloon portion 26 from the patient. To remove the balloon/sleeve assembly 14 from the probe handle 12, the sleeve portion 28 is everted over balloon portion 26 to isolate the contaminated surface of balloon portion 26. Inflation tube 36 and key 50 are then easily withdrawn from the channel 38 and key slot 58 in the handle body 16. With the inflation tube 36 separated from the handle body 16, probe handle 12 easily slides out of the balloon/sleeve assembly for subsequent re-use with a new balloon/sleeve assembly.

Although the present invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments, workers skilled in the art will recognize that changes may be made in form and detail without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

The invention claimed is:

1. A temperature sensing probe assembly comprising:
  - a handle having a length, a width, a first end and a second end;
  - a temperature sensor strip carried by the handle and extending from the first end of the handle, the temperature

sensor strip comprising a temperature sensor spaced from the first end, the temperature sensor configured for connection to a thermometry device;

a balloon-and-sleeve assembly comprising:

opposing first and second layers of a flexible polymeric material configured to define a balloon and a sleeve that extends longitudinally from the balloon, the balloon further comprising a first interior space in communication with an interior space of the sleeve, and a second interior space isolated from the first interior space and from the interior space of the sleeve; and an inflation tube having a first tube portion sealingly connected within the second interior space of the balloon, the first tube portion configured with an inflation port, the inflation tube further having a second tube portion extending through the interior space of the sleeve and being configured for connection to a fluid source; and wherein the handle is reversibly positionable within the sleeve and the temperature sensor strip is reversibly positionable within the first interior space of the balloon.

2. The temperature sensing probe assembly of claim 1 wherein the balloon comprises a third polymeric layer having a perimeter edge corresponding to a perimeter of the balloon and an end portion facing the sleeve, the perimeter edge connected to the first and second polymeric layers of the balloon, the first and third polymeric layers defining the first interior space of the balloon and the second and third polymeric layers defining the second interior space of the balloon.

3. The temperature sensing probe assembly of claim 2 wherein the first and third layers of the balloon are configured to define a temperature sensor channel, the temperature sensor channel in communication with the interior space of the sleeve.

4. The temperature sensing probe assembly of claim 3 wherein the balloon comprises a waist at a point of transition from the balloon to the sleeve, wherein the first interior space of the balloon comprises an opening defined by an unconnected portion of each of the first and third polymeric layers corresponding to the waist of the balloon, and wherein the opening comprises a guide tube connected to the first and third polymeric layers.

5. The temperature sensing probe assembly of claim 1 wherein the handle further comprises a channel extending along the length of the handle and an opening in a surface of the handle for access to the channel, the channel having an inner diameter that approximates an outer diameter of the second tube portion to receive and removably retain a length of the second tube portion, wherein the opening has a width less than a width of the channel.

6. The temperature sensing probe assembly of claim 5 wherein the handle comprises a curved upper surface and a planar lower surface, the opening being in the flat lower surface.

7. The temperature sensing probe assembly of claim 6 wherein the handle further comprises a key slot in the surface of the handle and wherein the inflation tube further comprises a key on the second tube portion having a configuration complimentary to the key slot, the key being mateable with the key slot when the temperature sensor strip is properly located in the first interior space and the second tube portion is positioned in the channel.

8. The temperature sensing probe assembly of claim 7 wherein the key slot is in the lower surface of the handle.

9. A temperature sensing probe assembly comprising:  
a handle having a length, a width, a first end and a second end;

a temperature sensor strip carried by the handle and extending from the first end of the handle, the temperature sensor strip comprising a temperature sensor spaced from the first end, the temperature sensor configured for connection to a thermometry device;

a balloon-and-sleeve assembly comprising:

opposing first and second layers of a flexible polymeric material configured to define a balloon and a sleeve that extends longitudinally from the balloon, the balloon further comprising a first interior space in communication with an interior space of the sleeve, and a second interior space isolated from the first interior space and from the interior space of the sleeve,

wherein the balloon comprises a third polymeric layer having a perimeter edge corresponding to a perimeter of the balloon and an end portion facing the sleeve, the perimeter edge connected to the first and second polymeric layers of the balloon, the first and third polymeric layers defining the first interior space of the balloon and the second and third polymeric layers defining the second interior space of the balloon,

wherein the first and third layers of the balloon are configured to define a temperature sensor channel, the temperature sensor channel in communication with the interior space of the sleeve, and

wherein the temperature sensor channel is defined by first and second spaced heat seal lines connecting opposing surfaces of the first and third layers, the temperature sensor channel being centrally positioned on the balloon; and

an inflation tube having a first tube portion sealingly connected within the second interior space of the balloon, the first tube portion configured with an inflation port, the inflation tube further having a second tube portion extending through the interior space of the sleeve and being configured for connection to a fluid source,

wherein the handle is reversibly positionable within the sleeve and the temperature sensor strip is reversibly positionable within the first interior space of the balloon.

