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(54) **DEVICE FOR FACILITATING MANICURING AND METHOD OF USE THEREOF**

VORRICHTUNG ZUR ERLEICHTERUNG DER MANIKÜRE UND VERFAHREN FÜR DESSEN
GEBRAUCH

DISPOSITIF FACILITANT LA MANUCURE ET PROCEDE D'UTILISATION DUDIT DISPOSITIF

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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to devices for facilitating manicuring and to methods of using such devices.

[0002] Nail manicuring is an age-long nail treatment procedure including such chores as nail-cropping, nail-filing, finger-nail varnishing, nail-massaging and application of false nails over (and mostly longer than) the natural nails, and is particularly associated with, but not solely restricted to, females' beauty science. Hitherto, nail manicuring chores have been performed with or without a support or a finger steadier for steadying fingers while the nail fixing is in progress.

[0003] During unsupported finger manicuring, all fingers of the hand needing attention are normally either stretched out or clasped together in a loose fist with the thumb either resting full length across the fore-finger or bent submerged under the fore-finger. The shortcoming of either of these finger positioning postures is that, due to absence of a support to steady them, the fingers can be rather shaky which results in the nail manicuring chore being less precise. This increases the occurrence of unnecessary smearing of nail-surrounding skin in the case of nail varnishing, or otherwise causes greater difficulty of applying precise nail manicuring attention exclusively to the nail area only of a particular finger.

[0004] In the case of posing the hand with outstretched fingers (and less so, perhaps, of the thumb) an additional practical difficulty is presented due to the fact that, when held in such a position, the fingers can be at an awkward angle, which, unless the nail manicuring chore is being executed by a person other than the palm owner, renders precision nail manicuring more difficult. It is further observed in this relation that leverage with or amongst the fingers is inhibited by the limited view of each nail surface and this in turn compels the palm owner to move the hand around until each nail surface is in a clearer view to the owner.

[0005] Furthermore, as the thumb nail lies on a plane which is substantially perpendicular to the one common plane in which nails of the rest of the fingers lie, the palm owner is again compelled to tilt the relevant palm too bring the thumb nail face up in order to successively manicure it, which may result in disturbing the nails already manicured. In attempting to steady finger nails and generally enhance precision in any nail manicuring chore, it is common practice for the manicurer to lay the hand palm down on a flat surface with the fingers and thumb outstretched but this is disadvantaged by the "awkward angle" which inhibits view of each finger's nail area, and by the compulsion to tilt the palm for raising the thumb nail into a clearer upper view.

[0006] In fact the laying of fingers on a flat surface is one of the time-wasting rituals of current nail manicuring chores wherein, for convenience the palm owner's thigh acts as the flat surface, in which case the palm owner will normally precede the manicuring chore with other

similarly time-wasting rituals such as placing a small piece of cloth on the thigh to avoid staining the fabric of the palm owner's skirt or trouser leg. In such nail manicuring methods, however, cloth fabric-staining accidents are very palpable occurrences, which can never be ruled out.

[0007] FR 1000606 discloses a finger locating and supporting device in the form of a body having a curved upper surface with elongated grooves found therein in which, in use, the fingers of a hand to me manicured engage with the finger tips overhanging the edge of the body so as to be presented for manicuring.

[0008] According to one aspect of the present invention, whose scope is defined in the appended claims, there is provided a finger locating and supporting device for facilitating manicuring comprising an elongated body formed as a hand grip having a first surface portion in which are formed a first plurality of recesses (2, 3, 4, 5), characterised in that the first surface portion is defined between opposed elongated edges with said first plurality of recesses extending from one of said elongated edges generally toward said other elongated edge, and in that a second plurality of recesses are formed in a second surface portion which is inclined to and intersects said first surface portion at said one elongated edge, said first and second plurality of recesses being symmetrically positioned on either side of said one elongated edge, wherein, in use, the fingers of a hand close around the body so as to grip the device between the fingers and the palm of the hand with each finger being in contact with both said first and second surface portions and with at least the tip of at least one of the fingers engaging in one of said recesses, the device being usable with both the left and the right hand.

[0009] According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided a method of manicuring according to claim 6.

[0010] A device for facilitating manicuring and a method of manicuring using such a device in accordance with the invention has the advantage of saving time by making obsolete the ritual of finding a flat surface and of clothing or dressing the surface (if using the thigh as the flat surface). Associated to this, there is also no longer the chance of soiling fabric of the palm owner's skirt or trouser leg.

[0011] In addition, when the device is gripped in the palm with the or each finger positioned in a recess, each finger nail is positioned in a manner which ensures maximum exposure of each individual finger nail, thereby necessitating only the most minimal movement. The device is also preferably sized to fit easily into a handbag or pocket.

