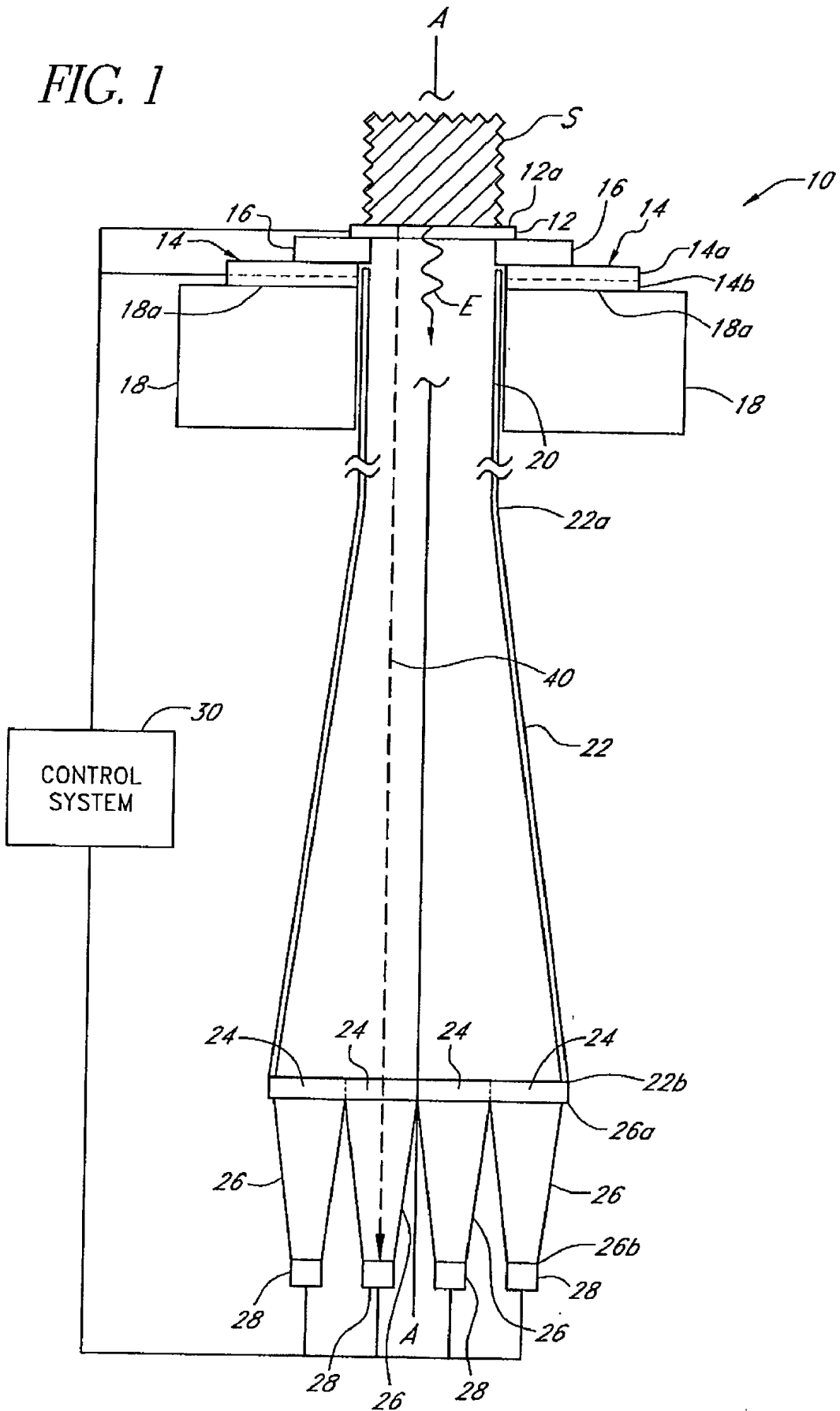


FIG. 1



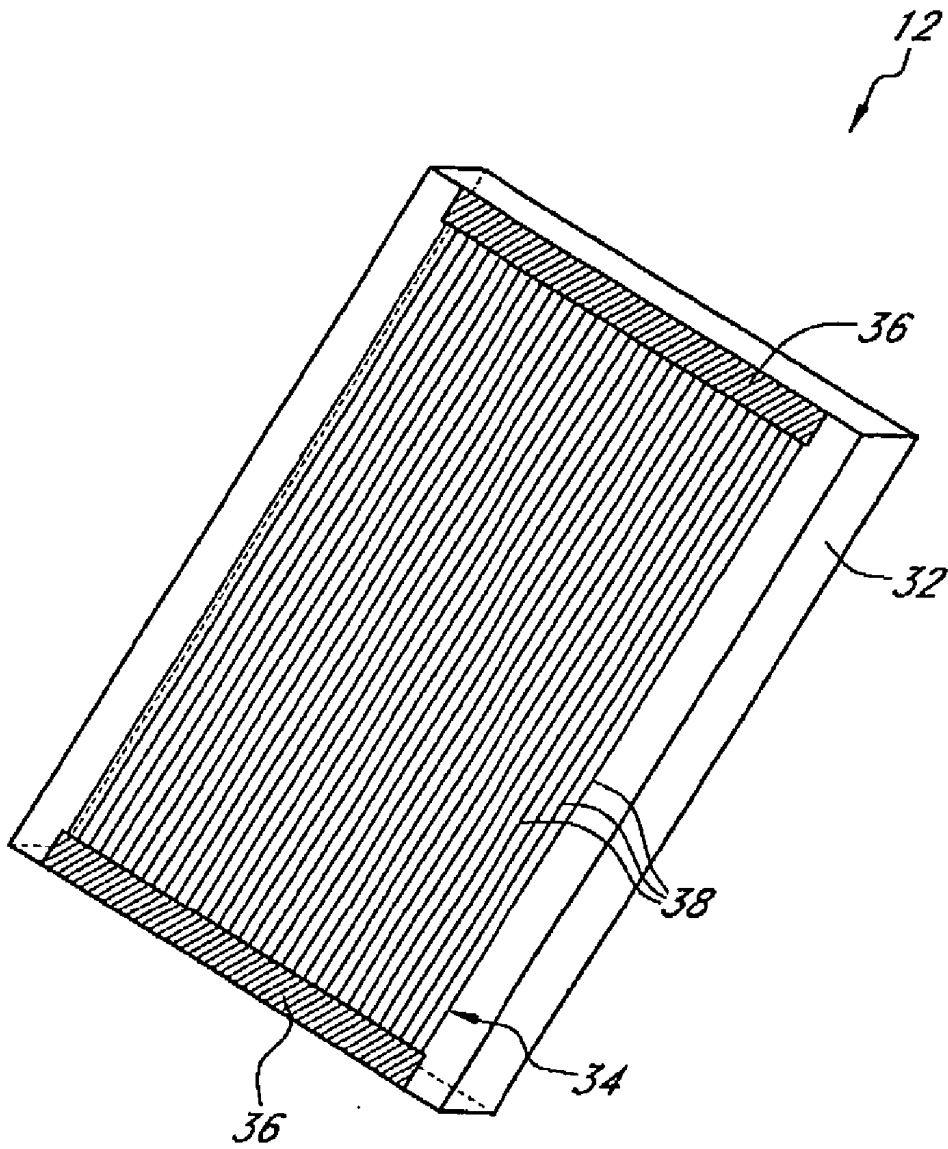


FIG. 2

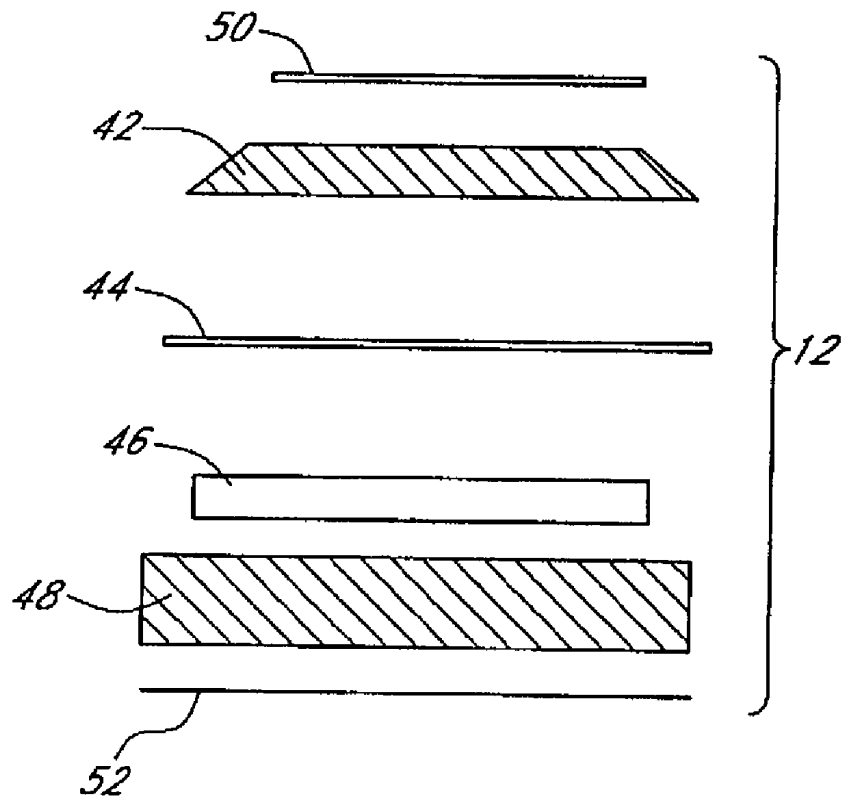


FIG. 3

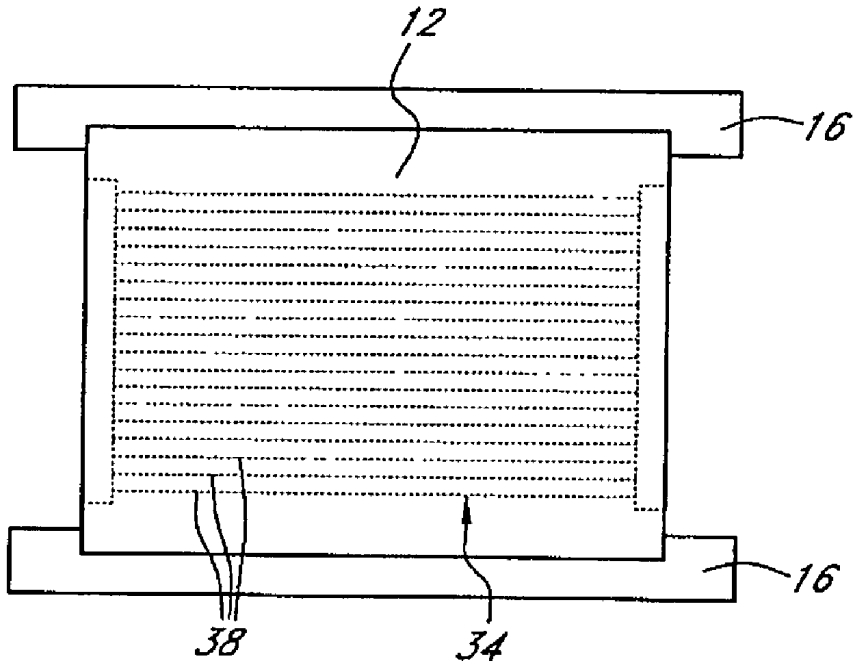


FIG. 4

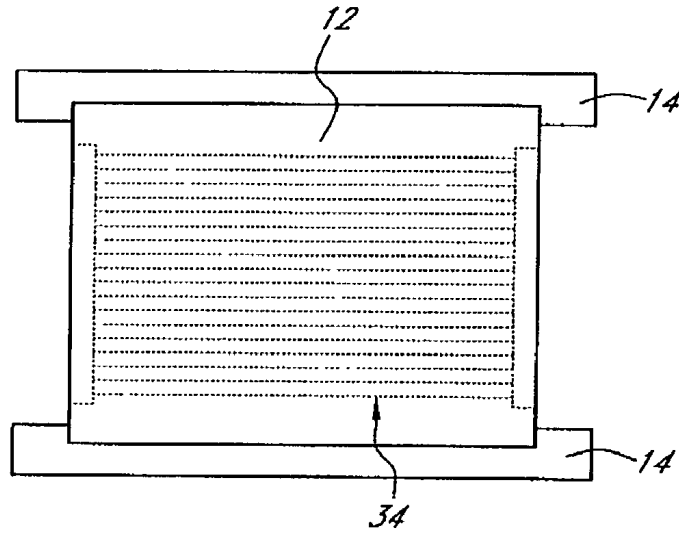


FIG. 5

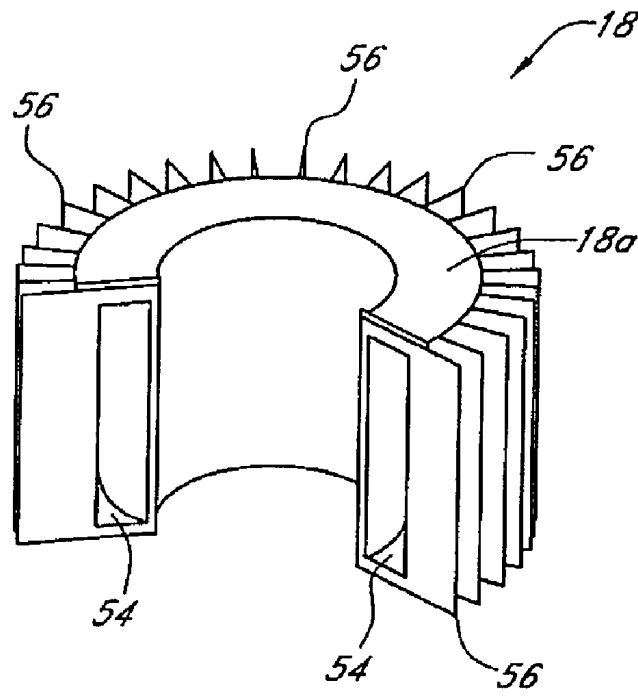


FIG. 6

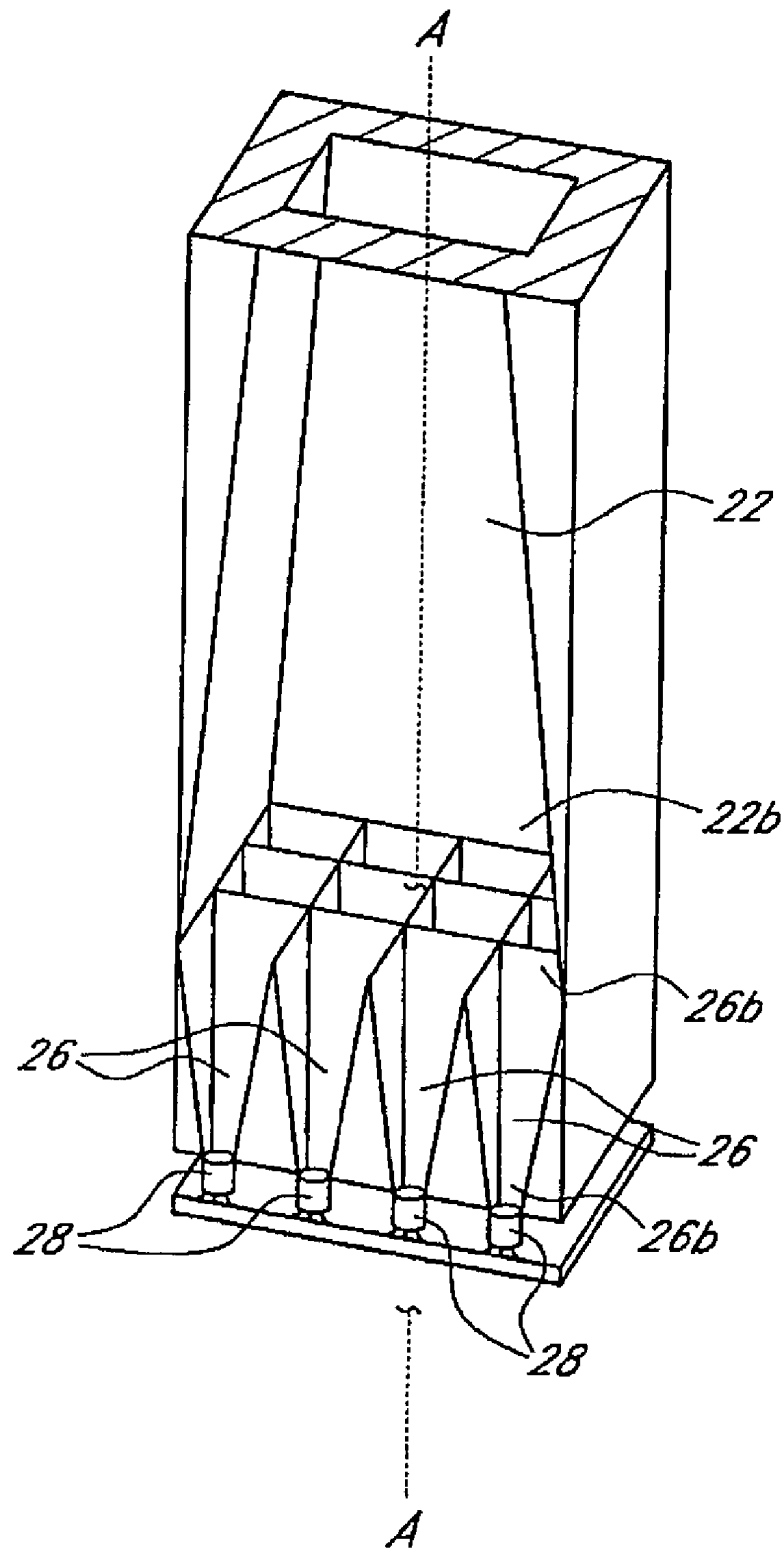


FIG. 6A

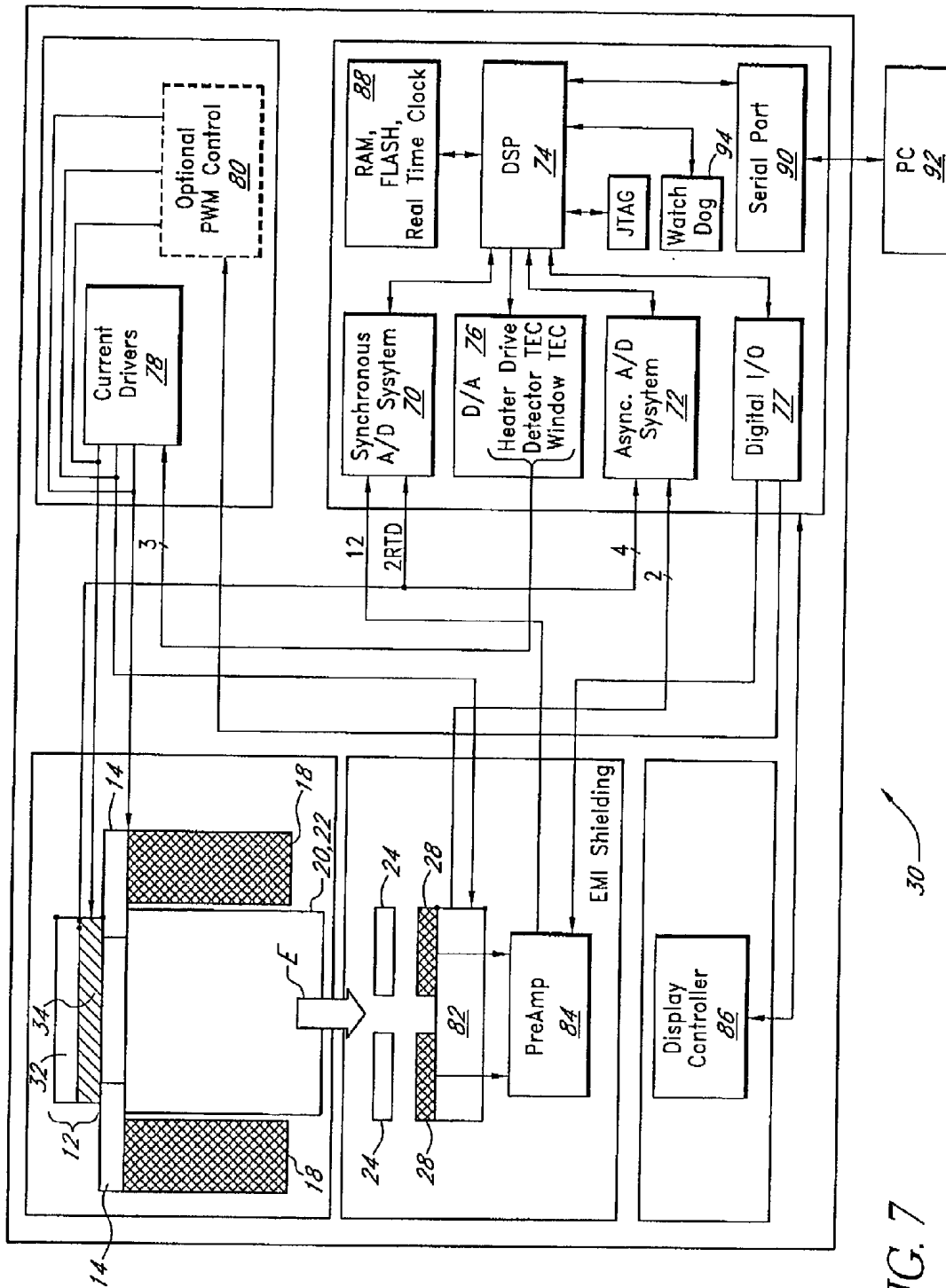
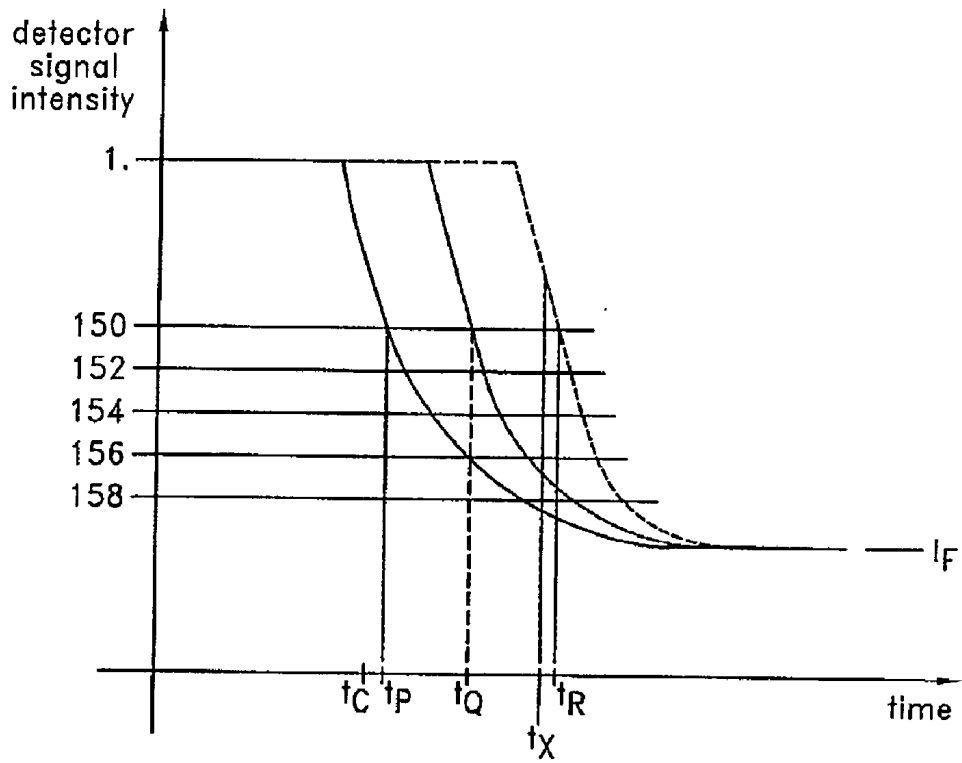
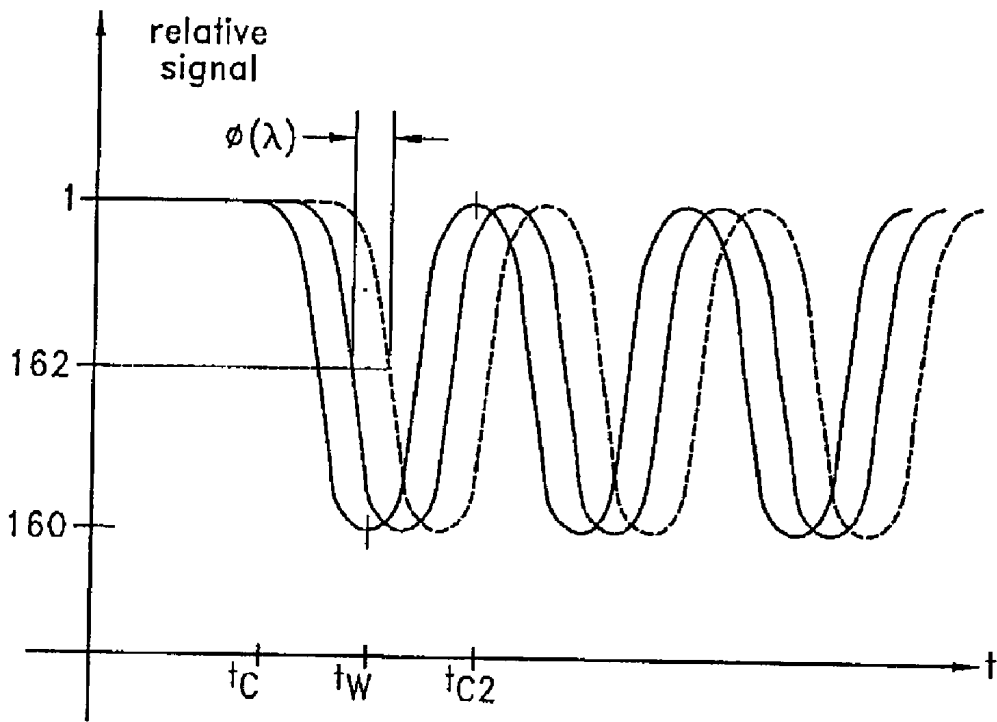


FIG. 7



P ——— surface tissue reference λ signal
 Q ——— analytical signal
 R - - - - - deep tissue reference λ signal

FIG. 8



J — surface tissue reference signal
K — analytical signal
L - - - - - deep tissue reference signal