10. A temperature sensing probe assembly comprising:

a handle having a length, a width, a first end and a second end;

a temperature sensor strip carried by the handle and extending from the first end of the handle, the temperature sensor strip comprising a temperature sensor spaced from the first end, the temperature sensor configured for connection to a thermometry device;

a balloon-and-sleeve assembly comprising:

opposing first and second layers of a flexible polymeric material to define a balloon and a sleeve that extends longitudinally from the balloon, the balloon further comprising a first interior space in communication with an interior space of the sleeve, and a second interior space isolated from the first interior space and from the interior space of the sleeve,

wherein the balloon comprises third and fourth polymeric layers each having a perimeter edge connected to the first and second polymeric layers, the first and third layers defining the first interior space of the balloon and the second and fourth layers defining the second interior space of the balloon; and

an inflation tube having a first tube portion sealingly connected within the second interior space of the balloon, the first tube portion configured with an inflation port,

the inflation tube further having a second tube portion extending through the interior space of the sleeve and movable within the interior space of the sleeve independent of the respective layers defining the sleeve, wherein the second tube portion is configured for connection to a fluid source,

wherein the handle is reversibly positionable within the sleeve and the temperature sensor strip is reversibly positionable within the first interior space of the balloon.

**11.** A balloon-and-sleeve assembly for use with a temperature sensing probe comprised of a handle and a temperature sensor strip extending from one end of the handle, the balloon-and-sleeve assembly comprising:

opposing first and second polymeric layers configured to define a balloon and a sleeve that extends longitudinally from the balloon, the balloon comprising a first enclosed interior space and a second enclosed interior space, the first interior space in communication with an interior space of the sleeve and configured to contain the temperature sensor strip when the handle is positioned in the interior space of the sleeve, the second interior space isolated from the first interior space and the interior space of the sleeve; and

an inflation tube having a first tube portion sealingly connected within the second interior space of the balloon, the first tube portion configured with an inflation port, the inflation tube further having a second tube portion extending through the interior space of the sleeve and being configured for connection to a fluid source.

**12.** The balloon-and-sleeve assembly of claim **11** wherein the sleeve has a length sufficient to cover the handle when the temperature sensor strip is positioned in the first interior space.

**13.** The balloon-and-sleeve assembly of claim **11** wherein the balloon comprises a third polymeric layer having a perimeter edge corresponding to a perimeter of the balloon and an end portion facing the sleeve, the perimeter edge connected to the first and second polymeric layers of the balloon, the first and third polymeric layers defining the first interior space of the balloon and the second and third polymeric layers defining the second interior space of the balloon.

**14.** The balloon-and-sleeve assembly of claim **13** wherein the inflation tube is secured between facing surface portions of the second and third polymeric layers.

**15.** The balloon-and-sleeve assembly of claim **13** and further comprising a guide tube positioned between the first and third layers adjacent to the end portion of the third polymeric layer, the guide tube secured to facing portions of the first and third polymeric layers, the guide tube facilitating insertion of

the temperature sensor strip between the first and third polymeric layers and into the first interior space.

**16.** The balloon-and-sleeve assembly of claim **11** wherein the balloon comprises third and fourth polymeric layers having a perimeter edge connected to the first and second polymeric layers, the first and third layers defining the first interior space of the balloon and the second and fourth layers defining the second interior space of the balloon.

**17.** The balloon-and-sleeve assembly of claim **16** wherein the inflation tube is secured between facing surface portions of the second and fourth polymeric layers.

**18.** A balloon-and-sleeve assembly for use with a temperature sensing probe comprised of a handle and a temperature sensor strip extending from one end of the handle, the balloon-and-sleeve assembly comprising:

opposing first and second polymeric layers configured to define a balloon and a sleeve that extends longitudinally from the balloon, the balloon comprising a first enclosed interior space and a second enclosed interior space, the first interior space in communication with an interior space of the sleeve and configured to contain the temperature sensor strip when the handle is positioned in the interior space of the sleeve, the second interior space isolated from the first interior space and from the interior space of the sleeve,

wherein the balloon comprises a third polymeric layer having a perimeter edge corresponding to a perimeter of the balloon and an end portion facing the sleeve, the perimeter edge portion connected to the first and second polymeric layers of the balloon, the first and third polymeric layers defining the first interior space of the balloon and the second and third polymeric layers defining the second interior space of the balloon,

wherein the balloon further comprises a central channel formed in the first interior space, the central channel comprising spaced first and second seal lines connecting facing surfaces of the first and third polymeric layers, the central channel in communication with the interior of the sleeve for receiving and locating the temperature sensor strip in the first interior space of the balloon; and

an inflation tube having a first tube portion sealingly connected within the second interior space of the balloon, the first tube portion configured with an inflation port, the inflation tube further having a second tube portion extending through the interior space of the sleeve and being configured for connection to a fluid source.

\* \* \* \* \*

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摘要(译)

可重复使用的温度传感探针组件包括从手柄的一端延伸的温度传感器条带。温度传感器条带有至少一个温度传感器，用于测量人体（例如直肠）的体腔内的温度。手柄/温度传感器条带可以可逆地定位在由球囊部分和套管部分组成的整体球囊/套管组件内。球囊部分包括第一内部空间和第二内部空间，第一内部空间构造成保持温度传感器，第二内部空间与第一内部空间分开，第二内部空间构造成用于充气。充气管具有密封在球囊部分的第二内部空间内的一部分和延伸穿过套管部分以连接到流体源的第二部分。