[0012] In an advantageous development of the invention, the thumb of the hand is positioned in a recess formed in one end surface of the device such that the thumb nail is elevated in a manner which secures maximum surface area exposure of the nail involving the most minimal movement of the wrist. In that way the

problem of having to tilt the hand to bring either the fingers planetary line or that of the thumb (as the case may be) to a horizontal position, is also eliminated.

[0013] In order that the invention may be well understood, there will now be described an embodiment thereof, given by way of example, reference being made to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a front view of a device for facilitating manicuring showing grooves into which fingers may be positioned, a groove on an end face in which the thumb may be rested, and a small nail file along the foot of the device;

Figure 2 is a perspective view from the left of the device of the invention, showing a left wing of finger grooves, the thumb groove at the apex and the left-part of the file at the foot of the elevation;

Figure 3 is a perspective view from the right of the device of the invention showing a right wing of the finger grooves, the thumb groove at the apex of the device and the right wing of the nail file;

Figure 4 is the bottom view of the device of the invention; and

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the device of the invention grasped in a right hand which it is intended should be manicured.

[0014] Referring now in greater detail to the drawings, in which like reference numerals consistently designate like parts of the invention operating in a like manner in all the drawings, there is shown a device for facilitating manicuring, the main body of which should preferably be in a triangular shape.

[0015] Referring first to Figure 1, there is shown a device in front view having a detachable nail file 6 carried on the foot of the device, groove 1 that begins at the apex and slants down (as side views in Figures 2 and 3 show) at the back to taper off slightly below the curve of the device's head, and additional grooves 2 to 5.

[0016] Although grooves 2 to 5 differ slightly from each other in size to suit the size of the respective human fingers which they are intended to receive (e.g. groove 5 which is meant to receive the smallest finger of the palm may in practice be smaller than groove 3 that receives houses the tallest middle finger), what is described of groove 2 as follows is true of grooves 3, 4 and 5.

[0017] As figure 1 shows, groove 2 is wing shaped such that the line 2c that bisects it into two wings lies both at the deepest portion of each wing 2a, 2b and along the line of symmetry between the two wings 2a and 2b (either of which lies on, respectively, the left side and right side of the middle 2c of the groove). Each wing tapers in depth while it moves away to the side from 2c. In this figure, 12 is an imaginary line which runs symmetrically through one of the three corners of the device, bisects groove 1 along its length and runs down the back of the device and through sharpener hole 7 (see Figure

3). In Figure 1 then the middle 2c, 3c, 4c and 5c of grooves 2, 3, 4 and 5 (see Figure 4) lie along the edge which symmetry line 12 also traverses.

[0018] To enhance their features as represented in Figure 1 these parts can be seen in side views denoted in Figures 2 and 3. Thus, Figure 2 (which shows the right side elevation) contains the device's back-surface 8 down which symmetrical line 12 continues to run to cut right through sharpener hole 7 on way to the base. As denoted in Figure 1 both the symmetry line 12 and edge 14 run from foot through 5c, 4c, 3c and 2c. In this figure only 2b, 3b, 4b and 5b (being right wings of grooves 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively) are in view in addition to groove 1. Only a part of the nail appears in this elevation.

[0019] Furthermore, the invention as presented by Figure 3 (which gives the left view of the device) is closely similar to the view in Figure 2 except that Figure 3 presents as noted the left wings (2c, 3c 4c and 5c) of the grooves 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively and of the nail file 6.

[0020] In addition to the detachable nail file 6, there is further provided a pencil sharpener consisting of an active blade 9, a spare blade 13 and a sharpener hole 7 (see Figure 4). While blade 9 (which is fastened to the device by means of a screw 10) and the spare blade 13 are attachments to the bottom of the shaft of the device, the sharpener hole 7 enters the shaft at the tool of the side directly opposite edge 14 such that when active blade 9 is in place, it covers only about 3/4 or so of the hollow space by which hole 7 opens out to the base. This in practice leaves about 1/4 space of the length of the hole 7 running along (and next to) the sharpened edge of the blade 9 such that waste scrapped from a mascara pencil or indeed any writing or makeup device requiring sharpening escapes through space 11.

[0021] In order to preserve its advantage of light-portability, the device should be made or constructed from preferably light material such as (virgin) plastic, paper-mache or similar featherweight material. This light-portability may further be enhanced by forming the device's shaft with a hollow-core running along its in-side length. This hollow-core structure, with the outward grooves and sharpener, can be produced either by making two separate parts (left and right sections) and bonding them along the symmetrical line 12 or by a blow moulding process wherein a cylindrical mould having walls shaped like the invention in inverted form receives a tubular plastic parison or input cut to the convenient size of the mold. Then compressed air is blown into the tubular input to inflate its sides hardpressed against the grooved walls of the mould. The device is substantially rigid in construction.