FIG. 9

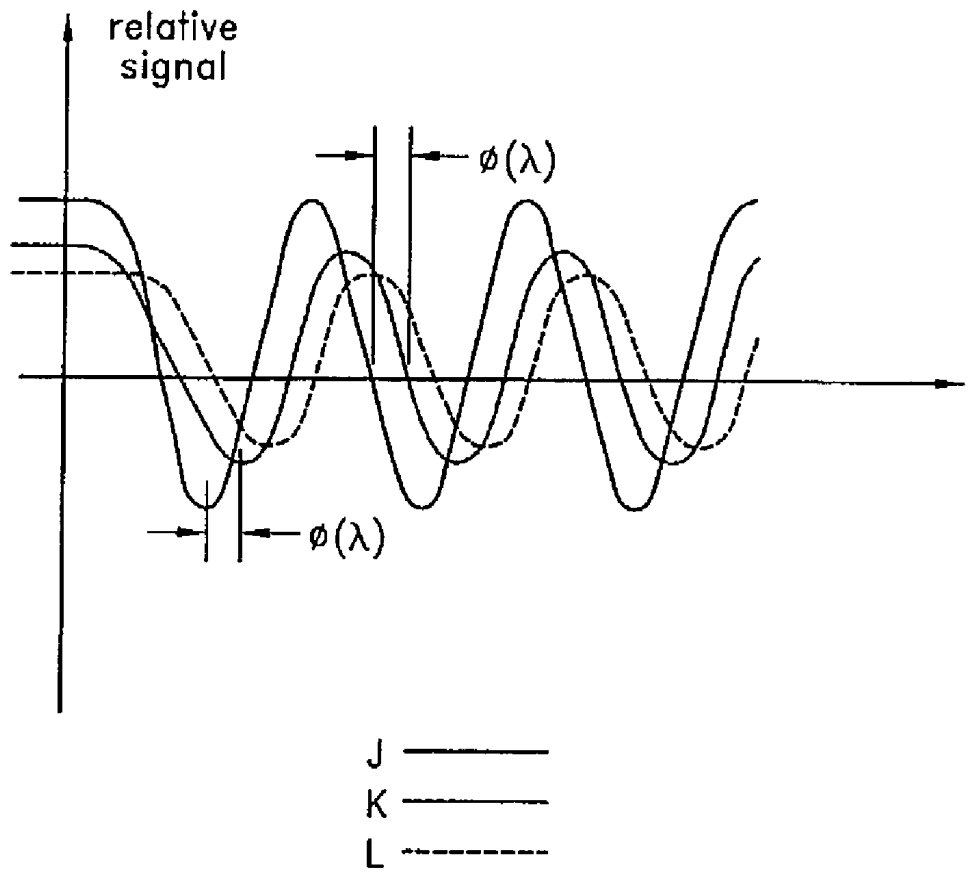


FIG. 10

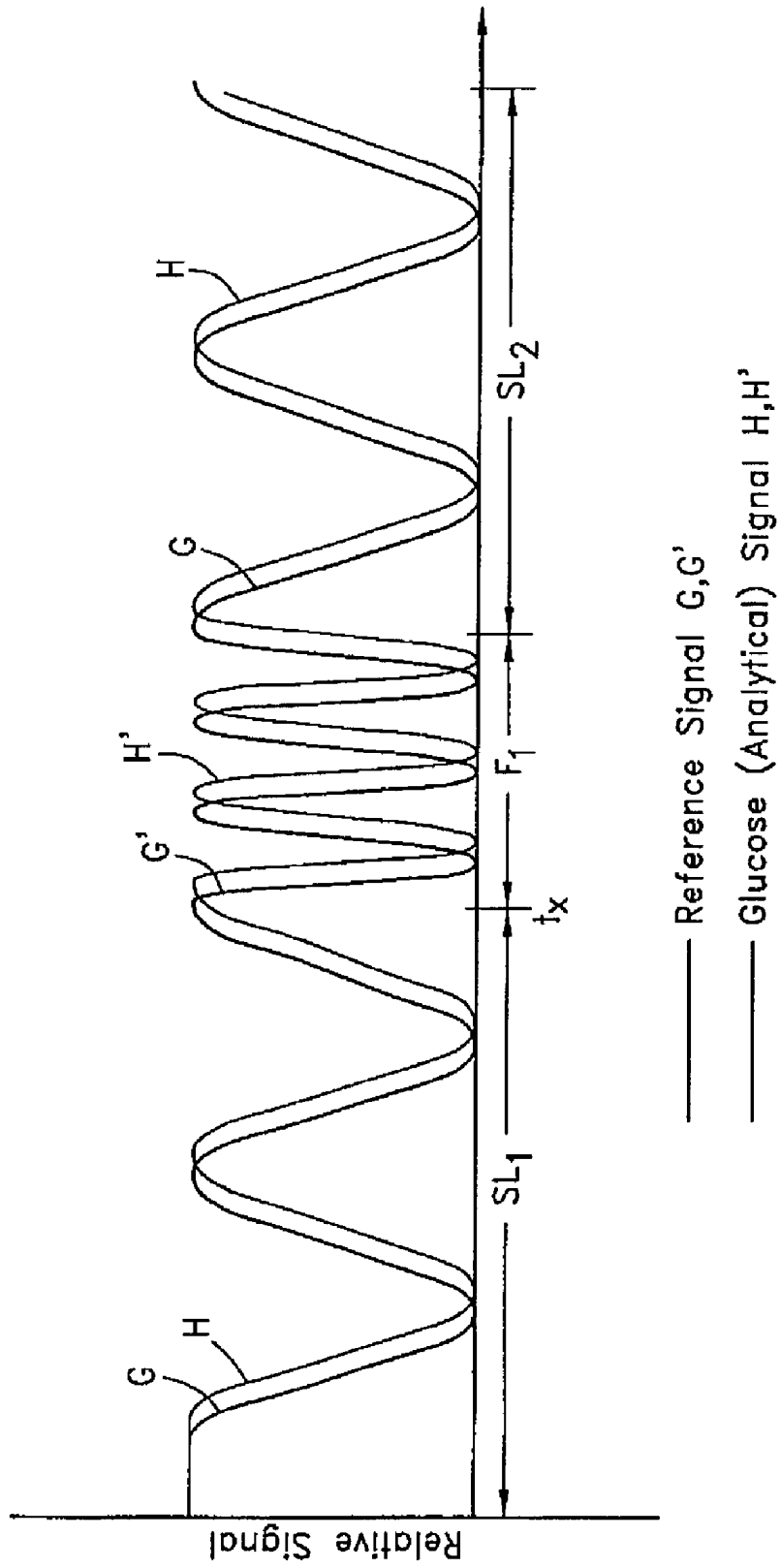


FIG. 11

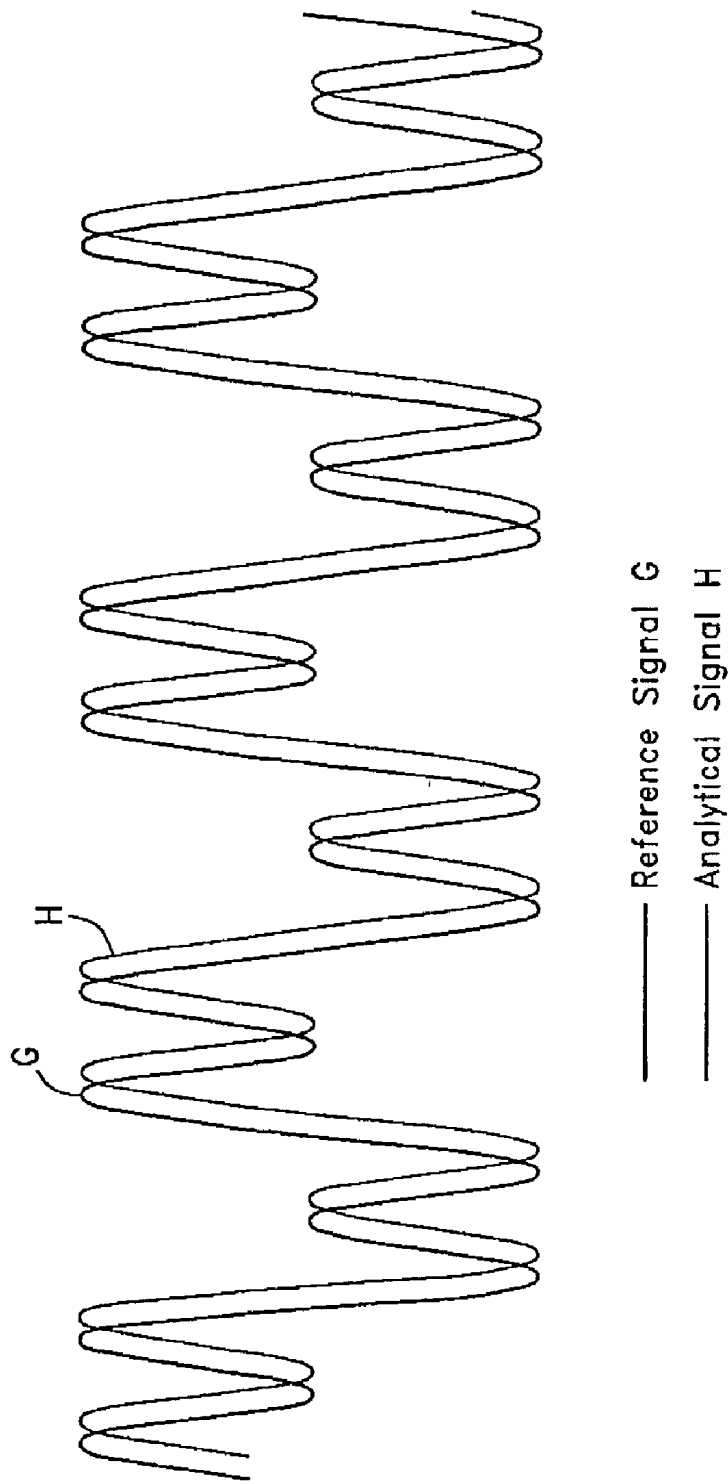


FIG. 12

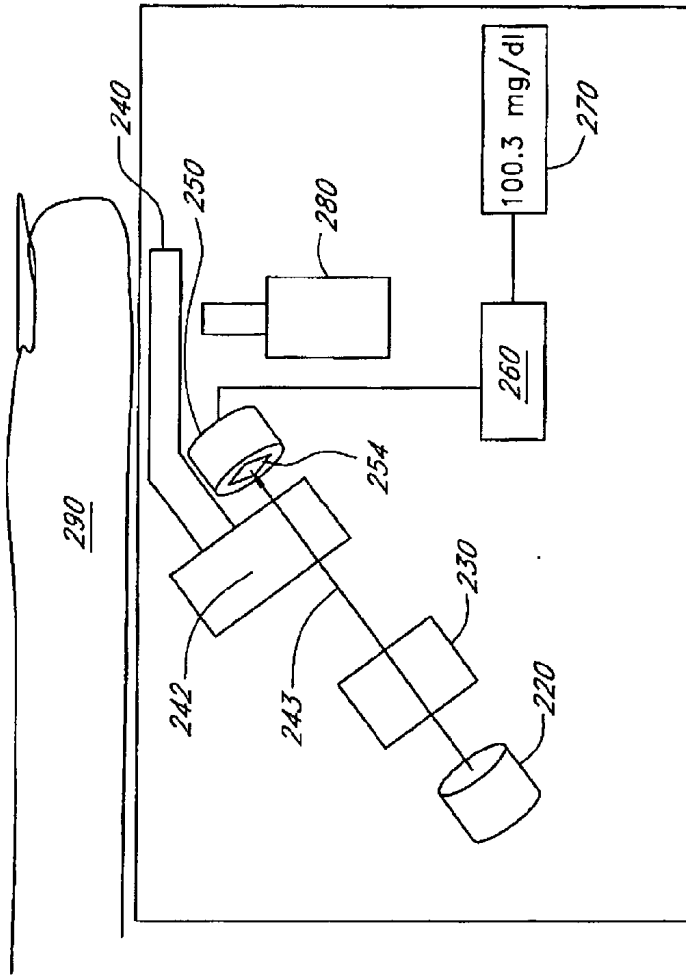


FIG. 13

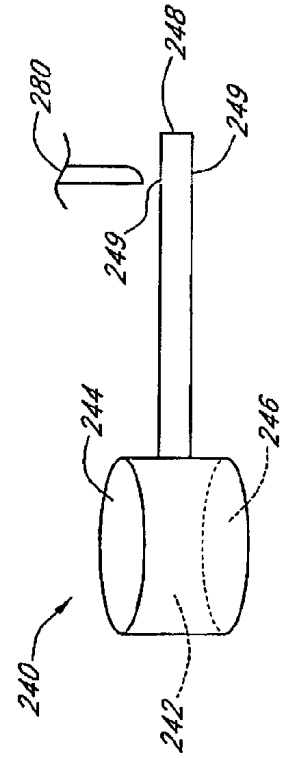


FIG. 14

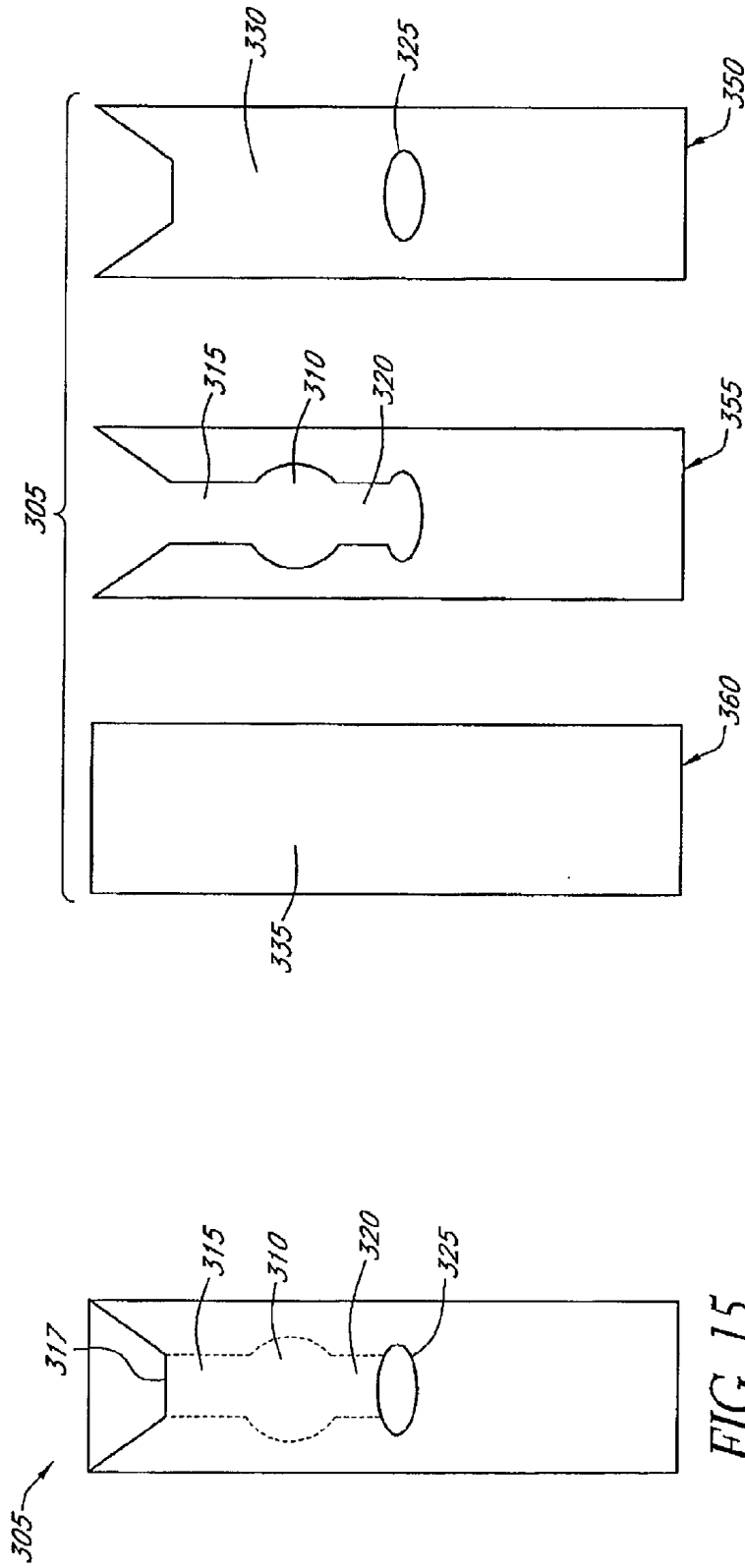


FIG. 16

FIG. 15

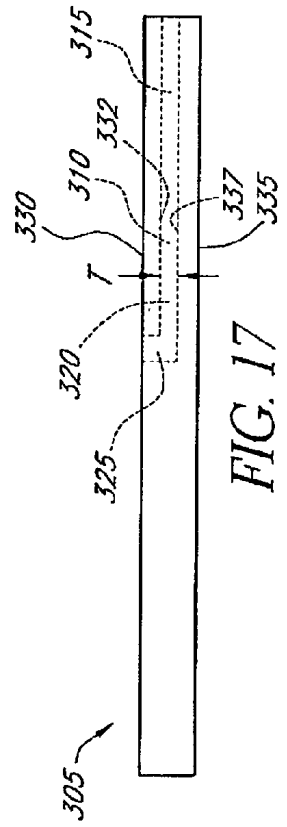


FIG. 17

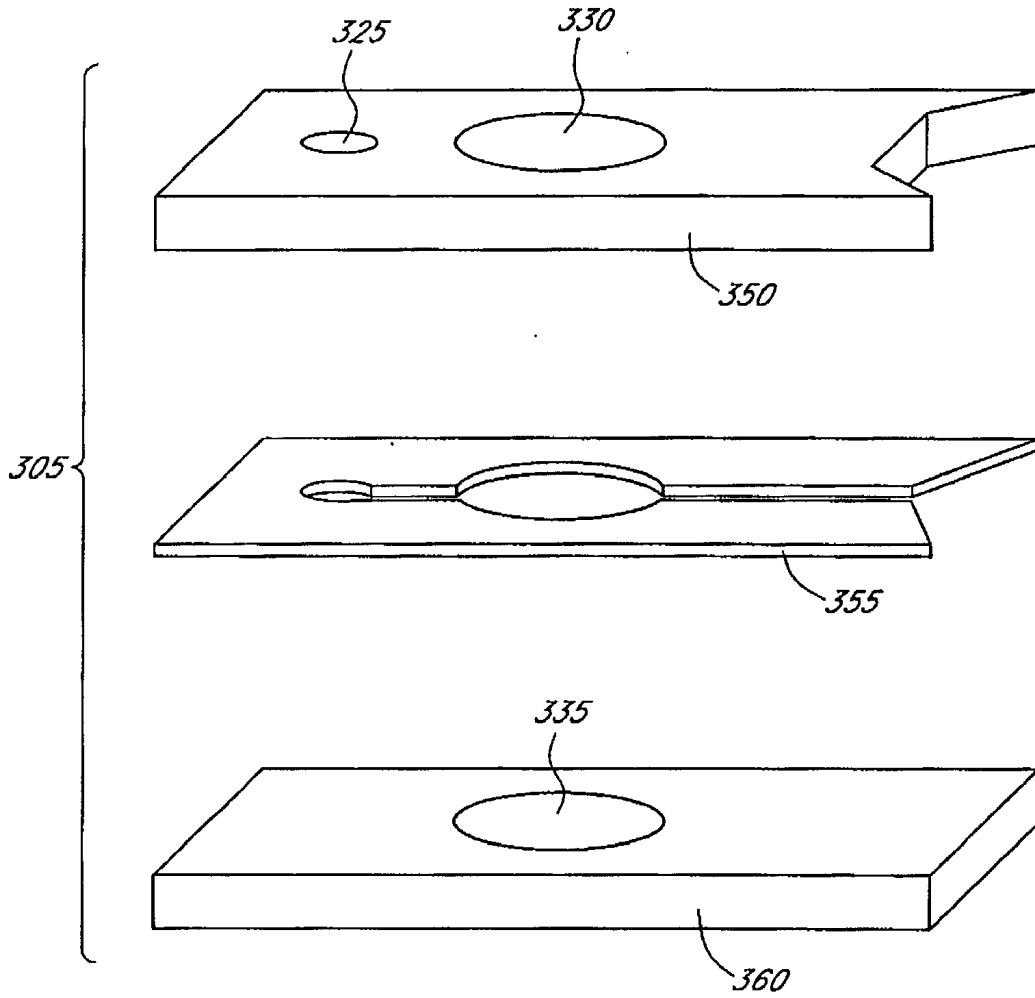
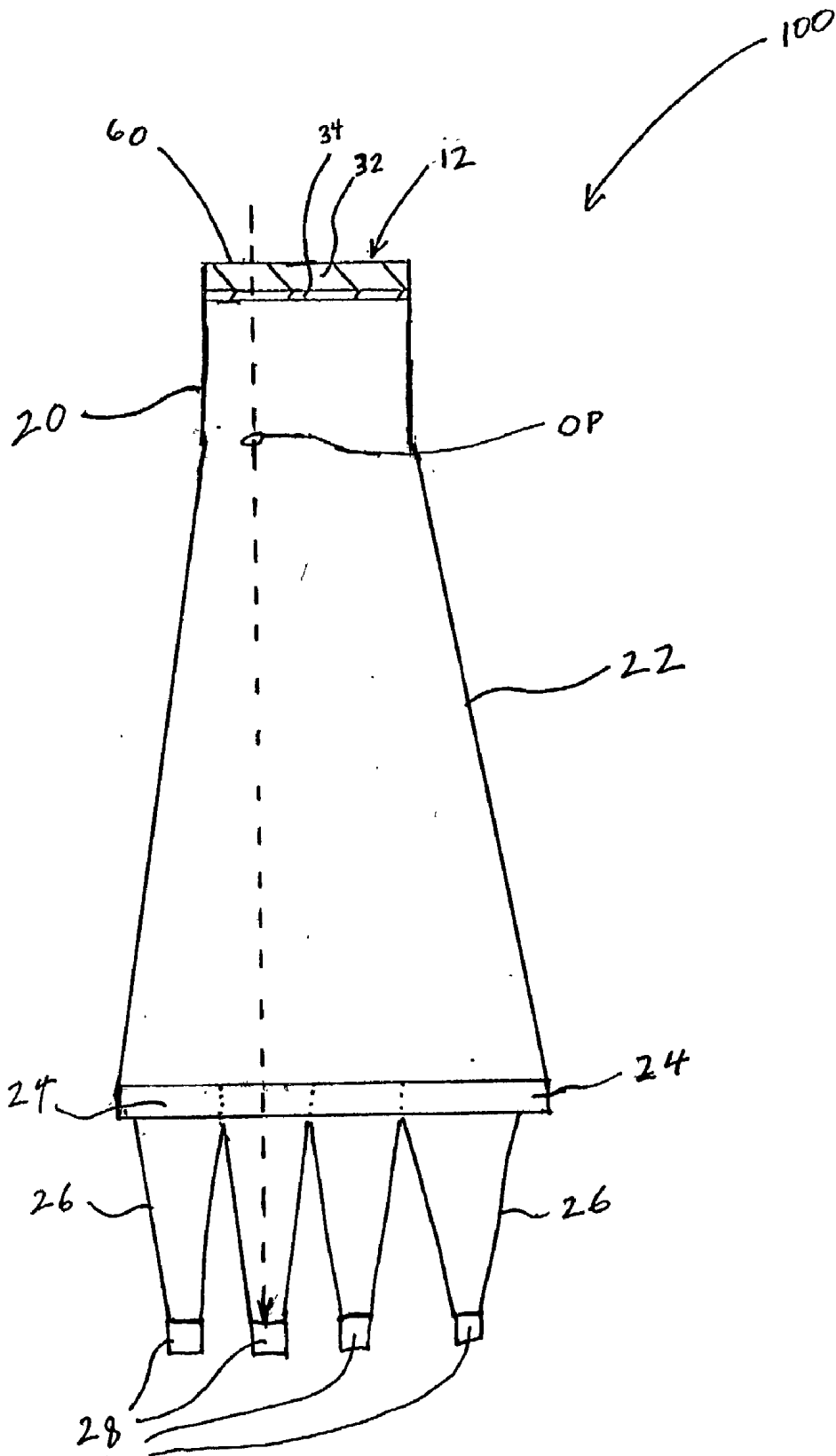