[0022] In use, the user clasps the device (by the palm needing nail manicuring) as shown in Figure 5 such that while the thumb rests in groove 1 in an upward pointing position, groove 2 will house the index finger, groove 3 will then house the middle tall finger, groove 4 will similarly house the second last finger, while groove 5 will

house the last (smallest) finger. While fingers are in this resting steady position they are now more amenable to better nail manicuring because they do not easily move unintentionally. This position also reduces the possibility of stained skin around the nail.

Claims

1. A finger locating and supporting device for facilitating manicuring comprising an elongated body formed as a hand grip having a first surface portion in which are formed a first plurality of recesses (2, 3, 4, 5), **characterised in that** the first surface portion is defined between opposed elongated edges with said first plurality of recesses extending from one of said elongated edges generally toward said other elongated edge, and **in that** a second plurality of recesses are formed in a second surface portion which is inclined to and intersects said first surface portion at said one elongated edge, said first and second plurality of recesses being symmetrically positioned on either side of said one elongated edge, wherein, in use, the fingers of a hand close around the body so as to grip the device between the fingers and the palm of the hand with each finger being in contact with both said first and second surface portions and with at least the tip of at least one of the fingers engaging in one of said recesses, the device being usable with both the left and the right hand.
2. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein there are four recesses (2, 3, 4, 5), in each surface portion, one for each finger of the human hand, and each recess (2, 3, 4, 5) has a curved profile to match the general shape of the human finger.
3. A device as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein each recess (2, 3, 4, 5) varies in depth as it extends away from the one elongate edge, the deepest portion (2c, 3c, 4c, 5c) of each recess (2, 3, 4, 5) lying on the one elongated edge.
4. A device as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein the first elongated edge of the first face is a common edge between said first and second faces, the recesses in the second elongate face extending from that common edge.
5. A device as claimed in any of the preceding claims, further comprising a recess (1) in an end face of the body, wherein, in use, the thumb of the gripping hand rests in said end face recess (1) so as to steadily prevent the thumb for manicuring.
6. A method of manicuring using the device as claimed in any of the preceding claims, comprising the steps

of closing the finger of a hand to be manicured around the device so as to grip the device firmly between the fingers and the palm of the hand with at least the end of at least one of the fingers of the hand engaging in one of the recesses (2, 3, 4, 5) and with each finger in contact with the body of the device along substantially the entire length of the finger, and manicuring the or each finger.

Patentansprüche

1. Fingeraufnahme- und -stützvorrichtung zum Erleichtern der Maniküre, umfassend einen als Handgriff geformten länglichen Körper mit einem ersten Flächenteil, in dem eine erste Mehrzahl von Aussparungen (2, 3, 4, 5) gebildet ist, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** der erste Flächenteil zwischen einander gegenüberliegenden länglichen Rändern definiert wird, wobei die genannte erste Mehrzahl von Aussparungen sich von einem der genannten länglichen Ränder allgemein auf den genannten anderen länglichen Rand zu erstreckt, und dass eine zweite Mehrzahl von Aussparungen in einem zweiten Flächenteil gebildet ist, der zu dem genannten einen länglichen Rand geneigt ist und den ersten Flächenteil an ihm schneidet, wobei die genannte erste und zweite Mehrzahl von Aussparungen symmetrisch auf beiden Seiten des genannten einen länglichen Rands positioniert sind, wobei sich im Gebrauch die Finger einer Hand um den Körper schließen, um die Vorrichtung zwischen den Fingern und der Innenfläche der Hand festzuhalten, wobei jeder Finger mit dem genannten ersten und dem genannten zweiten Flächenteil in Berührung ist und wobei wenigstens die Spitze von wenigstens einem der Finger in eine der genannten Aussparungen eingreift, wobei die Vorrichtung sowohl mit der linken als auch mit der rechten Hand benutzt werden kann.
2. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, die in jedem Flächenteil vier Aussparungen (2, 3, 4, 5) aufweist, eine für jeden Finger der menschlichen Hand, und jede Aussparung (2, 3, 4, 5) ein gekrümmtes Profil passend zu der allgemeinen Form des menschlichen Fingers hat.
3. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 2, bei der die Tiefe jeder Aussparung (2, 3, 4, 5) in ihrem Verlauf von dem einen länglichen Rand weg variiert, wobei der tiefste Teil (2c, 3c, 4c, 5c) jeder Aussparung (2, 3, 4, 5) am einen länglichen Rand liegt.
4. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei der der erste längliche Rand der ersten Seite ein gemeinsamer Rand zwischen der genannten ersten und der genannten zweiten Seite ist, wo-

bei die Aussparungen in der zweiten länglichen Seite sich von diesem gemeinsamen Rand aberstrecken.

5. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, ferner umfassend eine Aussparung (1) in einer Endseite des Körpers, wobei im Gebrauch der Daumen der greifenden Hand in der genannten Endseitenaussparung (1) ruht, um den Daumen für die Maniküre ruhig zu halten. 5
6. Verfahren zum Maniküren mit Hilfe der Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, umfassend die Schritte des Schließens der Finger einer zu manikürenden Hand um die Vorrichtung, um die Vorrichtung fest zwischen den Fingern und der Innenfläche der Hand festzuhalten, wobei wenigstens das Ende von wenigstens einem der Finger der Hand in eine der Aussparungen (2, 3, 4, 5) eingreift und jeder Finger an im Wesentlichen der gesamten Länge des Fingers entlang mit dem Körper der Vorrichtung in Berührung ist, und Maniküren des oder jedes Fingers. 10 15 20

Revendications

1. Un dispositif de maintien et de support de doigts pour faciliter les manucures, comprenant un corps allongé formé comme une poignée ayant une première partie de surface dans laquelle sont formés une première pluralité d'évidements (2, 3, 4, 5), **caractérisé en ce que** la première partie de surface est délimitée entre des bords allongés opposés, ladite première pluralité d'évidements s'étendant depuis l'un desdits bords allongés généralement vers ledit autre bord allongé, et **en ce qu'**une deuxième pluralité d'évidements sont formés dans une deuxième partie de surface qui est inclinée vers, et coupe, ladite première partie de surface au niveau dudit bord allongé, lesdites première et deuxième pluralités d'évidements étant positionnées symétriquement sur l'un ou l'autre côté dudit bord allongé, dispositif dans lequel, pendant l'emploi, les doigts d'une main se referment autour du corps de sorte à saisir le dispositif entre les doigts et la paume de la main, chaque doigt étant en contact avec lesdites première aussi bien que deuxième parties de surface, et au moins le bout d'au moins un des doigts s'engageant dans l'un desdits évidements, le dispositif pouvant être utilisé tant avec la main gauche qu'avec la main droite. 30 35 40 45 50
2. Un dispositif selon la revendication 1, dans lequel sont prévus quatre évidements (2, 3, 4, 5) dans chaque partie de surface, dont un pour chaque doigt de la main humaine, et chaque évidement (2, 3, 4, 5) a un profil incurvé pour s'adapter à la forme géné-

rale du doigt humain.

3. Un dispositif selon la revendication 1 ou 2, dans lequel la profondeur de chaque évidement (2, 3, 4, 5) varie lorsqu'elle s'écarte de l'un des bords allongés, la partie la plus profonde (2c, 3c, 4c, 5c) de chaque évidement (2, 3, 4, 5) reposant sur ce bord allongé.
4. Un dispositif selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le premier bord allongé de la première face est un bord commun entre lesdites première et deuxième faces, les évidements dans la deuxième face allongée s'étendant depuis ce bord commun.
5. Un dispositif selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, qui comprend de plus, dans une face d'extrémité du corps, un évidement (1) de sorte que, pendant l'emploi, le pouce de la main en train de serrer repose dans ledit évidement (1) de ladite face d'extrémité de sorte à empêcher le pouce de bouger pendant la manucure.
6. Un procédé de manucure utilisant le dispositif revendiqué dans l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, comprenant les étapes consistant à refermer le doigt d'une main à manucurer autour du dispositif afin de saisir fermement le dispositif entre les doigts et la paume de la main, au moins le bout d'au moins un des doigts de la main s'engageant dans l'un des évidements (2, 3, 4, 5) et chaque doigt étant en contact avec le corps du dispositif sur sensiblement toute la longueur du doigt, et à manucurer le doigt ou chaque doigt. 25 30 35 40 45 50 55