FIG. 16A

FIG. 18



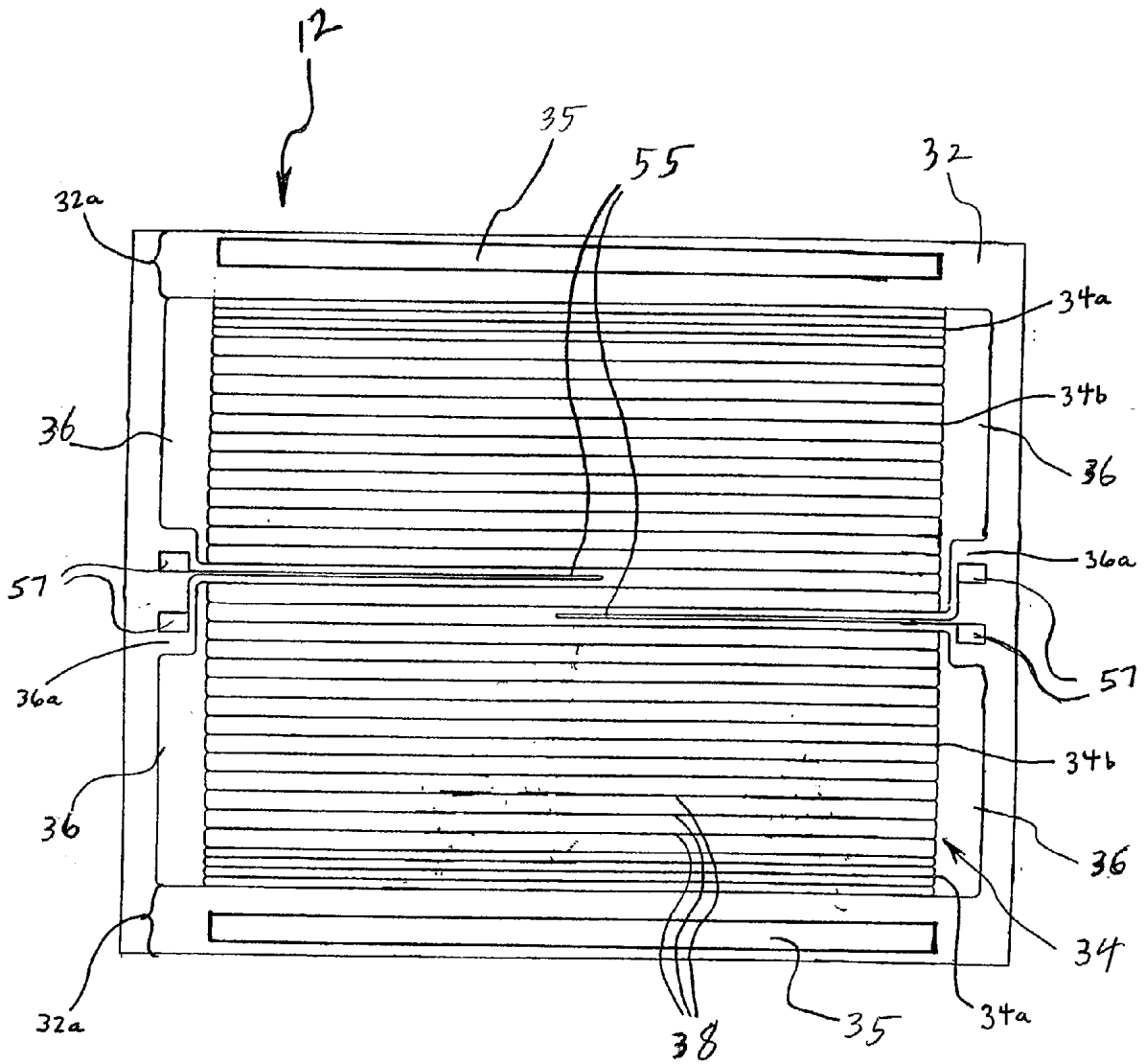


FIG. 19

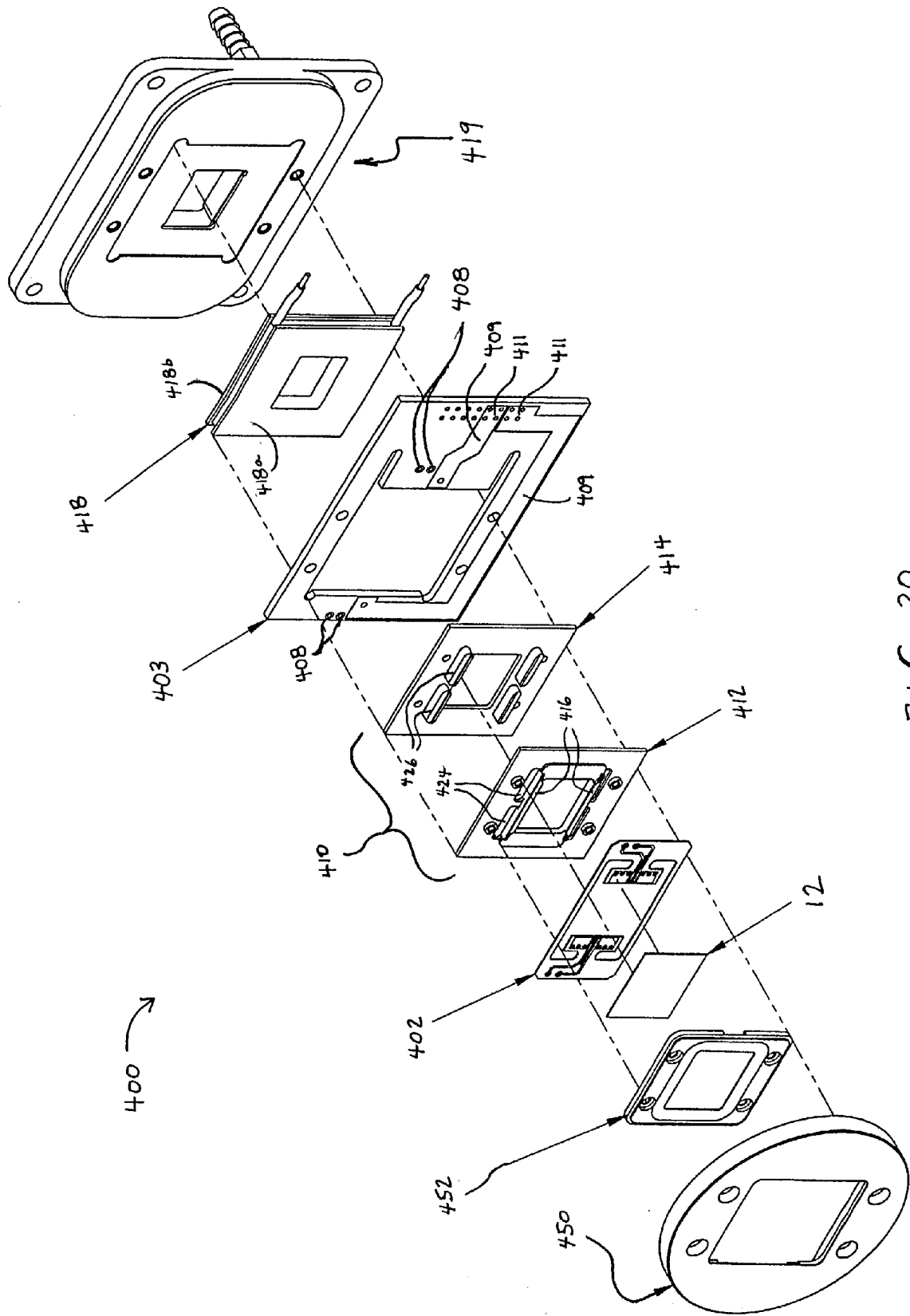


FIG. 20

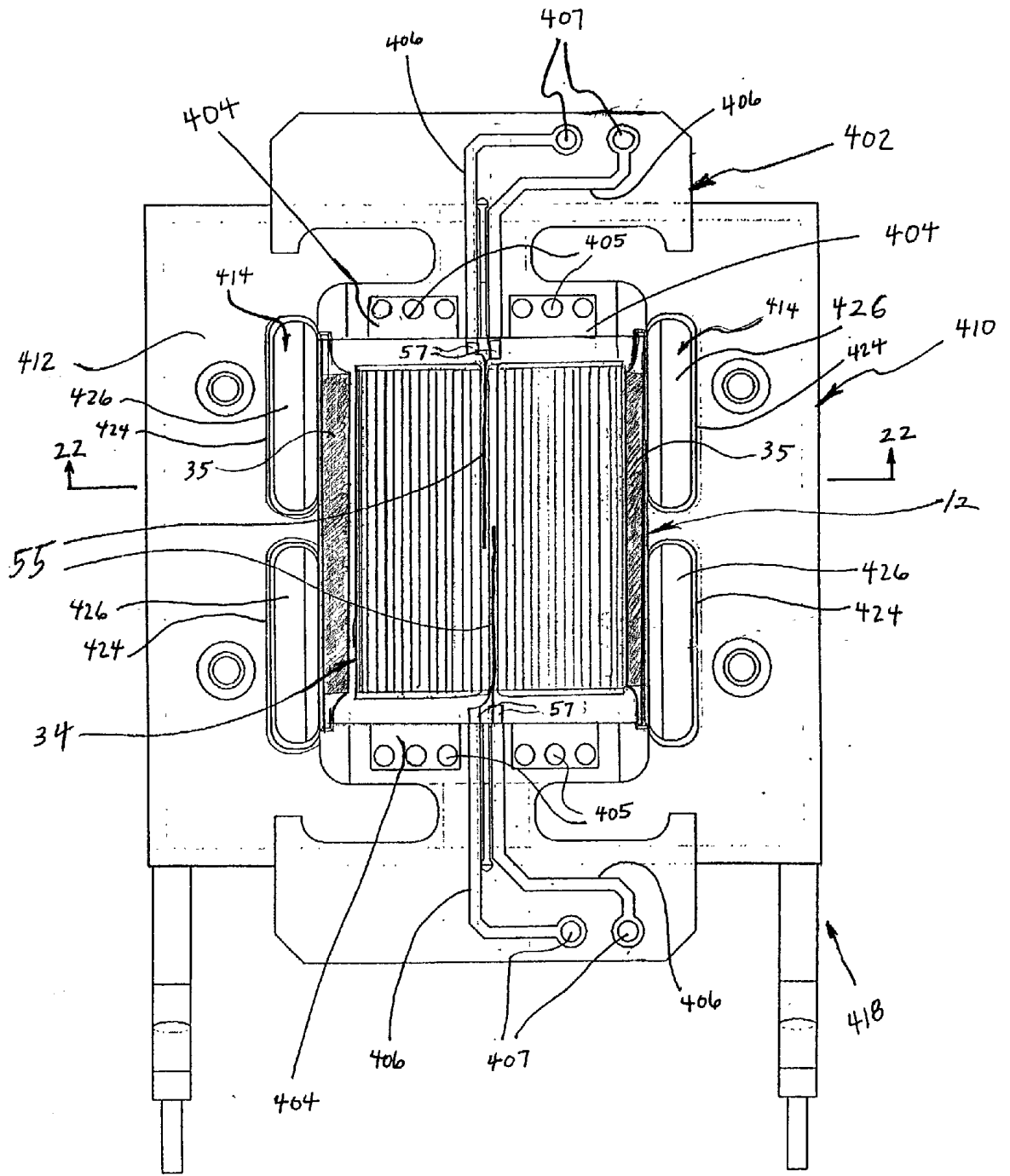


FIG. 21

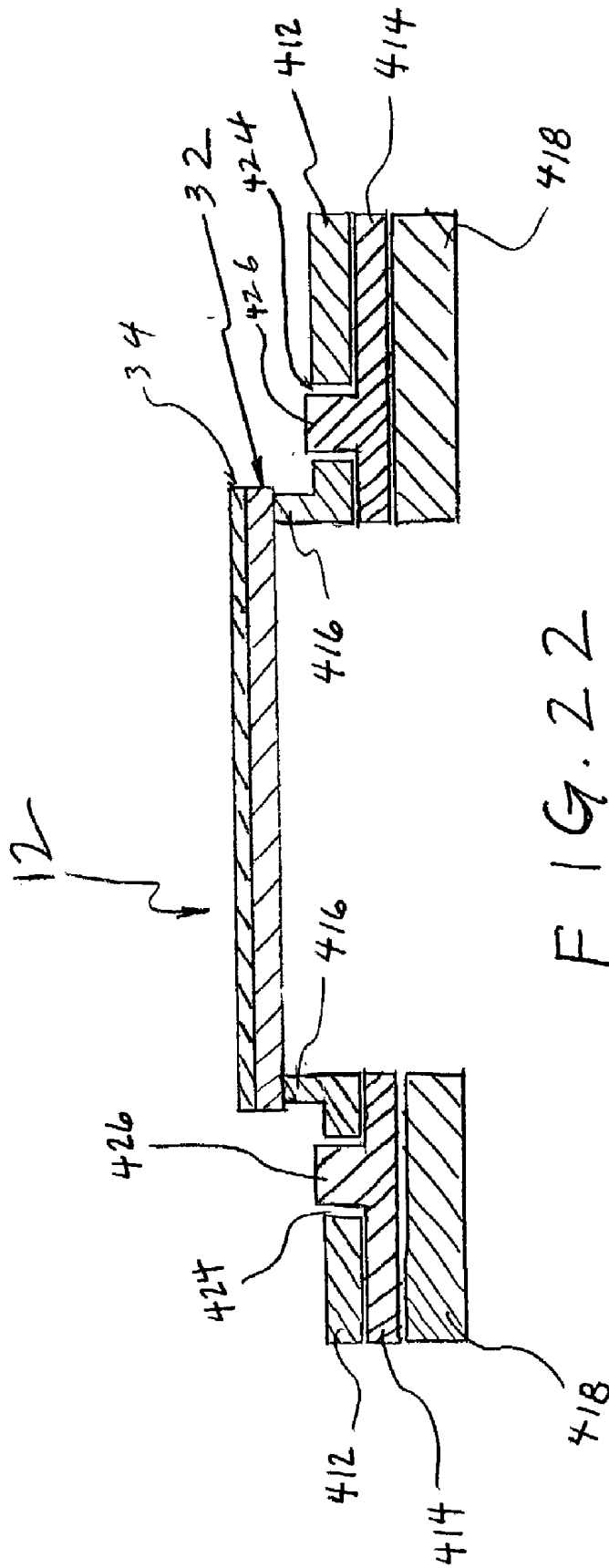


FIG. 22

WINDOW ASSEMBLY

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/336,404, filed Oct. 29, 2001, titled WINDOW ASSEMBLY. The entire contents of the above-mentioned provisional patent application are incorporated herein by reference and made a part of this specification.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The disclosure herein relates generally to detector windows for use with noninvasive optical detection systems.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] Millions of diabetics are forced to draw blood on a daily basis to determine their blood glucose levels. In addition, the detection of other blood constituents, such as the determination of the concentration of alcohol in the bloodstream, often requires blood withdrawal in order to perform a precise analysis thereof. A search for a non-invasive methodology to accurately determine blood constituent levels has been substantially expanded in order to alleviate the discomfort of these individuals. A significant advance in the state of the art of non-invasive blood constituent analysis has been realized by the development of spectrometers, including "thermal gradient" spectrometers, which analyze the absorbance of particular wavelengths of infrared energy passed through and/or emitted by a sample of tissue. These spectroscopic analytical devices typically employ a window or lens for admitting infrared energy into the device for analysis by infrared detectors.

[0006] Although these devices have marked a significant advance in the state of the art of non-invasive blood constituent analysis, further improvements could be made in the performance and ease of manufacture of the window portion used in connection with the devices.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] In accordance with one embodiment, there is disclosed a window assembly for heating a sample for analysis by a noninvasive optical detection system and for permitting infrared energy emitted by the sample to pass into the detection system. The window assembly consists of a main layer formed from an infrared-transparent material, and a heater layer affixed to the main layer. The heater layer is configured to exchange heat to the sample, and the main layer is configured to permit infrared energy to pass from the sample into the noninvasive optical detection system.

[0008] In accordance with another embodiment, there is disclosed an analyte detection system for non-invasively determining the concentration of an analyte in a sample. The detection system comprises a window assembly consisting of a main layer adapted to allow electromagnetic radiation to pass therethrough, and a heater layer adapted to exchange heat to the sample. The system also includes a detector adapted to detect electromagnetic radiation emitted by the sample and passed through the window assembly. The analyte detection system also includes a control system in

electrical communication with the heater layer and adapted to cause the heater layer to exchange heat to the sample.

[0009] In accordance with one embodiment, there is disclosed a window assembly for use with a noninvasive optical detection system. The window assembly consists of a main layer formed from an infrared-transparent material, and a heater layer affixed to the main layer. The heater layer is configured to exchange heat to the sample, and the main layer is configured to permit infrared energy to pass from the sample into the noninvasive optical detection system.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] FIG. 1 is a schematic view of a noninvasive optical detection system.

[0011] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a window assembly for use with the noninvasive detection system.

[0012] FIG. 3 is an exploded schematic view of an alternative window assembly for use with the noninvasive detection system.

[0013] FIG. 4 is a plan view of the window assembly connected to a cooling system.

[0014] FIG. 5 is a plan view of the window assembly connected to a cold reservoir.

[0015] FIG. 6 is a cutaway view of a heat sink for use with the noninvasive detection system.

[0016] FIG. 6A is a cutaway perspective view of a lower portion of the noninvasive detection system of FIG. 1.

[0017] FIG. 7 is a schematic view of a control system for use with the noninvasive detection system.

[0018] FIG. 8 depicts a first methodology for determining the concentration of an analyte of interest.

[0019] FIG. 9 depicts a second methodology for determining the concentration of an analyte of interest.

[0020] FIG. 10 depicts a third methodology for determining the concentration of an analyte of interest.

[0021] FIG. 11 depicts a fourth methodology for determining the concentration of an analyte of interest.

[0022] FIG. 12 depicts a fifth methodology for determining the concentration of an analyte of interest.

[0023] FIG. 13 is a schematic view of a reagentless whole-blood detection system.

[0024] FIG. 14 is a perspective view of one embodiment of a cuvette for use with the reagentless whole-blood detection system.

[0025] FIG. 15 is a plan view of another embodiment of a cuvette for use with the reagentless whole-blood detection system.

[0026] FIG. 16 is a disassembled plan view of the cuvette shown in FIG. 15.

[0027] FIG. 16A is an exploded perspective view of the cuvette of FIG. 15.

[0028] FIG. 17 is a side view of the cuvette of FIG. 15.

[0029] FIG. 18 is a partial schematic cross-sectional view of a noninvasive optical detection system employing a window assembly as disclosed herein.

[0030] FIG. 19 is a plan view of the underside of a window assembly for use with the noninvasive optical detection system.

[0031] FIG. 20 is an exploded perspective view of a window mounting system that may be used in connection with the window assembly of FIG. 19.

[0032] FIG. 21 is a plan view of the interconnection of the window assembly and various components of the window mounting system.

[0033] FIG. 22 is a sectional view of the attachment of the window assembly to a thermal diffuser portion of the window mounting system.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0034] Disclosed herein are various embodiments of a window assembly that may advantageously be employed as part of a noninvasive optical detection system. Part I below includes a discussion of one type of noninvasive optical detection system with which the window assembly may be employed, as well as a basic discussion of one embodiment of a window assembly. Part II below includes a discussion of further embodiments of the window assembly and related components. It should be understood that any of the embodiments of the window assembly disclosed herein may (but need not) be used with any of the embodiments of the noninvasive optical detection system disclosed herein.

[0035] Although certain preferred embodiments and examples are disclosed below, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that the invention extends beyond the specifically disclosed embodiments to other alternative embodiments and/or uses of the invention and obvious modifications and equivalents thereof. Thus, it is intended that the scope of the invention herein disclosed should not be limited by the particular disclosed embodiments described below.

[0036] I. Overview of Analyte Detection Systems

[0037] Disclosed herein are analyte detection systems, including a noninvasive system discussed largely in part A below and a whole-blood system discussed largely in part B below. Also disclosed are various methods, including methods for detecting the concentration of an analyte in a material sample. Both the noninvasive system/method and the whole-blood system/method can employ optical measurement. As used herein with reference to measurement apparatus and methods, "optical" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to identification of the presence or concentration of an analyte in a material sample without requiring a chemical reaction to take place. As discussed in more detail below, the two approaches each can operate independently to perform an optical analysis of a material sample. The two approaches can also be combined in an apparatus, or the two approaches can be used together to perform different steps of a method.

[0038] In one embodiment, the two approaches are combined to perform calibration of an apparatus, e.g., of an apparatus that employs a noninvasive approach. In another

embodiment, an advantageous combination of the two approaches performs an invasive measurement to achieve greater accuracy and a whole-blood measurement to minimize discomfort to the patient. For example, the whole-blood technique may be more accurate than the noninvasive technique at certain times of the day, e.g., at certain times after a meal has been consumed, or after a drug has been administered.

[0039] It should be understood, however, that any of the disclosed devices may be operated in accordance with any suitable detection methodology, and that any disclosed method may be employed in the operation of any suitable device. Furthermore, the disclosed devices and methods are applicable in a wide variety of situations or modes of operation, including but not limited to invasive, noninvasive, intermittent or continuous measurement, subcutaneous implantation, wearable detection systems, or any combination thereof.