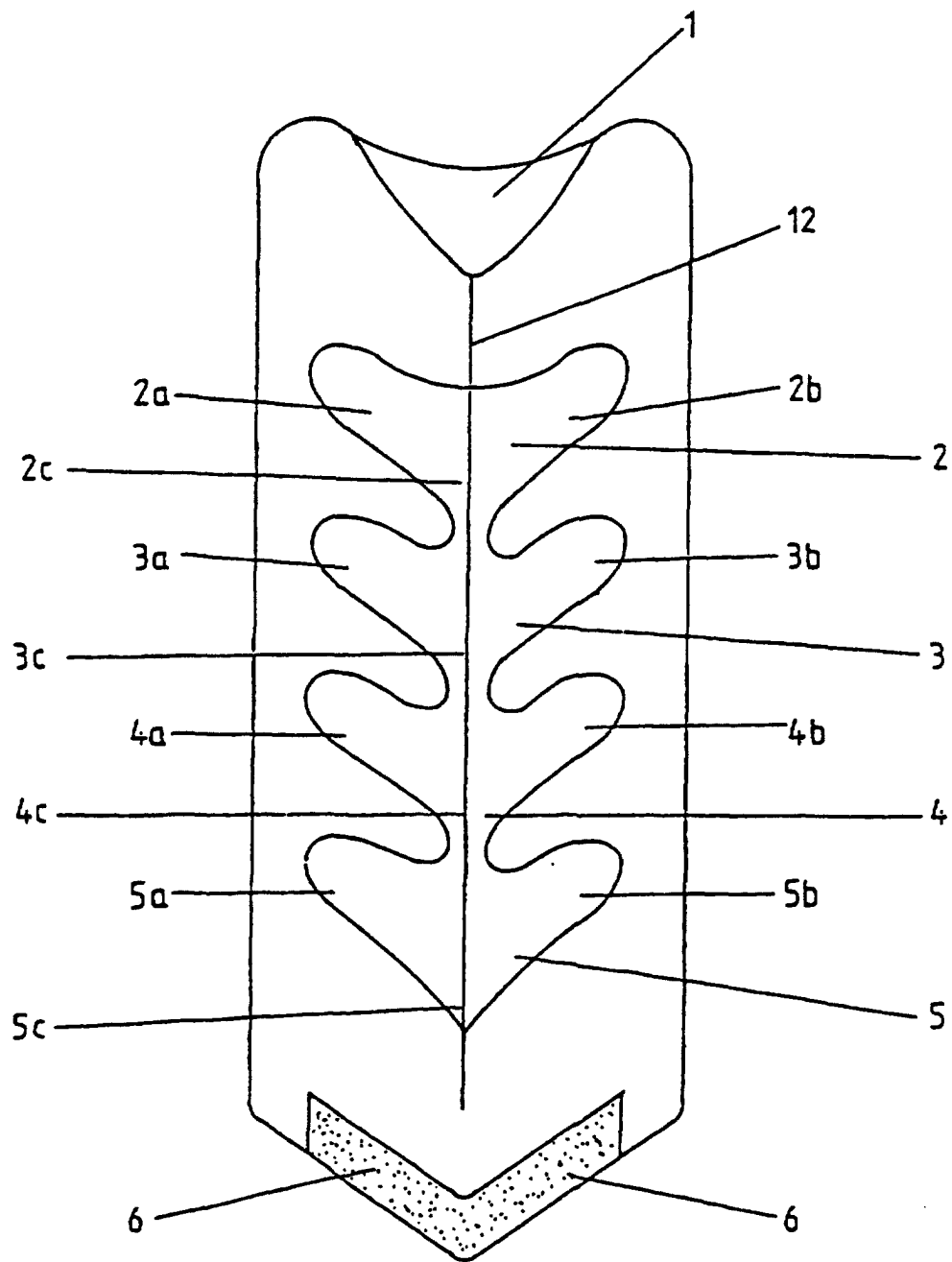


FIG. 1

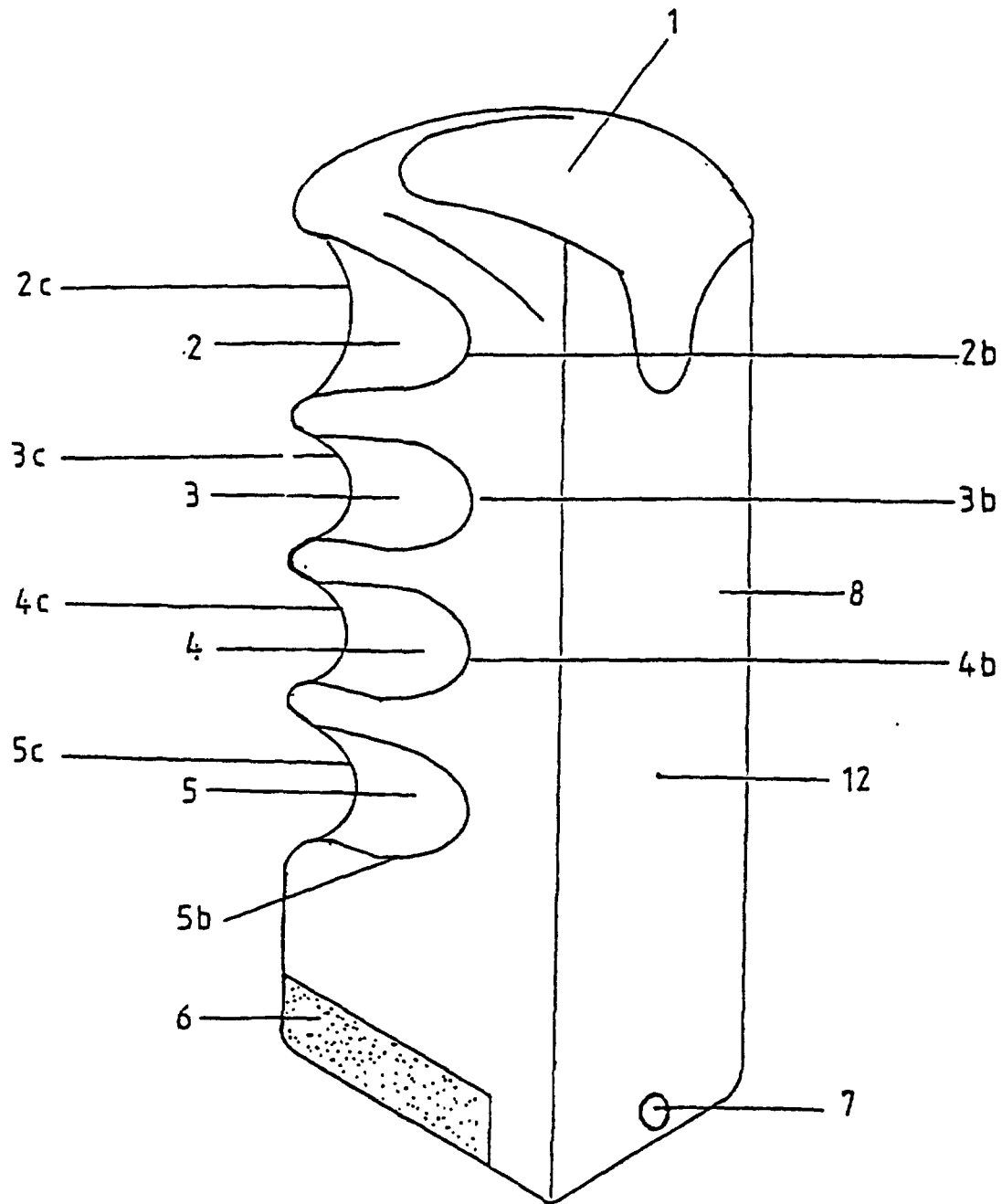


FIG. 2

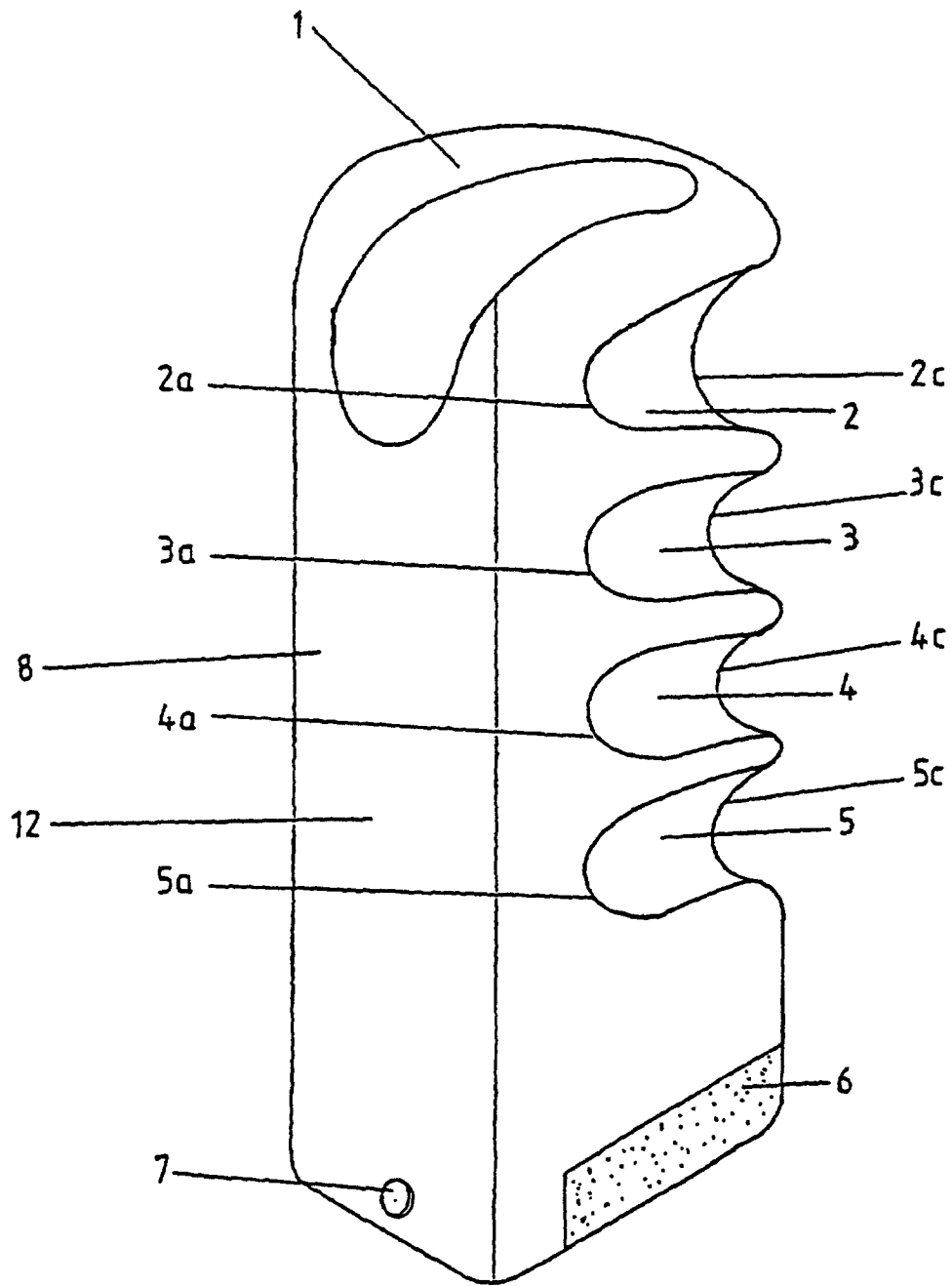