[0040] Any method which is described and illustrated herein is not limited to the exact sequence of acts described, nor is it necessarily limited to the practice of all of the acts set forth. Other sequences of events or acts, or less than all of the events, or simultaneous occurrence of the events, may be utilized in practicing the method(s) in question.

[0041] A. Noninvasive System

[0042] 1. Monitor Structure

[0043] FIG. 1 depicts a noninvasive optical detection system (hereinafter "noninvasive system") 10 in a presently preferred configuration. The depicted noninvasive system 10 is particularly suited for noninvasively detecting the concentration of an analyte in a material sample S, by observing the infrared energy emitted by the sample, as will be discussed in further detail below.

[0044] As used herein, the term "noninvasive" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to analyte detection devices and methods which have the capability to determine the concentration of an analyte in in-vivo tissue samples or bodily fluids. It should be understood, however, that the noninvasive system 10 disclosed herein is not limited to noninvasive use, as the noninvasive system 10 may be employed to analyze an in-vitro fluid or tissue sample which has been obtained invasively or noninvasively. As used herein, the term "invasive" (or, alternatively, "traditional") is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to analyte detection methods which involve the removal of fluid samples through the skin. As used herein, the term "material sample" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to any collection of material which is suitable for analysis by the noninvasive system 10. For example, the material sample S may comprise a tissue sample, such as a human forearm, placed against the noninvasive system 10. The material sample S may also comprise a volume of a bodily fluid, such as whole blood, blood component(s), interstitial fluid or intercellular fluid obtained invasively, or saliva or urine obtained noninvasively, or any collection of organic or inorganic material. As used herein, the term "analyte" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to any chemical species the presence or concentration of which is sought in the material sample S by the noninvasive system

10. For example, the analyte(s) which may be detected by the noninvasive system **10** include but not are limited to glucose, ethanol, insulin, water, carbon dioxide, blood oxygen, cholesterol, bilirubin, ketones, fatty acids, lipoproteins, albumin, urea, creatinine, white blood cells, red blood cells, hemoglobin, oxygenated hemoglobin, carboxyhemoglobin, organic molecules, inorganic molecules, pharmaceuticals, cytochrome, various proteins and chromophores, microcalcifications, electrolytes, sodium, potassium, chloride, bicarbonate, and hormones. As used herein to describe measurement techniques, the term "continuous" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to the taking of discrete measurements more frequently than about once every 10 minutes, and/or the taking of a stream or series of measurements or other data over any suitable time interval, for example, over an interval of one to several seconds, minutes, hours, days, or longer. As used herein to describe measurement techniques, the term "intermittent" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to the taking of measurements less frequently than about once every 10 minutes.

[**0045**] The noninvasive system **10** preferably comprises a window assembly **12**, although in some embodiments the window assembly **12** may be omitted. One function of the window assembly **12** is to permit infrared energy **E** to enter the noninvasive system **10** from the sample **S** when it is placed against an upper surface **12a** of the window assembly **12**. The window assembly **12** includes a heater layer (see discussion below) which is employed to heat the material sample **S** and stimulate emission of infrared energy therefrom. A cooling system **14**, preferably comprising a Peltier-type thermoelectric device, is in thermally conductive relation to the window assembly **12** so that the temperature of the window assembly **12** and the material sample **S** can be manipulated in accordance with a detection methodology discussed in greater detail below. The cooling system **14** includes a cold surface **14a** which is in thermally conductive relation to a cold reservoir **16** and the window assembly **12**, and a hot surface **14b** which is in thermally conductive relation to a heat sink **18**.

[**0046**] As the infrared energy **E** enters the noninvasive system **10**, it first passes through the window assembly **12**, then through an optical mixer **20**, and then through a collimator **22**. The optical mixer **20** preferably comprises a light pipe having highly reflective inner surfaces which randomize the directionality of the infrared energy **E** as it passes therethrough and reflects against the mixer walls. The collimator **22** also comprises a light pipe having highly-reflective inner walls, but the walls diverge as they extend away from the mixer **20**. The divergent walls cause the infrared energy **E** to tend to straighten as it advances toward the wider end of the collimator **22**, due to the angle of incidence of the infrared energy when reflecting against the collimator walls.

[**0047**] From the collimator **22** the infrared energy **E** passes through an array of filters **24**, each of which allows only a selected wavelength or band of wavelengths to pass therethrough. These wavelengths/bands are selected to highlight or isolate the absorptive effects of the analyte of interest in the detection methodology discussed in greater detail below. Each filter **24** is preferably in optical communication with a concentrator **26** and an infrared detector **28**. The concentrators **26** have highly reflective, converging inner

walls which concentrate the infrared energy as it advances toward the detectors **28**, increasing the density of the energy incident upon the detectors **28**.

[**0048**] The detectors **28** are in electrical communication with a control system **30** which receives electrical signals from the detectors **28** and computes the concentration of the analyte in the sample **S**. The control system **30** is also in electrical communication with the window **12** and cooling system **14**, so as to monitor the temperature of the window **12** and/or cooling system **14** and control the delivery of electrical power to the window **12** and cooling system **14**.

[**0049**] a. Window Assembly

[**0050**] A preferred configuration of the window assembly **12** is shown in perspective, as viewed from its underside (in other words, the side of the window assembly **12** opposite the sample **S**), in **FIG. 2**. The window assembly **12** generally comprises a main layer **32** formed of a highly infrared-transmissive material and a heater layer **34** affixed to the underside of the main layer **32**. The main layer **32** is preferably formed from diamond, most preferably from chemical-vapor-deposited ("CVD") diamond, with a preferred thickness of about 0.25 millimeters. In other embodiments alternative materials which are highly infrared-transmissive, such as silicon or germanium, may be used in forming the main layer **32**.

[**0051**] The heater layer **34** preferably comprises bus bars **36** located at opposing ends of an array of heater elements **38**. The bus bars **36** are in electrical communication with the elements **38** so that, upon connection of the bus bars **36** to a suitable electrical power source (not shown) a current may be passed through the elements **38** to generate heat in the window assembly **12**. The heater layer **34** may also include one or more temperature sensors (not shown), such as thermistors or resistance temperature devices (RTDs), to measure the temperature of the window assembly **12** and provide temperature feedback to the control system **30** (see **FIG. 1**).

[**0052**] Still referring to **FIG. 2**, the heater layer **34** preferably comprises a first adhesion layer of gold or platinum (hereinafter referred to as the "gold" layer) deposited over an alloy layer which is applied to the main layer **32**. The alloy layer comprises a material suitable for implementation of the heater layer **34**, such as, by way of example, **10/90** titanium/tungsten, titanium/platinum, nickel/chromium, or other similar material. The gold layer preferably has a thickness of about 4000 Å, and the alloy layer preferably has a thickness ranging between about 300 Å and about 500 Å. The gold layer and/or the alloy layer may be deposited onto the main layer **32** by chemical deposition including, but not necessarily limited to, vapor deposition, liquid deposition, plating, laminating, casting, sintering, or other forming or deposition methodologies well known to those of ordinary skill in the art. If desired, the heater layer **34** may be covered with an electrically insulating coating which also enhances adhesion to the main layer **32**. One preferred coating material is aluminum oxide. Other acceptable materials include, but are not limited to, titanium dioxide or zinc selenide.

[**0053**] The heater layer **34** may incorporate a variable pitch distance between centerlines of adjacent heater elements **38** to maintain a constant power density, and promote a uniform temperature, across the entire layer **34**. Where a

constant pitch distance is employed, the preferred distance is at least about 50-100 microns. Although the heater elements **38** generally have a preferred width of about 25 microns, their width may also be varied as needed for the same reasons stated above.

[0054] Alternative structures suitable for use as the heater layer **34** include, but are not limited to, thermoelectric heaters, radiofrequency (RF) heaters, infrared radiation heaters, optical heaters, heat exchangers, electrical resistance heating grids, wire bridge heating grids, or laser heaters. Whichever type of heater layer is employed, it is preferred that the heater layer obscures about 10% or less of the window assembly **12**.

[0055] In a preferred embodiment, the window assembly **12** comprises substantially only the main layer **32** and the heater layer **34** (and any antireflective, index-matching, electrical insulating or protective coatings applied thereto or placed therein, as may be done without substantial loss of the advantages of such a two-layer window assembly). Thus, when installed in an optical detection system such as the noninvasive system **10** shown in FIG. 1, the window assembly **12** will facilitate a minimally obstructed optical path between a (preferably flat) upper surface **12a** of the window assembly **12** and the infrared detectors **28** of the noninvasive system **10**. The optical path **32** in the preferred noninvasive system **10** proceeds only through the main layer **32** and heater layer **34** of the window assembly **12** (including any antireflective, index-matching, electrical insulating or protective coatings applied thereto or placed therein), through the optical mixer **20** and collimator **22** and to the detectors **28**.

[0056] FIG. 3 depicts an exploded side view of an alternative configuration for the window assembly **12**, which may be used in place of the configuration shown in FIG. 2. The window assembly **12** depicted in FIG. 3 includes near its upper surface (the surface intended for contact with the sample S) a highly infrared-transmissive, thermally conductive spreader layer **42**. Underlying the spreader layer **42** is a heater layer **44**. A thin electrically insulating layer (not shown), such as layer of aluminum oxide, titanium dioxide or zinc selenide, may be disposed between the heater layer **44** and the spreader layer **42**. (An aluminum oxide layer also increases adhesion of the heater layer **44** to the spreader layer **42**.) Adjacent to the heater layer **44** is a thermal insulating and impedance matching layer **46**. Adjacent to the thermal insulating layer **46** is a thermally conductive inner layer **48**. The spreader layer **42** is coated on its top surface with a thin layer of protective coating **50**. The bottom surface of the inner layer **48** is coated with a thin overcoat layer **52**. Preferably, the protective coating **50** and the overcoat layer **52** have antireflective properties.

[0057] The spreader layer **42** is preferably formed of a highly infrared-transmissive material having a high thermal conductivity sufficient to facilitate heat transfer from the heater layer **44** uniformly into the material sample S when it is placed against the window assembly **12**. Other effective materials include, but are not limited to, CVD diamond, diamondlike carbon, gallium arsenide, germanium, and other infrared-transmissive materials having sufficiently high thermal conductivity. Preferred dimensions for the spreader layer **42** are about one inch in diameter and about 0.010 inch thick. As shown in FIG. 3, a preferred embodi-

ment of the spreader layer **42** incorporates a beveled edge. Although not required, an approximate 45-degree bevel is preferred.

[0058] The protective layer **50** is intended to protect the top surface of the spreader layer **42** from damage. Ideally, the protective layer is highly infrared-transmissive and highly resistant to mechanical damage, such as scratching or abrasion. It is also preferred that the protective layer **50** and the overcoat layer **52** have high thermal conductivity and antireflective and/or index-matching properties. A satisfactory material for use as the protective layer **50** and the overcoat layer **52** is the multi-layer Broad Band Anti-Reflective Coating produced by Deposition Research Laboratories, Inc. of St. Charles, Mo. Diamondlike carbon coatings are also suitable.

[0059] Except as noted below, the heater layer **44** is generally similar to the heater layer **34** employed in the window assembly shown in FIG. 2. Alternatively, the heater layer **44** may comprise a doped infrared-transmissive material, such as a doped silicon layer, with regions of higher and lower resistivity. The heater layer **44** preferably has a resistance of about 2 ohms and has a preferred thickness of about 1,500 angstroms. A preferred material for forming the heater layer **44** is a gold alloy, but other acceptable materials include, but are not limited to, platinum, titanium, tungsten, copper, and nickel.

[0060] The thermal insulating layer **46** prevents the dissipation of heat from the heater element **44** while allowing the cooling system **14** to effectively cool the material sample S (see FIG. 1). This layer **46** comprises a material having thermally insulative (e.g., lower thermal conductivity than the spreader layer **42**) and infrared transmissive qualities. A preferred material is a germanium-arsenic-selenium compound of the calcogenide glass family known as AMTIR-1 produced by Amorphous Materials, Inc. of Garland, Tex. The pictured embodiment has a diameter of about 0.85 inches and a preferred thickness in the range of about 0.005 to about 0.010 inches. As heat generated by the heater layer **44** passes through the spreader layer **42** into the material sample S, the thermal insulating layer **46** insulates this heat.

[0061] The inner layer **48** is formed of thermally conductive material, preferably crystalline silicon formed using a conventional floatzone crystal growth method. The purpose of the inner layer **48** is to serve as a cold-conducting mechanical base for the entire layered window assembly.

[0062] The overall optical transmission of the window assembly **12** shown in FIG. 3 is preferably at least 70%. The window assembly **12** of FIG. 3 is preferably held together and secured to the noninvasive system **10** by a holding bracket (not shown). The bracket is preferably formed of a glass-filled plastic, for example Ultem 2300, manufactured by General Electric. Ultem 2300 has low thermal conductivity which prevents heat transfer from the layered window assembly **12**.

[0063] b. Cooling System

[0064] The cooling system **14** (see FIG. 1) preferably comprises a Peltier-type thermoelectric device. Thus, the application of an electrical current to the preferred cooling system **14** causes the cold surface **14a** to cool and causes the opposing hot surface **14b** to heat up. The cooling system **14** cools the window assembly **12** via the situation of the

window assembly 12 in thermally conductive relation to the cold surface 14a of the cooling system 14. It is contemplated that the cooling system 14, the heater layer 34, or both, can be operated to induce a desired time-varying temperature in the window assembly 12 to create an oscillating thermal gradient in the sample S, in accordance with various analyte-detection methodologies discussed herein.

[0065] Preferably, the cold reservoir 16 is positioned between the cooling system 14 and the window assembly 12, and functions as a thermal conductor between the system 14 and the window assembly 12. The cold reservoir 16 is formed from a suitable thermally conductive material, preferably brass. Alternatively, the window assembly 12 can be situated in direct contact with the cold surface 14a of the cooling system 14.

[0066] In alternative embodiments, the cooling system 14 may comprise a heat exchanger through which a coolant, such as air, nitrogen or chilled water, is pumped, or a passive conduction cooler such as a heat sink. As a further alternative, a gas coolant such as nitrogen may be circulated through the interior of the noninvasive system 10 so as to contact the underside of the window assembly 12 (see FIG. 1) and conduct heat therefrom.

[0067] FIG. 4 is a top schematic view of a preferred arrangement of the window assembly 12 (of the type shown in FIG. 2) and the cold reservoir 16, and FIG. 5 is a top schematic view of an alternative arrangement in which the window assembly 12 directly contacts the cooling system 14. The cold reservoir 16/cooling system 14 preferably contacts the underside of the window assembly 12 along opposing edges thereof, on either side of the heater layer 34. With thermal conductivity thus established between the window assembly 12 and the cooling system 14, the window assembly can be cooled as needed during operation of the noninvasive system 10. In order to promote a substantially uniform or isothermal temperature profile over the upper surface of the window assembly 12, the pitch distance between centerlines of adjacent heater elements 38 may be made smaller (thereby increasing the density of heater elements 38) near the region(s) of contact between the window assembly 12 and the cold reservoir 16/cooling system 14. As a supplement or alternative, the heater elements 38 themselves may be made wider near these regions of contact. As used herein, "isothermal" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to a condition in which, at a given point in time, the temperature of the window assembly 12 or other structure is substantially uniform across a surface intended for placement in thermally conductive relation to the material sample S. Thus, although the temperature of the structure or surface may fluctuate over time, at any given point in time the structure or surface may nonetheless be isothermal.

[0068] The heat sink 18 drains waste heat from the hot surface 14b of the cooling system 16 and stabilizes the operational temperature of the noninvasive system 10. The preferred heat sink 18 (see FIG. 6) comprises a hollow structure formed from brass or any other suitable material having a relatively high specific heat and high heat conductivity. The heat sink 18 has a conduction surface 18a which, when the heat sink 18 is installed in the noninvasive system 18, is in thermally conductive relation to the hot surface 14b of the cooling system 14 (see FIG. 1). A cavity 54 is formed

in the heat sink 18 and preferably contains a phase-change material (not shown) to increase the capacity of the sink 18. A preferred phase change material is a hydrated salt, such as calciumchloride hexahydrate, available under the name TH29 from PCM Thermal Solutions, Inc., of Naperville, Ill. Alternatively, the cavity 54 may be omitted to create a heat sink 18 comprising a solid, unitary mass. The heat sink 18 also forms a number of fins 56 to further increase the conduction of heat from the sink 18 to surrounding air.

[0069] Alternatively, the heat sink 18 may be formed integrally with the optical mixer 20 and/or the collimator 22 as a unitary mass of rigid, heat-conductive material such as brass or aluminum. In such a heat sink, the mixer 20 and/or collimator 22 extend axially through the heat sink 18, and the heat sink defines the inner walls of the mixer 20 and/or collimator 22. These inner walls are coated and/or polished to have appropriate reflectivity and nonabsorbance in infrared wavelengths as will be further described below. Where such a unitary heat sink-mixer-collimator is employed, it is desirable to thermally insulate the detector array from the heat sink.

[0070] It should be understood that any suitable structure may be employed to heat and/or cool the material sample S, instead of or in addition to the window assembly 12/cooling system 14 disclosed above, so long as a proper degree of cycled heating and/or cooling are imparted to the material sample S. In addition other forms of energy, such as but not limited to light, radiation, chemically induced heat, friction and vibration, may be employed to heat the material sample S. It will be further appreciated that heating of the sample can be achieved by any suitable method, such as convection, conduction, radiation, etc.

[0071] c. Optics

[0072] As shown in FIG. 1, the optical mixer 20 comprises a light pipe with an inner surface coating which is highly reflective and minimally absorptive in infrared wavelengths, preferably a polished gold coating, although other suitable coatings may be used where other wavelengths of electromagnetic radiation are employed. The pipe itself may be fabricated from another rigid material such as aluminum or stainless steel, as long as the inner surfaces are coated or otherwise treated to be highly reflective. Preferably, the optical mixer 20 has a rectangular cross-section (as taken orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A-A of the mixer 20 and the collimator 22), although other cross-sectional shapes, such as other polygonal shapes or circular or elliptical shapes, may be employed in alternative embodiments. The inner walls of the optical mixer 20 are substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis A-A of the mixer 20 and the collimator 22. The highly reflective and substantially parallel inner walls of the mixer 20 maximize the number of times the infrared energy E will be reflected between the walls of the mixer 20, thoroughly mixing the infrared energy E as it propagates through the mixer 20. In a presently preferred embodiment, the mixer 20 is about 1.2 inches to 2.4 inches in length and its cross-section is a rectangle of about 0.4 inches by about 0.6 inches. Of course, other dimensions may be employed in constructing the mixer 20. In particular it is advantageous to miniaturize the mixer or otherwise make it as small as possible.

[0073] Still referring to FIG. 1, the collimator 22 comprises a tube with an inner surface coating which is highly

reflective and minimally absorptive in infrared wavelengths, preferably a polished gold coating. The tube itself may be fabricated from a another rigid material such as aluminum, nickel or stainless steel, as long as the inner surfaces are coated or otherwise treated to be highly reflective. Preferably, the collimator **22** has a rectangular cross-section, although other cross-sectional shapes, such as other polygonal shapes or circular, parabolic or elliptical shapes, may be employed in alternative embodiments. The inner walls of the collimator **22** diverge as they extend away from the mixer **20**. Preferably, the inner walls of the collimator **22** are substantially straight and form an angle of about 7 degrees with respect to the longitudinal axis A-A. The collimator **22** aligns the infrared energy E to propagate in a direction that is generally parallel to the longitudinal axis A-A of the mixer **20** and the collimator **22**, so that the infrared energy E will strike the surface of the filters **24** at an angle as close to 90 degrees as possible.

[0074] In a presently preferred embodiment, the collimator is about 7.5 inches in length. At its narrow end **22a**, the cross-section of the collimator **22** is a rectangle of about 0.4 inches by 0.6 inches. At its wide end **22b**, the collimator **22** has a rectangular cross-section of about 1.8 inches by 2.6 inches. Preferably, the collimator **22** aligns the infrared energy E to an angle of incidence (with respect to the longitudinal axis A-A) of about 0-15 degrees before the energy E impinges upon the filters **24**. Of course, other dimensions or incidence angles may be employed in constructing and operating the collimator **22**.

[0075] With further reference to FIGS. 1 and 6A, each concentrator **26** comprises a tapered surface oriented such that its wide end **26a** is adapted to receive the infrared energy exiting the corresponding filter **24**, and such that its narrow end **26b** is adjacent to the corresponding detector **28**. The inward-facing surfaces of the concentrators **26** have an inner surface coating which is highly reflective and minimally absorptive in infrared wavelengths, preferably a polished gold coating. The concentrators **26** themselves may be fabricated from a another rigid material such as aluminum, nickel or stainless steel, so long as their inner surfaces are coated or otherwise treated to be highly reflective.

[0076] Preferably, the concentrators **26** have a rectangular cross-section (as taken orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A-A), although other cross-sectional shapes, such as other polygonal shapes or circular, parabolic or elliptical shapes, may be employed in alternative embodiments. The inner walls of the concentrators converge as they extend toward the narrow end **26b**. Preferably, the inner walls of the collimators **26** are substantially straight and form an angle of about 8 degrees with respect to the longitudinal axis A-A. Such a configuration is adapted to concentrate infrared energy as it passes through the concentrators **26** from the wide end **26a** to the narrow end **26b**, before reaching the detectors **28**.

[0077] In a presently preferred embodiment, each concentrator **26** is about 1.5 inches in length. At the wide end **26a**, the cross-section of each concentrator **26** is a rectangle of about 0.6 inches by 0.57 inches. At the narrow end **26b**, each concentrator **26** has a rectangular cross-section of about 0.177 inches by 0.177 inches. Of course, other dimensions or incidence angles may be employed in constructing the concentrators **26**.

[0078] d. Filters

[0079] The filters **24** preferably comprise standard interference-type infrared filters, widely available from manufacturers such as Optical Coating Laboratory, Inc. ("OCLI") of Santa Rosa, Calif. In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 1, a 3x4 array of filters **24** is positioned above a 3x4 array of detectors **28** and concentrators **26**. As employed in this embodiment, the filters **24** are arranged in four groups of three filters having the same wavelength sensitivity. These four groups have bandpass center wavelengths of $7.15 \mu\text{m} \pm 0.03 \mu\text{m}$, $8.40 \mu\text{m} \pm 0.03 \mu\text{m}$, $9.48 \mu\text{m} \pm 0.04 \mu\text{m}$, and $11.10 \mu\text{m} \pm 0.04 \mu\text{m}$, respectively, which correspond to wavelengths around which water and glucose absorb electromagnetic radiation. Typical bandwidths for these filters range from 0.20 μm to 0.50 μm .

[0080] In an alternative embodiment, the array of wavelength-specific filters **24** may be replaced with a single Fabry-Perot interferometer, which can provide wavelength sensitivity which varies as a sample of infrared energy is taken from the material sample S. Thus, this embodiment permits the use of only one detector **28**, the output signal of which varies in wavelength specificity over time. The output signal can be de-multiplexed based on the wavelength sensitivities induced by the Fabry-Perot interferometer, to provide a multiple-wavelength profile of the infrared energy emitted by the material sample S. In this embodiment, the optical mixer **20** may be omitted, as only one detector **28** need be employed.

[0081] In still other embodiments, the array of filters **24** may comprise a filter wheel that rotates different filters with varying wavelength sensitivities over a single detector **24**. Alternatively, an electronically tunable infrared filter may be employed in a manner similar to the Fabry-Perot interferometer discussed above, to provide wavelength sensitivity which varies during the detection process. In either of these embodiments, the optical mixer **20** may be omitted, as only one detector **28** need be employed.

[0082] e. Detectors

[0083] The detectors **28** may comprise any detector type suitable for sensing infrared energy, preferably in the mid-infrared wavelengths. For example, the detectors **28** may comprise mercury-cadmium-telluride (MCT) detectors. A detector such as a Fermionics (Simi Valley, Calif.) model PV-9.1 with a PVA481-1 pre-amplifier is acceptable. Similar units from other manufacturers such as Graseby (Tampa, Fla.) can be substituted. Other suitable components for use as the detectors **28** include pyroelectric detectors, thermopiles, bolometers, silicon microbolometers and lead-salt focal plane arrays.

[0084] f. Control System

[0085] FIG. 7 depicts the control system **30** in greater detail, as well as the interconnections between the control system and other relevant portions of the noninvasive system. The control system includes a temperature control subsystem and a data acquisition subsystem.

[0086] In the temperature control subsystem, temperature sensors (such as RTDs and/or thermistors) located in the window assembly **12** provide a window temperature signal to a synchronous analog-to-digital conversion system **70** and an asynchronous analog-to-digital conversion system **72**.

The A/D systems **70**, **72** in turn provide a digital window temperature signal to a digital signal processor (DSP) **74**. The processor **74** executes a window temperature control algorithm and determines appropriate control inputs for the heater layer **34** of the window assembly **12** and/or for the cooling system **14**, based on the information contained in the window temperature signal. The processor **74** outputs one or more digital control signals to a digital-to-analog conversion system **76** which in turn provides one or more analog control signals to current drivers **78**. In response to the control signal(s), the current drivers **78** regulate the power supplied to the heater layer **34** and/or to the cooling system **14**. In one embodiment, the processor **74** provides a control signal through a digital I/O device **77** to a pulse-width modulator (PWM) control **80**, which provides a signal that controls the operation of the current drivers **78**. Alternatively, a low-pass filter (not shown) at the output of the PWM provides for continuous operation of the current drivers **78**.

[**0087**] In another embodiment, temperature sensors may be located at the cooling system **14** and appropriately connected to the A/D system(s) and processor to provide closed-loop control of the cooling system as well.

[**0088**] In yet another embodiment, a detector cooling system **82** is located in thermally conductive relation to one or more of the detectors **28**. The detector cooling system **82** may comprise any of the devices disclosed above as comprising the cooling system **14**, and preferably comprises a Peltier-type thermoelectric device. The temperature control subsystem may also include temperature sensors, such as RTDs and/or thermistors, located in or adjacent to the detector cooling system **82**, and electrical connections between these sensors and the asynchronous A/D system **72**. The temperature sensors of the detector cooling system **82** provide detector temperature signals to the processor **74**. In one embodiment, the detector cooling system **82** operates independently of the window temperature control system, and the detector cooling system temperature signals are sampled using the asynchronous A/D system **72**. In accordance with the temperature control algorithm, the processor **74** determines appropriate control inputs for the detector cooling system **82**, based on the information contained in the detector temperature signal. The processor **74** outputs digital control signals to the D/A system **76** which in turn provides analog control signals to the current drivers **78**. In response to the control signals, the current drivers **78** regulate the power supplied to the detector cooling system **14**. In one embodiment, the processor **74** also provides a control signal through the digital I/O device **77** and the PWM control **80**, to control the operation of the detector cooling system **82** by the current drivers **78**. Alternatively, a low-pass filter (not shown) at the output of the PWM provides for continuous operation of the current drivers **78**.