FIG. 3

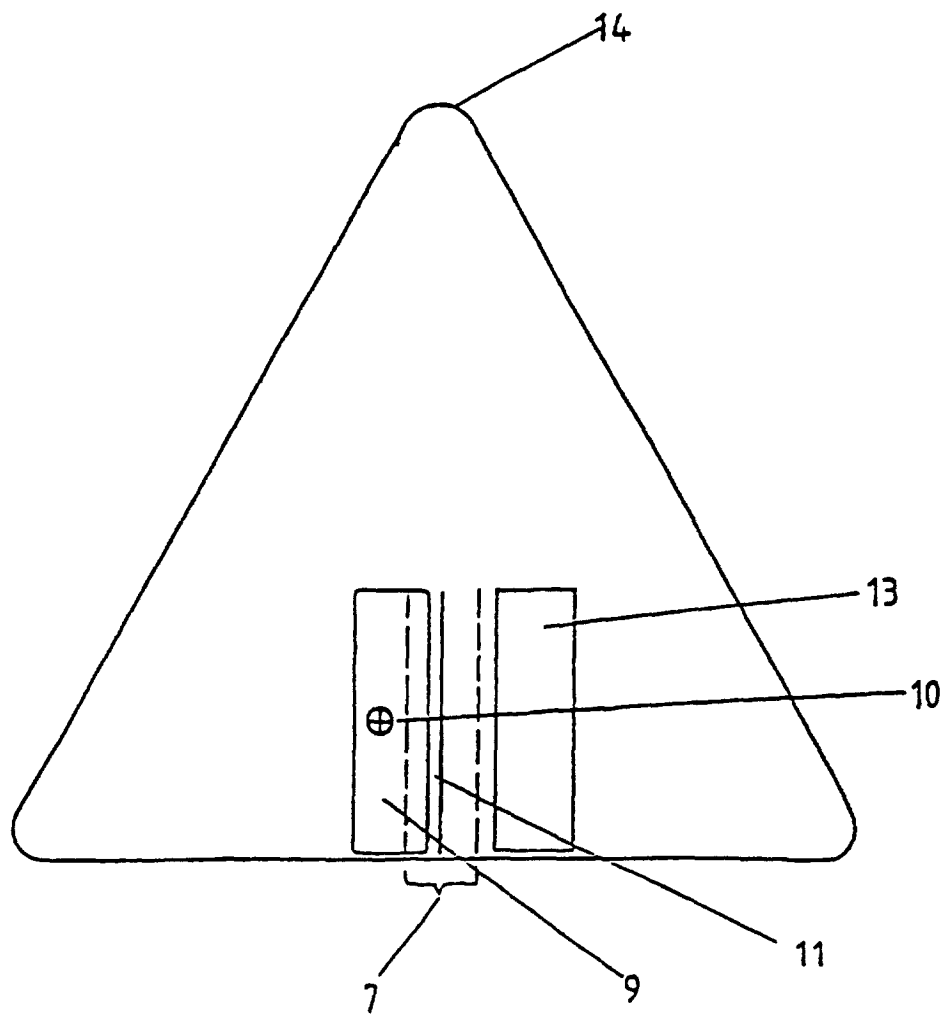