[**0089**] In the data acquisition subsystem, the detectors **28** respond to the infrared energy *E* incident thereon by passing one or more analog detector signals to a preamp **84**. The preamp **84** amplifies the detector signals and passes them to the synchronous A/D system **70**, which converts the detector signals to digital form and passes them to the processor **74**. The processor **74** determines the concentrations of the analyte(s) of interest, based on the detector signals and a concentration-analysis algorithm and/or phase/concentration regression model stored in a memory module **88**. The concentration-analysis algorithm and/or phase/concentra-

tion regression model may be developed according to any of the analysis methodologies discussed herein. The processor may communicate the concentration results and/or other information to a display controller **86**, which operates a display (not shown), such as an LCD display, to present the information to the user.

[**0090**] A watchdog timer **94** may be employed to ensure that the processor **74** is operating correctly. If the watchdog timer **94** does not receive a signal from the processor **74** within a specified time, the watchdog timer **94** resets the processor **74**. The control system may also include a JTAG interface **96** to enable testing of the noninvasive system **10**.

[**0091**] In one embodiment, the synchronous A/D system **70** comprises a 20-bit, 14 channel system, and the asynchronous A/D system **72** comprises a 16-bit, 16 channel system. The preamp may comprise a 12-channel preamp corresponding to an array of 12 detectors **28**.

[**0092**] The control system may also include a serial port **90** or other conventional data port to permit connection to a personal computer **92**. The personal computer can be employed to update the algorithm(s) and/or phase/concentration regression model(s) stored in the memory module **88**, or to download a compilation of analyte-concentration data from the noninvasive system. A real-time clock or other timing device may be accessible by the processor **74** to make any time-dependent calculations which may be desirable to a user.

[**0093**] 2. Analysis Methodology

[**0094**] The detector(s) **28** of the noninvasive system **10** are used to detect the infrared energy emitted by the material sample *S* in various desired wavelengths. At each measured wavelength, the material sample *S* emits infrared energy at an intensity which varies over time. The time-varying intensities arise largely in response to the use of the window assembly **12** (including its heater layer **34**) and the cooling system **14** to induce a thermal gradient in the material sample *S*. As used herein, "thermal gradient" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to a difference in temperature and/or thermal energy between different locations, such as different depths, of a material sample, which can be induced by any suitable method of increasing or decreasing the temperature and/or thermal energy in one or more locations of the sample. As will be discussed in detail below, the concentration of an analyte of interest (such as glucose) in the material sample *S* can be determined with a device such as the noninvasive system **10**, by comparing the time-varying intensity profiles of the various measured wavelengths.

[**0095**] Analysis methodologies are discussed herein within the context of detecting the concentration of glucose within a material sample, such as a tissue sample, which includes a large proportion of water. However, it will be evident that these methodologies are not limited to this context and may be applied to the detection of a wide variety of analytes within a wide variety of sample types. It should also be understood that other suitable analysis methodologies and suitable variations of the disclosed methodologies may be employed in operating an analyte detection system, such as the noninvasive system **10**.

[**0096**] As shown in **FIG. 8**, a first reference signal *P* may be measured at a first reference wavelength. The first refer-

ence signal P is measured at a wavelength where water strongly absorbs (e.g., 2.9 μm or 6.1 μm). Because water strongly absorbs radiation at these wavelengths, the detector signal intensity is reduced at those wavelengths. Moreover, at these wavelengths water absorbs the photon emissions emanating from deep inside the sample. The net effect is that a signal emitted at these wavelengths from deep inside the sample is not easily detected. The first reference signal P is thus a good indicator of thermal-gradient effects near the sample surface and may be known as a surface reference signal. This signal may be calibrated and normalized, in the absence of heating or cooling applied to the sample, to a baseline value of 1. For greater accuracy, more than one first reference wavelength may be measured. For example, both 2.9 μm and 6.1 μm may be chosen as first reference wavelengths.

[0097] As further shown in FIG. 8, a second reference signal R may also be measured. The second signal R may be measured at a wavelength where water has very low absorbance (e.g., 3.6 μm or 4.2 μm). This second reference signal R thus provides the analyst with information concerning the deeper regions of the sample, whereas the first signal P provides information concerning the sample surface. This signal may also be calibrated and normalized, in the absence of heating or cooling applied to the sample, to a baseline value of 1. As with the first (surface) reference signal P, greater accuracy may be obtained by using more than one second (deep) reference signal R.

[0098] In order to determine analyte concentration, a third (analytical) signal Q is also measured. This signal is measured at an IR absorbance peak of the selected analyte. The IR absorbance peaks for glucose are in the range of about 6.5 μm to 11.0 μm . This detector signal may also be calibrated and normalized, in the absence of heating or cooling applied to the material sample S, to a baseline value of 1. As with the reference signals P, R, the analytical signal Q may be measured at more than one absorbance peak.

[0099] Optionally, or additionally, reference signals may be measured at wavelengths that bracket the analyte absorbance peak. These signals may be advantageously monitored at reference wavelengths which do not overlap the analyte absorbance peaks. Further, it is advantageous to measure reference wavelengths at absorbance peaks which do not overlap the absorbance peaks of other possible constituents contained in the sample.

[0100] a. Basic Thermal Gradient

[0101] As further shown in FIG. 8, the signal intensities P, Q, R are shown initially at the normalized baseline signal intensity of 1. This of course reflects the baseline radiative behavior of a test sample in the absence of applied heating or cooling. At a time t_c , the surface of the sample is subjected to a temperature event which induces a thermal gradient in the sample. The gradient can be induced by heating or cooling the sample surface. The example shown in FIG. 8 uses cooling, for example, using a 10° C. cooling event. In response to the cooling event, the intensities of the detector signals P, Q, R decrease over time.

[0102] Since the cooling of the sample is neither uniform nor instantaneous, the surface cools before the deeper regions of the sample cool. As each of the signals P, Q, R drop in intensity, a pattern emerges. Signal intensity declines

as expected, but as the signals P, Q, R reach a given amplitude value (or series of amplitude values: **150**, **152**, **154**, **156**, **158**), certain temporal effects are noted. After the cooling event is induced at t_c , the first (surface) reference signal P declines in amplitude most rapidly, reaching a checkpoint **150** first, at time t_p . This is due to the fact that the first reference signal P mirrors the sample's radiative characteristics near the surface of the sample. Since the sample surface cools before the underlying regions, the surface (first) reference signal P drops in intensity first.

[0103] Simultaneously, the second reference signal R is monitored. Since the second reference signal R corresponds to the radiation characteristics of deeper regions of the sample, which do not cool as rapidly as the surface (due to the time needed for the surface cooling to propagate into the deeper regions of the sample), the intensity of signal R does not decline until slightly later. Consequently, the signal R does not reach the magnitude **150** until some later time t_r . In other words, there exists a time delay between the time t_p at which the amplitude of the first reference signal P reaches the checkpoint **150** and the time t_r at which the second reference signal R reaches the same checkpoint **150**. This time delay can be expressed as a phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$. Additionally, a phase difference may be measured between the analytical signal Q and either or both reference signals P, R.

[0104] As the concentration of analyte increases, the amount of absorbance at the analytical wavelength increases. This reduces the intensity of the analytical signal Q in a concentration-dependent way. Consequently, the analytical signal Q reaches intensity **150** at some intermediate time t_q . The higher the concentration of analyte, the more the analytical signal Q shifts to the left in FIG. 8. As a result, with increasing analyte concentration, the phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ decreases relative to the first (surface) reference signal P and increases relative to the second (deep tissue) reference signal R. The phase difference(s) $\Phi(\lambda)$ are directly related to analyte concentration and can be used to make accurate determinations of analyte concentration.

[0105] The phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ between the first (surface) reference signal P and the analytical signal Q is represented by the equation:

$$\Phi(\lambda)=|t_p-t_q|$$

[0106] The magnitude of this phase difference decreases with increasing analyte concentration.

[0107] The phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ between the second (deep tissue) reference signal R and the analytical signal Q signal is represented by the equation:

$$\Phi(\lambda)=|t_q-t_r|$$

[0108] The magnitude of this phase difference increases with increasing analyte concentration.

[0109] Accuracy may be enhanced by choosing several checkpoints, for example, **150**, **152**, **154**, **156**, and **158** and averaging the phase differences observed at each checkpoint. The accuracy of this method may be further enhanced by integrating the phase difference(s) continuously over the entire test period. Because in this example only a single temperature event (here, a cooling event) has been induced, the sample reaches a new lower equilibrium temperature and the signals stabilize at a new constant level I_p . Of course, the

method works equally well with thermal gradients induced by heating or by the application or introduction of other forms of energy, such as but not limited to light, radiation, chemically induced heat, friction and vibration.

[0110] This methodology is not limited to the determination of phase difference. At any given time (for example, at a time t_x) the amplitude of the analytical signal Q may be compared to the amplitude of either or both of the reference signals P, R. The difference in amplitude may be observed and processed to determine analyte concentration.

[0111] This method, the variants disclosed herein, and the apparatus disclosed as suitable for application of the method(s), are not limited to the detection of in-vivo glucose concentration. The method and disclosed variants and apparatus may be used on human, animal, or even plant subjects, or on organic or inorganic compositions in a non-medical setting. The method may be used to take measurements of in-vivo or in-vitro samples of virtually any kind. The method is useful for measuring the concentration of a wide range of additional chemical analytes, including but not limited to, glucose, ethanol, insulin, water, carbon dioxide, blood oxygen, cholesterol, bilirubin, ketones, fatty acids, lipoproteins, albumin, urea, creatinine, white blood cells, red blood cells, hemoglobin, oxygenated hemoglobin, carboxyhemoglobin, organic molecules, inorganic molecules, pharmaceuticals, cytochrome, various proteins and chromophores, microcalifications, hormones, as well as other chemical compounds. To detect a given analyte, one needs only to select appropriate analytical and reference wavelengths.

[0112] The method is adaptable and may be used to determine chemical concentrations in samples of body fluids (e.g., blood, urine or saliva) once they have been extracted from a patient. In fact, the method may be used for the measurement of in-vitro samples of virtually any kind.

[0113] b. Modulated Thermal Gradient

[0114] In a variation of the methodology described above, a periodically modulated thermal gradient can be employed to make accurate determinations of analyte concentration.

[0115] As previously shown in FIG. 8, once a thermal gradient is induced in the sample, the reference and analytical signals P, Q, R fall out of phase with respect to each other. This phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ is present whether the thermal gradient is induced through heating or cooling. By alternatively subjecting the test sample to cyclic pattern of heating, cooling, or alternately heating and cooling, an oscillating thermal gradient may be induced in a sample for an extended period of time.

[0116] An oscillating thermal gradient is illustrated using a sinusoidally modulated gradient. FIG. 9 depicts detector signals emanating from a test sample. As with the methodology shown in FIG. 8, one or more reference signals J, L are measured. One or more analytical signals K are also monitored. These signals may be calibrated and normalized, in the absence of heating or cooling applied to the sample, to a baseline value of 1. FIG. 9 shows the signals after normalization. At some time t_c , a temperature event (e.g., cooling) is induced at the sample surface. This causes a decline in the detector signal. As shown in FIG. 8, the signals (P, Q, R) decline until the thermal gradient disappears and a new equilibrium detector signal I_p is reached. In the method shown in FIG. 9, as the gradient begins to

disappear at a signal intensity 160, a heating event, at a time t_w , is induced in the sample surface. As a result the detector output signals J, K, L will rise as the sample temperature rises. At some later time t_{c2} , another cooling event is induced, causing the temperature and detector signals to decline. This cycle of cooling and heating may be repeated over a time interval of arbitrary length. Moreover, if the cooling and heating events are timed properly, a periodically modulated thermal gradient may be induced in the test sample.

[0117] As previously explained in the discussions relating to FIG. 8, the phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ may be measured and used to determine analyte concentration. FIG. 9 shows that the first (surface) reference signal J declines and rises in intensity first. The second (deep tissue) reference signal L declines and rises in a time-delayed manner relative to the first reference signal J. The analytical signal K exhibits a time/phase delay dependent on the analyte concentration. With increasing concentration, the analytical signal K shifts to the left in FIG. 9. As with FIG. 8, the phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ may be measured. For example, a phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ between the second reference signal L and the analytical signal K, may be measured at a set amplitude 162 as shown in FIG. 9. Again, the magnitude of the phase signal reflects the analyte concentration of the sample.

[0118] The phase-difference information compiled by any of the methodologies disclosed herein can be correlated by the control system 30 (see FIG. 1) with previously determined phase-difference information to determine the analyte concentration in the sample. This correlation could involve comparison of the phase-difference information received from analysis of the sample, with a data set containing the phase-difference profiles observed from analysis of wide variety of standards of known analyte concentration. In one embodiment, a phase/concentration curve or regression model is established by applying regression techniques to a set of phase-difference data observed in standards of known analyte concentration. This curve is used to estimate the analyte concentration in a sample based on the phase-difference information received from the sample.

[0119] Advantageously, the phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ may be measured continuously throughout the test period. The phase-difference measurements may be integrated over the entire test period for an extremely accurate measure of phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$. Accuracy may also be improved by using more than one reference signal and/or more than one analytical signal.

[0120] As an alternative or as a supplement to measuring phase difference(s), differences in amplitude between the analytical and reference signal(s) may be measured and employed to determine analyte concentration. Additional details relating to this technique and not necessary to repeat here may be found in the Assignee's U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/538,164, incorporated by reference below.

[0121] Additionally, these methods may be advantageously employed to simultaneously measure the concentration of one or more analytes. By choosing reference and analyte wavelengths that do not overlap, phase differences can be simultaneously measured and processed to determine analyte concentrations. Although FIG. 9 illustrates the method used in conjunction with a sinusoidally modulated thermal gradient, the principle applies to thermal gradients

conforming to any periodic function. In more complex cases, analysis using signal processing with Fourier transforms or other techniques allows accurate determinations of phase difference $\Phi(\lambda)$ and analyte concentration.

[0122] As shown in FIG. 10, the magnitude of the phase differences may be determined by measuring the time intervals between the amplitude peaks (or troughs) of the reference signals J, L and the analytical signal K. Alternatively, the time intervals between the “zero crossings” (the point at which the signal amplitude changes from positive to negative, or negative to positive) may be used to determine the phase difference between the analytical signal K and the reference signals J, L. This information is subsequently processed and a determination of analyte concentration may then be made. This particular method has the advantage of not requiring normalized signals.

[0123] As a further alternative, two or more driving frequencies may be employed to determine analyte concentrations at selected depths within the sample. A slow (e.g., 1 Hz) driving frequency creates a thermal gradient which penetrates deeper into the sample than the gradient created by a fast (e.g., 3 Hz) driving frequency. This is because the individual heating and/or cooling events are longer in duration where the driving frequency is lower. Thus, the use of a slow driving frequency provides analyte-concentration information from a deeper “slice” of the sample than does the use of a fast driving frequency.

[0124] It has been found that when analyzing a sample of human skin, a temperature event of 10° C. creates a thermal gradient which penetrates to a depth of about 150 μm , after about 500 ms of exposure. Consequently, a cooling/heating cycle or driving frequency of 1 Hz provides information to a depth of about 150 μm . It has also been determined that exposure to a temperature event of 10° C. for about 167 ms creates a thermal gradient that penetrates to a depth of about 50 μm . Therefore, a cooling/heating cycle of 3 Hz provides information to a depth of about 50 μm . By subtracting the detector signal information measured at a 3 Hz driving frequency from the detector signal information measured at a 1 Hz driving frequency, one can determine the analyte concentration(s) in the region of skin between 50 and 150 μm . Of course, a similar approach can be used to determine analyte concentrations at any desired depth range within any suitable type of sample.

[0125] As shown in FIG. 11, alternating deep and shallow thermal gradients may be induced by alternating slow and fast driving frequencies. As with the methods described above, this variation also involves the detection and measurement of phase differences $\Phi(\lambda)$ between reference signals G, G' and analytical signals H, H'. Phase differences are measured at both fast (e.g., 3 Hz) and slow (e.g., 1 Hz) driving frequencies. The slow driving frequency may continue for an arbitrarily chosen number of cycles (in region SL₁), for example, two full cycles. Then the fast driving frequency is employed for a selected duration, in region F₁. The phase difference data is compiled in the same manner as disclosed above. In addition, the fast frequency (shallow sample) phase difference data may be subtracted from the slow frequency (deep sample) data to provide an accurate determination of analyte concentration in the region of the sample between the gradient penetration depth associated with the fast driving frequency and that associated with the slow driving frequency.

[0126] The driving frequencies (e.g., 1 Hz and 3 Hz) can be multiplexed as shown in FIG. 12. The fast (3 Hz) and slow (1 Hz) driving frequencies can be superimposed rather than sequentially implemented. During analysis, the data can be separated by frequency (using Fourier transform or other techniques) and independent measurements of phase delay at each of the driving frequencies may be calculated. Once resolved, the two sets of phase delay data are processed to determine absorbance and analyte concentration.

[0127] Additional details not necessary to repeat here may be found in U.S. Pat. No. 6,198,949, titled SOLID-STATE NON-INVASIVE INFRARED ABSORPTION SPECTROMETER FOR THE GENERATION AND CAPTURE OF THERMAL GRADIENT SPECTRA FROM LIVING TISSUE, issued Mar. 6, 2001; U.S. Pat. No. 6,161,028, titled METHOD FOR DETERMINING ANALYTE CONCENTRATION USING PERIODIC TEMPERATURE MODULATION AND PHASE DETECTION, issued Dec. 12, 2000; U.S. Pat. No. 5,877,500, titled MULTICHANNEL INFRARED DETECTOR WITH OPTICAL CONCENTRATORS FOR EACH CHANNEL, issued on Mar. 2, 1999; U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/538,164, filed Mar. 30, 2000 and titled METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DETERMINING ANALYTE CONCENTRATION USING PHASE AND MAGNITUDE DETECTION OF A RADIATION TRANSFER FUNCTION; U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/336,404, filed Oct. 29, 2001, titled WINDOW ASSEMBLY; U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/340,435, filed Dec. 12, 2001, titled CONTROL SYSTEM FOR BLOOD CONSTITUENT MONITOR; U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/340,654, filed Dec. 12, 2001, titled SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR CONDUCTING AND DETECTING INFRARED RADIATION; U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/336,294, filed Oct. 29, 2001, titled METHOD AND DEVICE FOR INCREASING ACCURACY OF BLOOD CONSTITUENT MEASUREMENT; and U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/339,116, filed Nov. 7, 2001, titled METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR IMPROVING CLINICALLY SIGNIFICANT ACCURACY OF ANALYTE MEASUREMENTS. The entire disclosure of all of the above-mentioned patents, patent applications and publications is hereby incorporated by reference herein and made a part of this specification.

[0128] B. Whole-Blood Detection System

[0129] FIG. 13 is a schematic view of a reagentless whole-blood analyte detection system 200 (hereinafter “whole-blood system”) in a preferred configuration. The whole-blood system 200 may comprise a radiation source 220, a filter 230, a cuvette 240 that includes a sample cell 242, and a radiation detector 250. The whole-blood system 200 preferably also comprises a signal processor 260 and a display 270. Although a cuvette 240 is shown here, other sample elements, as described below, could also be used in the system 200. The whole-blood system 200 can also comprise a sample extractor 280, which can be used to access bodily fluid from an appendage, such as the finger 290, forearm, or any other suitable location.

[0130] As used herein, the terms “whole-blood analyte detection system” and “whole-blood system” are broad, synonymous terms and are used in their ordinary sense and refer, without limitation, to analyte detection devices which can determine the concentration of an analyte in a material

sample by passing electromagnetic radiation through the sample and detecting the absorbance of the radiation by the sample. As used herein, the term "whole-blood" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to blood that has been withdrawn from a patient but that has not been otherwise processed, e.g., it has not been hemolysed, lyophilized, centrifuged, or separated in any other manner, after being removed from the patient. Whole-blood may contain amounts of other fluids, such as interstitial fluid or intracellular fluid, which may enter the sample during the withdrawal process or are naturally present in the blood. It should be understood, however, that the whole-blood system **200** disclosed herein is not limited to analysis of whole-blood, as the whole-blood system **10** may be employed to analyze other substances, such as saliva, urine, sweat, interstitial fluid, intracellular fluid, hemolysed, lyophilized, or centrifuged blood or any other organic or inorganic materials.

[0131] The whole-blood system **200** may comprise a near-patient testing system. As used herein, "near-patient testing system" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense, and includes, without limitation, test systems that are configured to be used where the patient is rather than exclusively in a laboratory, e.g., systems that can be used at a patient's home, in a clinic, in a hospital, or even in a mobile environment. Users of near-patient testing systems can include patients, family members of patients, clinicians, nurses, or doctors. A "near-patient testing system" could also include a "point-of-care" system.

[0132] The whole-blood system **200** may in one embodiment be configured to be operated easily by the patient or user. As such, the system **200** is preferably a portable device. As used herein, "portable" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and means, without limitation, that the system **200** can be easily transported by the patient and used where convenient. For example, the system **200** is advantageously small. In one preferred embodiment, the system **200** is small enough to fit into a purse or backpack. In another embodiment, the system **200** is small enough to fit into a pants pocket. In still another embodiment, the system **200** is small enough to be held in the palm of a hand of the user.

[0133] Some of the embodiments described herein employ a sample element to hold a material sample, such as a sample of biological fluid. As used herein, "sample element" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and includes, without limitation, structures that have a sample cell and at least one sample cell wall, but more generally includes any of a number of structures that can hold, support or contain a material sample and that allow electromagnetic radiation to pass through a sample held, supported or contained thereby; e.g., a cuvette, test strip, etc. As used herein, the term "disposable" when applied to a component, such as a sample element, is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and means, without limitation, that the component in question is used a finite number of times and then discarded. Some disposable components are used only once and then discarded. Other disposable components are used more than once and then discarded.

[0134] The radiation source **220** of the whole-blood system **200** emits electromagnetic radiation in any of a number of spectral ranges, e.g., within infrared wavelengths; in the

mid-infrared wavelengths; above about $0.8 \mu\text{m}$; between about $5.0 \mu\text{m}$ and about $20.0 \mu\text{m}$; and/or between about $5.25 \mu\text{m}$ and about $12.0 \mu\text{m}$. However, in other embodiments the whole-blood system **200** may employ a radiation source **220** which emits in wavelengths found anywhere from the visible spectrum through the microwave spectrum, for example anywhere from about $0.4 \mu\text{m}$ to greater than about $100 \mu\text{m}$. In still further embodiments the radiation source emits electromagnetic radiation in wavelengths between about $3.5 \mu\text{m}$ and about $14 \mu\text{m}$, or between about $0.8 \mu\text{m}$ and about $2.5 \mu\text{m}$, or between about $2.5 \mu\text{m}$ and about $20 \mu\text{m}$, or between about $20 \mu\text{m}$ and about $100 \mu\text{m}$, or between about $6.85 \mu\text{m}$ and about $10.10 \mu\text{m}$.

[0135] The radiation emitted from the source **220** is in one embodiment modulated at a frequency between about one-half hertz and about one hundred hertz, in another embodiment between about 2.5 hertz and about 7.5 hertz, in still another embodiment at about 50 hertz, and in yet another embodiment at about 5 hertz. With a modulated radiation source, ambient light sources, such as a flickering fluorescent lamp, can be more easily identified and rejected when analyzing the radiation incident on the detector **250**. One source that is suitable for this application is produced by ION OPTICS, INC. and sold under the part number NL5LNC.

[0136] The filter **230** permits electromagnetic radiation of selected wavelengths to pass through and impinge upon the cuvette/sample element **240**. Preferably, the filter **230** permits radiation at least at about the following wavelengths to pass through to the cuvette/sample element: $3.9 \mu\text{m}$, $4.0 \mu\text{m}$, $4.05 \mu\text{m}$, $4.2 \mu\text{m}$, $4.75 \mu\text{m}$, $4.95 \mu\text{m}$, $5.25 \mu\text{m}$, $6.12 \mu\text{m}$, $7.4 \mu\text{m}$, $8.0 \mu\text{m}$, $8.45 \mu\text{m}$, $9.25 \mu\text{m}$, $9.5 \mu\text{m}$, $9.65 \mu\text{m}$, $10.4 \mu\text{m}$, $12.2 \mu\text{m}$. In another embodiment, the filter **230** permits radiation at least at about the following wavelengths to pass through to the cuvette/sample element: $5.25 \mu\text{m}$, $6.12 \mu\text{m}$, $6.8 \mu\text{m}$, $8.03 \mu\text{m}$, $8.45 \mu\text{m}$, $9.25 \mu\text{m}$, $9.65 \mu\text{m}$, $10.4 \mu\text{m}$, $12 \mu\text{m}$. In still another embodiment, the filter **230** permits radiation at least at about the following wavelengths to pass through to the cuvette/sample element: $6.85 \mu\text{m}$, $6.97 \mu\text{m}$, $7.39 \mu\text{m}$, $8.23 \mu\text{m}$, $8.62 \mu\text{m}$, $9.02 \mu\text{m}$, $9.22 \mu\text{m}$, $9.43 \mu\text{m}$, $9.62 \mu\text{m}$, and $10.10 \mu\text{m}$. The sets of wavelengths recited above correspond to specific embodiments within the scope of this disclosure. Furthermore, other subsets of the foregoing sets or other combinations of wavelengths can be selected. Finally, other sets of wavelengths can be selected within the scope of this disclosure based on cost of production, development time, availability, and other factors relating to cost, manufacturability, and time to market of the filters used to generate the selected wavelengths, and/or to reduce the total number of filters needed.

[0137] In one embodiment, the filter **230** is capable of cycling its passband among a variety of narrow spectral bands or a variety of selected wavelengths. The filter **230** may thus comprise a solid-state tunable infrared filter, such as that available from ION OPTICS INC. The filter **230** could also be implemented as a filter wheel with a plurality of fixed-passband filters mounted on the wheel, generally perpendicular to the direction of the radiation emitted by the source **220**. Rotation of the filter wheel alternately presents filters that pass radiation at wavelengths that vary in accordance with the filters as they pass through the field of view of the detector **250**.

[0138] The detector **250** preferably comprises a 3 mm long by 3 mm wide pyroelectric detector. Suitable examples are produced by DIAS Angewandte Sensorik GmbH of Dresden, Germany, or by BAE Systems (such as its TGS model detector). The detector **250** could alternatively comprise a thermopile, a bolometer, a silicon microbolometer, a leadsalt focal plane array, or a mercury-cadmium-telluride (MCT) detector. Whichever structure is used as the detector **250**, it is desirably configured to respond to the radiation incident upon its active surface **254** to produce electrical signals that correspond to the incident radiation.

[0139] In one embodiment, the sample element comprises a cuvette **240** which in turn comprises a sample cell **242** configured to hold a sample of tissue and/or fluid (such as whole-blood, blood components, interstitial fluid, intercellular fluid, saliva, urine, sweat and/or other organic or inorganic materials) from a patient within its sample cell. The cuvette **240** is installed in the whole-blood system **200** with the sample cell **242** located at least partially in the optical path **243** between the radiation source **220** and the detector **250**. Thus, when radiation is emitted from the source **220** through the filter **230** and the sample cell **242** of the cuvette **240**, the detector **250** detects the radiation signal strength at the wavelength(s) of interest. Based on this signal strength, the signal processor **260** determines the degree to which the sample in the cell **242** absorbs radiation at the detected wavelength(s). The concentration of the analyte of interest is then determined from the absorption data via any suitable spectroscopic technique.

[0140] As shown in FIG. 13, the whole-blood system **200** can also comprise a sample extractor **280**. As used herein, the term "sample extractor" is a broad term and is used in its ordinary sense and refers, without limitation, to any device which is suitable for drawing a sample material, such as whole-blood, other bodily fluids, or any other sample material, through the skin of a patient. In various embodiments, the sample extractor may comprise a lance, laser lance, iontophoretic sampler, gas-jet, fluid-jet or particle-jet perforator, ultrasonic enhancer (used with or without a chemical enhancer), or any other suitable device.

[0141] As shown in FIG. 13, the sample extractor **280** could form an opening in an appendage, such as the finger **290**, to make whole-blood available to the cuvette **240**. It should be understood that other appendages could be used to draw the sample, including but not limited to the forearm. With some embodiments of the sample extractor **280**, the user forms a tiny hole or slice through the skin, through which flows a sample of bodily fluid such as whole-blood. Where the sample extractor **280** comprises a lance (see FIG. 14), the sample extractor **280** may comprise a sharp cutting implement made of metal or other rigid materials. One suitable laser lance is the Lasette Plus® produced by Cell Robotics International, Inc. of Albuquerque, N. Mex. If a laser lance, iontophoretic sampler, gas-jet or fluid-jet perforator is used as the sample extractor **280**, it could be incorporated into the whole-blood system **200** (see FIG. 13), or it could be a separate device.

[0142] Additional information on laser lances can be found in U.S. Pat. No. 5,908,416, issued Jun. 1, 1999, titled LASER DERMAL PERFORATOR; the entirety of this patent is hereby incorporated by reference herein and made a part of this specification. One suitable gas-jet, fluid-jet or

particle-jet perforator is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,207,400, issued Mar. 27, 2001, titled NON- OR MINIMALLY INVASIVE MONITORING METHODS USING PARTICLE DELIVERY METHODS; the entirety of this patent is hereby incorporated by reference herein and made a part of this specification. One suitable iontophoretic sampler is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,298,254, issued Oct. 2, 2001, titled DEVICE FOR SAMPLING SUBSTANCES USING ALTERNATING POLARITY OF IONTOPHORETIC CURRENT; the entirety of this patent is hereby incorporated by reference herein and made a part of this specification. One suitable ultrasonic enhancer, and chemical enhancers suitable for use therewith, are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,458,140, titled ENHANCEMENT OF TRANSDERMAL MONITORING APPLICATIONS WITH ULTRASOUND AND CHEMICAL ENHANCERS, issued Oct. 17, 1995, the entire disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of this specification.

[0143] FIG. 14 shows one embodiment of a sample element, in the form of a cuvette **240**, in greater detail. The cuvette **240** further comprises a sample supply passage **248**, a pierceable portion **249**, a first window **244**, and a second window **246**, with the sample cell **242** extending between the windows **244**, **246**. In one embodiment, the cuvette **240** does not have a second window **246**. The first window **244** (or second window **246**) is one form of a sample cell wall; in other embodiments of the sample elements and cuvettes disclosed herein, any sample cell wall may be used that at least partially contains, holds or supports a material sample, such as a biological fluid sample, and which is transmissive of at least some bands of electromagnetic radiation, and which may but need not be transmissive of electromagnetic radiation in the visible range. The pierceable portion **249** is an area of the sample supply passage **248** that can be pierced by suitable embodiments of the sample extractor **280**. Suitable embodiments of the sample extractor **280** can pierce the portion **249** and the appendage **290** to create a wound in the appendage **290** and to provide an inlet for the blood or other fluid from the wound to enter the cuvette **240**. (The sample extractor **280** is shown on the opposite side of the sample element in FIG. 14, as compared to FIG. 13, as it may pierce the portion **249** from either side.)

[0144] The windows **244**, **246** are preferably optically transmissive in the range of electromagnetic radiation that is emitted by the source **220**, or that is permitted to pass through the filter **230**. In one embodiment, the material that makes up the windows **244**, **246** is completely transmissive, i.e., it does not absorb any of the electromagnetic radiation from the source **220** and filter **230** that is incident upon it. In another embodiment, the material of the windows **244**, **246** has some absorption in the electromagnetic range of interest, but its absorption is negligible. In yet another embodiment, the absorption of the material of the windows **244**, **246** is not negligible, but it is known and stable for a relatively long period of time. In another embodiment, the absorption of the windows **244**, **246** is stable for only a relatively short period of time, but the whole-blood system **200** is configured to observe the absorption of the material and eliminate it from the analyte measurement before the material properties can change measurably.

[0145] The windows **244**, **246** are made of polypropylene in one embodiment. In another embodiment, the windows **244**, **246** are made of polyethylene. Polyethylene and

polypropylene are materials having particularly advantageous properties for handling and manufacturing, as is known in the art. Also, polypropylene can be arranged in a number of structures, e.g., isotactic, atactic and syndiotactic, which may enhance the flow characteristics of the sample in the sample element. Preferably the windows **244**, **246** are made of durable and easily manufactureable materials, such as the above-mentioned polypropylene or polyethylene, or silicon or any other suitable material. The windows **244**, **246** can be made of any suitable polymer, which can be isotactic, atactic or syndiotactic in structure.

[0146] The distance between the windows **244**, **246** comprises an optical pathlength and can be between about $1\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $100\ \mu\text{m}$. In one embodiment, the optical pathlength is between about $10\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $40\ \mu\text{m}$, or between about $25\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $60\ \mu\text{m}$, or between about $30\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $50\ \mu\text{m}$. In still another embodiment, the optical pathlength is about $25\ \mu\text{m}$. The transverse size of each of the windows **244**, **246** is preferably about equal to the size of the detector **250**. In one embodiment, the windows are round with a diameter of about $3\ \text{mm}$. In this embodiment, where the optical pathlength is about $25\ \mu\text{m}$ the volume of the sample cell **242** is about $0.177\ \mu\text{L}$. In one embodiment, the length of the sample supply passage **248** is about $6\ \text{mm}$, the height of the sample supply passage **248** is about $1\ \text{mm}$, and the thickness of the sample supply passage **248** is about equal to the thickness of the sample cell, e.g., $25\ \mu\text{m}$. The volume of the sample supply passage is about $0.150\ \mu\text{L}$. Thus, the total volume of the cuvette **240** in one embodiment is about $0.327\ \mu\text{L}$. Of course, the volume of the cuvette **240**/sample cell **242**/etc. can vary, depending on many variables, such as the size and sensitivity of the detectors **250**, the intensity of the radiation emitted by the source **220**, the expected flow properties of the sample, and whether flow enhancers (discussed below) are incorporated into the cuvette **240**. The transport of fluid to the sample cell **242** is achieved preferably through capillary action, but may also be achieved through wicking, or a combination of wicking and capillary action.

[0147] FIGS. **15-17** depict another embodiment of a cuvette **305** that could be used in connection with the whole-blood system **200**. The cuvette **305** comprises a sample cell **310**, a sample supply passage **315**, an air vent passage **320**, and a vent **325**. As best seen in FIGS. **16, 16A** and **17**, the cuvette also comprises a first sample cell window **330** having an inner side **332**, and a second sample cell window **335** having an inner side **337**. As discussed above, the window(s) **330/335** in some embodiments also comprise sample cell wall(s). The cuvette **305** also comprises an opening **317** at the end of the sample supply passage **315** opposite the sample cell **310**. The cuvette **305** is preferably about $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{8}$ inch wide and about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long; however, other dimensions are possible while still achieving the advantages of the cuvette **305**.

[0148] The sample cell **310** is defined between the inner side **332** of the first sample cell window **330** and the inner side **337** of the second sample cell window **335**. The perpendicular distance **T** between the two inner sides **332**, **337** comprises an optical pathlength that can be between about $1\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $1.22\ \text{mm}$. The optical pathlength can alternatively be between about $1\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $100\ \mu\text{m}$. The optical pathlength could still alternatively be about $80\ \mu\text{m}$, but is preferably between about $10\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $50\ \mu\text{m}$. In

another embodiment, the optical pathlength is about $25\ \mu\text{m}$. The windows **330**, **335** are preferably formed from any of the materials discussed above as possessing sufficient radiation transmissivity. The thickness of each window is preferably as small as possible without overly weakening the sample cell **310** or cuvette **305**.

[0149] Once a wound is made in the appendage **290**, the opening **317** of the sample supply passage **315** of the cuvette **305** is placed in contact with the fluid that flows from the wound. In another embodiment, the sample is obtained without creating a wound, e.g. as is done with a saliva sample. In that case, the opening **317** of the sample supply passage **315** of the cuvette **305** is placed in contact with the fluid obtained without creating a wound. The fluid is then transported through the sample supply passage **315** and into the sample cell **310** via capillary action. The air vent passage **320** improves the capillary action by preventing the buildup of air pressure within the cuvette and allowing the blood to displace the air as the blood flows therein.

[0150] Other mechanisms may be employed to transport the sample to the sample cell **310**. For example, wicking could be used by providing a wicking material in at least a portion of the sample supply passage **315**. In another variation, wicking and capillary action could be used together to transport the sample to the sample cell **310**. Membranes could also be positioned within the sample supply passage **315** to move the blood while at the same time filtering out components that might complicate the optical measurement performed by the whole-blood system **200**.

[0151] FIGS. **16** and **16A** depict one approach to constructing the cuvette **305**. In this approach, the cuvette **305** comprises a first layer **350**, a second layer **355**, and a third layer **360**. The second layer **355** is positioned between the first layer **350** and the third layer **360**. The first layer **350** forms the first sample cell window **330** and the vent **325**. As mentioned above, the vent **325** provides an escape for the air that is in the sample cell **310**. While the vent **325** is shown on the first layer **350**, it could also be positioned on the third layer **360**, or could be a cutout in the second layer, and would then be located between the first layer **360** and the third layer **360**. The third layer **360** forms the second sample cell window **335**.

[0152] The second layer **355** may be formed entirely of an adhesive that joins the first and third layers **350**, **360**. In other embodiments, the second layer may be formed from similar materials as the first and third layers, or any other suitable material. The second layer **355** may also be formed as a carrier with an adhesive deposited on both sides thereof. The second layer **355** forms the sample supply passage **315**, the air vent passage **320**, and the sample cell **310**. The thickness of the second layer **355** can be between about $1\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $1.22\ \text{mm}$. This thickness can alternatively be between about $1\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $100\ \mu\text{m}$. This thickness could alternatively be about $80\ \mu\text{m}$, but is preferably between about $10\ \mu\text{m}$ and about $50\ \mu\text{m}$. In another embodiment, the second layer thickness is about $25\ \mu\text{m}$.

[0153] In other embodiments, the second layer **355** can be constructed as an adhesive film having a cutout portion to define the passages **315**, **320**, or as a cutout surrounded by adhesive.

[0154] Further information can be found in U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/055,875, filed Jan. 21, 2002, titled

REAGENT-LESS WHOLE-BLOOD GLUCOSE METER. The entire contents of this patent application are hereby incorporated by reference herein and made a part of this specification.

II. Window Assembly

[0155] FIG. 18 schematically illustrates a noninvasive optical detection system 100 which may be similar to the noninvasive system 10 discussed above, except as further detailed below. The noninvasive system 100 preferably defines an optical path OP including a window assembly 12 consisting essentially of a main layer 32 and a heater layer 34. The optical path OP further includes an optical scrambler or mixer 20, a collimator 22, a plurality of filters 24, concentrators 26, and detectors 28. As described in greater detail above, the optical mixer 20 randomizes the directionality of radiation passing therethrough and ensures that each detector 28 receives a substantially uniform sample of the radiation emitted from the sample S placed against the upper surface 60 of the window assembly 12. Thus it is clear that, in the illustrated embodiment, the only solid transmissive medium positioned across the optical path OP between the sample S and the filters 24 is the window assembly 12, having only a main layer 32 and heater layer 34 (and any antireflective, indexmatching, electrical insulating or protective coatings applied thereto or placed therein). This in turn promotes minimal loss of the radiation signal emitted by the sample S as the signal passes to the detectors 28.

[0156] In other embodiments of the noninvasive detection system 100, any or all of the mixer 20, collimator 22 and concentrators 26 may be omitted. Nonetheless, all of these embodiments will share the above-described advantage of causing minimal signal loss as the radiation emitted by the sample S passes to the detectors 28, with the window assembly 12 as the only solid transmissive medium positioned across the optical path OP between the sample S and the filters 24.