FIG. 4

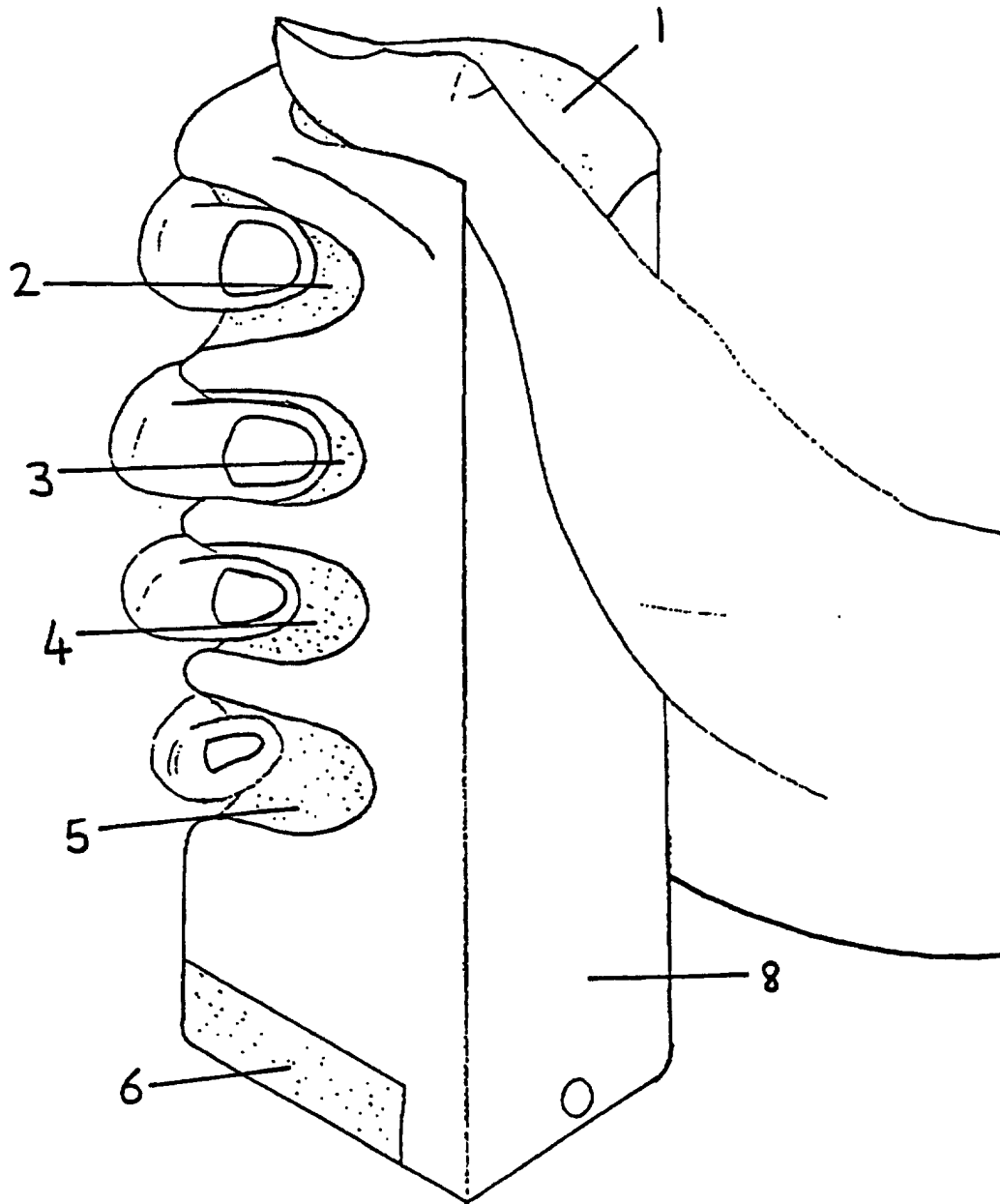


FIG. 5