[0157] FIG. 19 shows one embodiment of the window assembly 12. The main layer 32 is formed of an infrared-transparent material and the heater layer 34 is affixed to the backside (i.e., the side opposite the sample S, facing the interior of the noninvasive system) of the main layer 32. The main layer 32 may be formed from diamond, in particular chemical-vapor-deposited ("CVD") diamond, with a preferred thickness of up to about 0.012" and more preferably about 0.010" or less. A minimal window thickness is preferred in order to reduce the solid material through which the infrared radiation must pass before entering the noninvasive system. Alternative infrared-transparent materials may be used in forming the main layer, such as silicon or germanium.

[0158] In the illustrated embodiment, the heater layer 34 includes an electrical resistance heating grid, with bus bars 36 located at opposing ends of an array of heater elements 38. The bus bars 36 typically comprise conductive elements provided in electrical contact with the heater elements 38 so that, upon connection of the bus bars 36 to a suitable electrical power source (not shown) a current may be passed through the elements 38 to generate heat in the window assembly 12. The heater layer 34 may also include one or more resistance temperature devices (RTD's) 55 to measure the temperature of the window assembly 12 and provide

temperature feedback to a control system 30. The RTDs 55 terminate in RTD connection pads 57.

[0159] In a preferred embodiment, the window assembly 12 of FIG. 19 comprises substantially only the main layer 32 and the heater layer 34 (and any antireflective, index-matching, electrical insulating or protective coatings applied thereto or placed therein, as may be done without substantial loss of the advantages of such a two-layer window assembly). Thus, when installed in an optical detection system such as the noninvasive system 10 shown in FIG. 1 or the system 100 illustrated in FIG. 18, the window assembly 12 will facilitate a minimally obstructed optical path for the electromagnetic energy emitted from the sample S.

[0160] With continued reference to FIG. 19, the heater layer 34 preferably comprises a first adhesion layer of gold or platinum (hereinafter referred to as the "gold" layer) deposited over an alloy layer which is applied to the main layer 32. The alloy layer comprises an electrically conductive material suitable for forming the heating elements 38 of the heater layer 34, such as, by way of example, 10/90 titanium/tungsten, titanium/platinum, nickel/chromium, or other similar material. The gold layer preferably has a thickness of about 4000 Å, and the alloy layer preferably has a thickness ranging between about 300 Å and about 500 Å. The gold layer and/or the alloy layer may be deposited onto the main layer 32 by chemical deposition including, but not necessarily limited to, vapor deposition, liquid deposition, plating, laminating, casting, sintering, or other forming or deposition methodologies well known to those of ordinary skill in the art. If desired, the heater layer 34 may be covered with an electrically insulating coating which also enhances adhesion to the main layer 32. One preferred coating material is aluminum oxide; other acceptable materials include, but are not limited to, titanium dioxide or zinc selenide.

[0161] The heater layer 34 may incorporate a variable pitch distance between centerlines of adjacent heater elements 38 to maintain a constant power density, and promote a uniform temperature, across the entire layer 34. Alternatively, the pitch distance may be maintained constant across the heater layer. Where a constant pitch distance is employed, the preferred distance is at least about 50-100 microns. The heater elements 38 are typically provided with a width of about 25 microns. Other heater element widths may also be used to increase or decrease the power output of the heater layer. If desired, the width of the heater elements 38 may also be varied across a given heater layer 34 as needed in order to alter the power density across the heater layer 34.

[0162] In a presently preferred embodiment, the pitch distance separating centerlines of adjacent heater elements 38 is reduced, and/or the width of the heater elements 38 is increased, in the regions of the window assembly 12 near the point(s) of contact with the thermal diffuser 410 (see FIG. 20 and discussion below). This arrangement advantageously promotes an isothermal temperature profile at the upper surface of the main layer 32 despite thermal contact with the thermal diffuser.

[0163] The embodiment shown in FIG. 19 includes a plurality of heater elements 38 of substantially equal width which are variably spaced across the width of the main layer 32. In the illustrated embodiment, the centerlines of the heater elements 38 are spaced at a first pitch distance of

about 0.0070" at peripheral portions **34a** of the heater layer **34**, and at a second pitch distance of about 0.015" at a central portion **34b** of the main layer **32**. The heater elements **38** closest to the center are preferably sufficiently spaced to allow the RTDs **55** to extend therebetween. In the embodiment shown, the main layer **32** includes peripheral regions **32a** which extend about 0.053" from the outermost heater element on each side of the heater layer **34** to the adjacent edge of the main layer **32**. As shown, the bus bars **36** are preferably configured and segmented to allow space for the RTDs **55** and the RTD connection pads **57**, in intermediate gaps **36a**. The RTDs **55** preferably extend into the array of heater elements **38** by distance that is slightly longer than half of the length of an individual heater element **38**. In alternative embodiments, the RTDs **55** may be located at the edges of the main layer **32**, or at other locations as desired for a particular noninvasive system.

[0164] With continued reference to **FIG. 19**, the peripheral regions of the main layer **32** may include metallized edge portions **35** for facilitating connection to the diffuser **410** (discussed below in connection with **FIG. 20**). The metallized edge portions **35** may be formed by the same or similar processes used in forming the heater elements **38** and RTDs **55**. In preferred embodiments, the edge portions **35** are typically between about 0.040" and about 0.060" wide by about 0.450" and about 0.650" long, and in one embodiment, they are about 0.050" by about 0.550". Other dimensions may be appropriately used so long as the window assembly **12** may be joined in thermal communication with the diffuser **410** as needed.

[0165] In the embodiment shown in **FIG. 19**, the main layer **32** is about 0.690" long by about 0.571" wide, and the heater layer (excluding the metallized edge portions **35**) is about 0.640" long by about 0.465" wide. The main layer **32** is about 0.010"-0.012" thick, and is advantageously thinner than about 0.010" where possible. Each heater element **38** is about 0.570" long, and each peripheral region **34a** is about 0.280" wide. These dimensions are merely exemplary; of course, other dimensions may be used as desired.

[0166] Alternative structures suitable for use as the heater layer **34** include, but are not limited to, thermoelectric heaters, radiofrequency (RF) heaters, infrared radiation heaters, optical heaters, heat exchangers, electrical resistance heating grids, or wire bridge heating grids. Whichever type of heater layer is employed, it is preferred that the heater layer obscures about 10% or less of the window assembly **12**.

[0167] **FIG. 20** illustrates an exploded view of a window mounting system **400** which, in one embodiment, is employed as part of the noninvasive system **10** disclosed above. Where employed in connection with the noninvasive system **10**, the window mounting system **400** supplements or, where appropriate, replaces any of the window assembly **12**, cooling system **14**, cold reservoir **16** and heat sink **18** shown in **FIG. 1**.

[0168] In the window mounting system **400**, the window assembly **12** is physically and electrically connected (typically by soldering) to a first printed circuit board ("first PCB") **402**. The window assembly **12** is also in thermally conductive relation (typically by contact) to a thermal diffuser **410**. The window assembly may also be fixed to the diffuser **410** by soldering.

[0169] The thermal diffuser **410** generally comprises a heat spreader layer **412** which, as mentioned, preferably contacts the window assembly **12**, and a conductive layer **414** which is typically soldered to the heat spreader layer **412**. The conductive layer **414** may then be placed in direct contact with a cold side **418a** of a thermoelectric cooler (TEC) **418** or other cooling device. The TEC **418**, which in one embodiment comprises a 25 W TEC manufactured by MELCOR, is in electrical communication with a second PCB **403**, which includes TEC power leads **409** and TEC power terminals **411** for connection of the TEC **418** to an appropriate power source (not shown). The second PCB **403** also includes contacts **408** for connection with RTD terminals **407** (see **FIG. 21**) of the first PCB **402**. A heat sink **419**, which may take the form of the illustrated water jacket, the heat sink **18** shown in **FIG. 6**, any other heat sink structures mentioned herein, or any other appropriate device, is in thermal communication with a hot side **418b** of the TEC **418** (or other cooling device), in order to remove any excess heat created by the TEC **418**.

[0170] In alternative embodiments, the window assemblies shown in **FIGS. 2 and 3** and described above may also be used in conjunction with the window mounting system illustrated in **FIG. 20**.

[0171] **FIG. 21** illustrates a plan view of the interconnection of the window assembly **12**, the first PCB **402**, the diffuser **410** and the thermoelectric cooler **418**. The first PCB includes RTD bonding leads **406** and heater bonding pads **404** which permit attachment of the RTDs **55** and bus bars **36**, respectively, of the window assembly **12** to the first PCB **402** via soldering or other conventional techniques. Electrical communication is thus established between the heater elements **38** of the heater layer **34**, and heater terminals **405** formed in the heater bonding pads **404**. Similarly, electrical communication is established between the RTDs **55** and RTD terminals **407** formed at the ends of the RTD bonding leads **406**. Electrical connections can be established with the heater elements **38** and the RTDs **55** via simple connection to the terminals **405**, **407** of the first PCB **402**. Thus, the interconnection system **200** provides a simple, reliable, inexpensive means of establishing the appropriate electrical connections with the window assembly **12**. Other interconnection systems may also be used as desired.

[0172] With further reference to **FIGS. 19-21**, the heat spreader layer **412** of the thermal diffuser **410** contacts the underside of the main layer **32** of the window assembly **12** via a pair of rails **416**. The rails **416** may contact the main layer **32** at the metallized edge portions **35**, or at any other appropriate location. The physical and thermal connection between the rails **416** and the window main layer **32** may be achieved by soldering, as indicated above. Alternatively, the connection may be achieved by an adhesive such as epoxy, or any other appropriate method. The material chosen for the window main layer **32** is preferably sufficiently thermally conductive that heat may be quickly removed from the main layer **32** through the rails **416**, the diffuser **410**, and the TEC **128**.

[0173] **FIG. 22** shows a cross-sectional view of the assembly of **FIG. 21** through line **22-22**. As can be seen in **FIG. 22**, the window assembly **12** contacts the rails **416** of the heat spreader layer **412**. The conductive layer **414** underlies

the spreader layer 412 and may comprise protrusions 426 configured to extend through openings 424 formed in the spreader layer 412. The openings 424 and protrusions 426 are sized to leave sufficient expansion space therebetween, to allow expansion and contraction of the conductive layer 414 without interference with, or causing deformation of, the window assembly 12 or the heat spreader layer 412. Moreover, the protrusions 426 and openings 424 coact to prevent displacement of the spreader layer 412 with respect to the conductive layer 414 as the conductive layer 414 expands and contracts.

[0174] The thermal diffuser 410 provides a thermal impedance between the TEC 418 and the window assembly 12, which impedance is selected to drain heat from the window assembly at a rate proportional to the power output of the heater layer 34. In this way, the temperature of the main layer 32 can be rapidly cycled between a "hot" and a "cold" temperatures, thereby allowing a time-varying thermal gradient to be induced in a sample S placed against the window assembly 12. The thermal impedance of the diffuser 410 will depend on the material and the thickness of the conductive layer 414 and the heat spreader layer 412, among other factors.

[0175] The heat spreader layer 412 is preferably made of a material which has substantially the same coefficient of thermal expansion as the material used to form the window assembly main layer 32, within the expected operating temperature range. Preferably, both the material used to form the main layer 32 and the material used to form the heat spreader layer 412 have substantially the same, extremely low, coefficient of thermal expansion. For this reason, CVD diamond is preferred for the main layer 32 (as mentioned above); with a CVD diamond main layer 32 the preferred material for the heat spreader layer 412 is Invar. Invar advantageously has an extremely low coefficient of thermal expansion and a relatively high thermal conductivity. Because Invar is a metal, the main layer 32 and the heat spreader layer 412 can be thermally bonded to one another with little difficulty. Alternatively, other materials may be used for the heat spreader layer 412; for example, any of a number of glass and ceramic materials with low coefficients of thermal expansion may be employed.

[0176] In the absence of a material of a similar thermal expansion coefficient, the stresses induced in the window main layer 32 by the repeated expansion and contraction of the thermal diffuser 410 would be very destructive to the window assembly 12. By matching the thermal expansion coefficients of the main layer 32 and the heat spreader layer 412 of the thermal diffuser 410, the temperature of the window 12 can be rapidly cycled between "cold" and "hot" temperatures with minimal physical stress to the window 12.

[0177] The conductive layer 414 of the thermal diffuser 410 is typically a highly thermally conductive material such as copper (or, alternatively, other metals or non-metals exhibiting comparable thermal conductivities). The conductive layer 414 is typically soldered or otherwise bonded to the underside of the heat spreader layer 412.

[0178] In the illustrated embodiment, the heat spreader layer 412 may be constructed according to the following dimensions, which are to be understood as exemplary; accordingly the dimensions may be varied as desired. The heat spreader layer 412 has an overall length and width of

about 1.170", with a central opening of about 0.590" long by 0.470" wide. Generally, the heat spreader layer 412 is about 0.030" thick; however, the rails 416 extend a further 0.045" above the basic thickness of the heat spreader layer 412. Each rail 416 has an overall length of about 0.710"; over the central 0.525" of this length each rail 416 is about 0.053" wide. On either side of the central width each rail 416 tapers, at a radius of about 0.6", down to a width of about 0.023". Each opening 424 is about 0.360" long by about 0.085" wide, with corners rounded at a radius of about 0.033".

[0179] In the illustrated embodiment, conductive layer 414 may be constructed according to the following dimensions, which are to be understood as exemplary; accordingly the dimensions may be varied as desired. The conductive layer 414 has an overall length and width of about 1.170", with a central opening of about 0.590" long by 0.470" wide. Generally, the conductive layer 412 is about 0.035" thick; however, the protrusions 426 extend a further 0.075"-0.085" above the basic thickness of the conductive layer 414. Each protrusion 426 is about 0.343" long by about 0.076" wide, with corners rounded at a radius of about 0.035".

[0180] As shown in FIG. 20, first and second clamping plates 450 and 452 may be used to clamp the portions of the window mounting system 400 to one another. For example, the second clamping plate 452 is configured to clamp the window assembly 12 and the first PCB 402 to the diffuser 410 with screws or other fasteners extending through the openings shown in the second clamping plate 452, the heat spreader layer 412 and the conductive layer 414. Similarly, the first clamping plate 450 is configured to overlie the second clamping plate 452 and clamp the rest of the window mounting system 400 to the heat sink 419, thus sandwiching the second clamping plate 452, the window assembly 12, the first PCB 402, the diffuser 410, the second PCB 403, and the TEC 418 therebetween. The first clamping plate 450 prevents undesired contact between the sample S and any portion of the window mounting system 400, other than the window assembly 12 itself. Other mounting plates and mechanisms may also be used as desired.

[0181] It has been found that the configuration of the window assembly 12 and spectrometer 100 disclosed above yields various performance advantages over conventional systems. The preferred CVD diamond window provides excellent infrared transmission, especially in the preferred mid-far IR wavelengths of 5-15 microns, and thus permits a strong signal to pass to the infrared detectors in the spectrometer. The diamond material is also highly thermally conductive and advantageously presents a uniform temperature front to a tissue sample placed against the window, while facilitating high fidelity control of the temperature of the window and the adjacent tissue sample. The diamond window is also very strong and highly resistant to abrasion. Location of the heater layer on the backside of the window protects it against environmental wear and/or damage, while the insulative properties of the diamond which forms the intervening main layer guard against patient exposure to current in the heater layer. The preferably flat upper surface of the window assembly facilitates good thermal contact with the sample S.

What is claimed is:

1. A window assembly for heating a sample for analysis by a noninvasive optical detection system and for permitting

infrared energy emitted by the sample to pass into the detection system, said window assembly consisting of:

- a main layer formed from an infrared-transparent material; and
- a heater layer affixed to said main layer;

wherein said heater layer is configured to exchange heat to the sample, and said main layer is configured to permit infrared energy to pass from the sample into the noninvasive optical detection system.

2. The window assembly of claim 1, wherein the heater layer comprises a plurality of heating elements.

3. The window assembly of claim 2, wherein said heater layer comprises bus bars located at opposing ends of an array of heating elements.

4. The window assembly of claim 2, wherein the heater layer comprises an alloy layer formed on the main layer, and a first adhesion layer formed over the alloy layer.

5. The window assembly of claim 1, wherein said heater layer covers up to about 10% of the area of the main layer.

6. The window assembly of claim 1, wherein said main layer comprises a member of the group consisting of silicon, germanium, and chemical vapor deposited diamond.

7. The window assembly of claim 6, wherein the main layer has a thickness of about 0.25 millimeters.

8. The window assembly of claim 1, wherein said heater layer comprises an alloy layer and a first adhesion layer.

9. The window assembly of claim 8, wherein said first adhesion layer comprises gold, and has a thickness of about 4000 Å.

10. The window assembly of claim 9, wherein said heater layer comprises an array of heating elements, the heating elements being separated from one another by a pitch distance.

11. The analyte detection system of claim 10, wherein said pitch distance is about 50 to 100 microns.

12. The window assembly of claim 10, wherein said pitch distance is varied over the width of the heater layer.

13. An analyte detection system for non-invasively determining the concentration of an analyte in a sample, said detection system comprising:

- a window assembly consisting of a main layer adapted to allow electromagnetic radiation to pass therethrough, and a heater layer adapted to exchange heat to the sample;
- a detector adapted to detect electromagnetic radiation emitted by the sample and passed through said window assembly;
- a control system in electrical communication with said heater layer and adapted to cause the heater layer to exchange heat to the sample.

14. The analyte detection system of claim 13, wherein the heater layer comprises a plurality of heater elements.

15. The analyte detection system of claim 14, wherein the pitch distance is about 50 to 100 microns.

16. The analyte detection system of claim 14, wherein the heater elements are spaced at a variable pitch distance.

17. The analyte detection system of claim 13, wherein the heater layer obscures less than about 10% of the window.

18. The analyte detection system of claim 13, wherein the detector is adapted to detect infrared electromagnetic radiation.

19. The analyte detection system of claim 13, further comprising a cooling system in thermal communication with the window assembly.

20. The analyte detection system of claim 13, wherein the heater layer of the window assembly comprises at least one resistance temperature device.

21. A window assembly for use with a noninvasive optical detection system, said window assembly consisting of:

- a main layer formed from an infrared-transparent material; and
- a heater layer affixed to said main layer;

wherein said heater layer is configured to induce a thermal gradient in a sample, and said main layer is configured to permit electromagnetic energy to pass from the sample into the noninvasive optical detection system.

22. The window assembly of claim 21, wherein said heater layer comprises an alloy layer and a first adhesion layer.

23. The window assembly of claim 22, wherein said first adhesion layer comprises gold, and has a thickness of about 4000 Å.

24. The window assembly of claim 23, wherein said heater layer comprises an array of heating elements, the heating elements being separated from one another by a pitch distance.

25. The analyte detection system of claim 24, wherein said pitch distance is about 50 to 100 microns.

26. The window assembly of claim 24, wherein said pitch distance is varied over the width of the heater layer.

27. The window assembly of claim 21, wherein the heater layer comprises a member of the group consisting of a thermoelectric heater, a radio frequency heater, an infrared radiation heater, an optical heater, a heat exchanger, an electrical resistance heating grid, and a wire bridge heating grid.

28. The window assembly of claim 21, wherein the heater layer obscures no more than about 10% of the main layer.

29. The window assembly of claim 21, wherein the main layer has a thickness of about 0.25 millimeters.

30. The window assembly of claim 21, wherein said main layer comprises a member of the group consisting of silicon, germanium, and chemical vapor deposited diamond.

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摘要(译)

描述了用于非侵入性地确定样品中分析物浓度的分析物检测系统。该检测系统包括窗组件，该窗组件包括适于允许电磁辐射通过的主层，以及适于将热量交换到样品的加热器层。该系统还包括检测器，其适于检测由样品发射并穿过窗组件的电磁辐射。分析物检测系统还包括控制系统，该控制系统与加热器层电连通并适于使加热器层与样品交换热量。窗组件的主层可以由多种材料制成，例如锗，硅和化学气相沉积的金刚石。

