(19) Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets

(11) EP 1 596 716 B1

(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION**

(45) Date of publication and mention of the grant of the patent:
30.04.2014 Bulletin 2014/18

(21) Application number: **04705347.5**

(22) Date of filing: **26.01.2004**

(51) Int Cl.:
A61B 5/00 *(2006.01)*

(86) International application number:
PCT/US2004/002563

(87) International publication number:
WO 2004/066824 (12.08.2004 Gazette 2004/33)

(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING TISSUE USING LOW-COHERENCE INTERFEROMETRY**

SYSTEM UND VERFAHREN ZUR GEWEBEIDENTIFIZIERUNG MITTELS INTERFEROMETRIE MIT NIEDRIGER KOHÄRENZ

SYSTÈME ET PROCÉDÉ POUR L'IDENTIFICATION TISSULAIRE UTILISANT L'INTERFÉROMÉTRIE À FAIBLE COHÉRENCE

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR HU IE IT LI LU MC NL PT RO SE SI SK TR

(30) Priority: **24.01.2003 US 442392 P**

(43) Date of publication of application:
23.11.2005 Bulletin 2005/47

(60) Divisional application:
10182976.0 / 2 319 405
10183037.0 / 2 319 404

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Description

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to an apparatus and method for identifying tissue types using interferometric ranging during needle biopsy. More particularly, the present invention relates to an imaging system including a needle probe and algorithms for detecting various tissue types during a biopsy. Also provided is a method for differentiating tissue types using the imaging system.

Background of the Invention

[0002] A significant cause of inefficiency of intraoperative and biopsy procedures is the inability of a physician to identify tissue type by gross inspection. For example, head and neck surgeries, the inability to differentiate muscle, fat, lymph node, and parathyroid glands by gross inspection leads to unnecessary operative time, resulting in an increase in the cost of these procedure. Further, when not guided by an imaging modality, fine needle aspiration biopsies yield non-diagnostic tissue in 25% to 35% of cases. In medicine, there is a significant need for an inexpensive, portable, and efficient way for identifying tissue type.

[0003] The use of optical coherence tomography and confocal microscopy in needle probes has been previously described. These needle probes allow physicians to acquire images of tissue. However, these conventional needle probes have certain shortcomings. The methods used in these needle probes require imaging a single focused spot on a sample by scanning the spot in two dimensions in order to produce a two dimensional image of the subject. The scanning and imaging requirements of these known imaging needle probe systems require complex and expensive disposable components, as well as console components. Many components of existing imaging needle probes require complex and expensive construction making routine use of the needle probes a practical impossibility. Further, current imaging needle probes use complex and expensive custom syringes, which may not be sterilizable or disposable.

[0004] In the past, research has been performed to evaluate the use of low-coherence interferometry ("LCI") imaging for tissue diagnosis. Optical coherence tomography ("OCT") is LCI imaging that is performed by obtaining many axial scans while scanning a sample arm beam across a specimen, creating a two dimensional image. In order to perform LCI imaging, several strict requirements must be met by the conventional systems, including use of:

1. high speed reference arm delay scanning (at least 1,000 scans/second),
2. a high power broad bandwidth source (at least 5 mW),
3. a complex probe (must have at least one lens and a scanning mechanism),
4. an expensive data acquisition apparatus, and
5. an image display.

These requirements of the conventional systems dramatically increase the cost of OCT systems and OCT probes.

[0005] It would be desirable to have a low cost and accurate imaging system, process and needle biopsy probe having sufficient resolution that can be used by physicians with little additional training. It would also be desirable to have a needle biopsy probe that would use conventional syringe and needle combinations to avoid the high cost of developing and manufacturing custom barrels or needles. Such an exemplary system would also desirably be able to provide real time, or near real time, feedback regarding progress and location of the biopsy needle. Such a probe should also be able to identify various tissue types and interfaces and be able to alert a user when a target site has been reached or if an inappropriate tissue has been encountered. Interfaces are refractive index interfaces which occur when one tissue having optical refractive index is adjacent to another. The refractive index is unique to the molecular constituents of tissue and therefore interfaces occur throughout tissue. These refractive index interfaces may give rise to scattering which is the signal detected by LCI and OCT

[0006] Other features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent upon reading the following detailed description of embodiments of the invention, when taken in conjunction with the appended claims.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] The present invention generally provides devices, processes, software arrangements and storage media for identifying tissue types using interferometric ranging, as defined in the independent claims. The probe or disposable portion of the device uses a solitary single mode optical fiber, which is inexpensive and may fit into the lumen of a clinically available needle. The solitary single mode optical fiber can be between 125 μm and 250 μm in diameter.

[0008] According to the present invention, two dimensional imaging is not required. As a result, the requirements of the imaging system are significantly reduced. Such requirements include, but are not limited to the use of:

1. a low power broad bandwidth source (.001-.5 mW),
2. a simple probe (does not require a lens or scanning mechanism),
3. an inexpensive data acquisition apparatus,
4. a simple, inexpensive and small detector apparatus, and

5. a simplified image display or audible notification apparatus.

[0009] Accordingly, the system that uses one-dimensional interferometric ranging to identify tissue according to the present invention allows for a decreased cost and size of the system console and a significantly decreased cost of the disposable data collection probe. Disposable probes accordign to the present invention may be constructed with material cost far below that of existing systems, and the light source and detection devices required also cost significantly less than those of conventional OCT systems. These considerations could allow these probes to be used in very common procedures, such as placing an intravenous catheter or guiding a lumbar puncture. Further, due to the cost savings and reduced size of the system components, the present invention may be implemented in a hand-held unit.

[0010] Other features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent upon reading the following detailed description of embodiments of the invention, when taken in conjunction with the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] Further objects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying figures showing illustrative embodiments of the invention, in which:

Fig. 1A is a graph of LCI reflectivity for muscle tissue.
Fig. 1B is a graph of LCI reflectivity for adipose tissue.
Fig. 2 is a schematic view of a tissue identification system according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Figs. 3A-C are area schematic views of different fiber and probe designs according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 4 is a schematic view of an interferometric ranging probe in the lumen of a biopsy needle according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 5 is a schematic view of a syringe interferometric ranging probe with a single mode fiber inserted through the body of the syringe according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 6 is a schematic view of a syringe interferometric ranging probe with a single mode fiber inserted through the plunger of the syringe according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 7 is a schematic view of a syringe interferometric ranging probe with a single mode fiber inserted through an intermediate adapter between the syringe needle lock and the needle housing according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 8 is a schematic view of a syringe interferometric ranging probe with a single mode fiber inserted through an adapter between the syringe needle lock and the needle housing and includes a motion transducer according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 9 is a schematic view of a needle biopsy apparatus with an activation gun according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 10 is a schematic view of a cannula with an interferometric ranging probe in the body according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 11 is a schematic view of a cannula with an interferometric ranging probe in the lumen according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 12 is a schematic view of a cannula with an interferometric ranging probe in an electrocautery device according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 13A is a schematic view of a standard needle and housing.
Fig. 13B is a schematic view of a standard needle and a modified housing according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 14 is a schematic view of an interferometric ranging probe optical connector according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 15 is a schematic view of a biopsy probe with an associated feedback unit according to one embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 16 is a schematic detail view of a gun and activation button according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 17 is a flow diagram of a method for tissue identification according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 18 is a schematic view of a system configuration according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.
Fig. 19 is a flow diagram of a signal processing sequence according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

[0012] Throughout the figures, the same reference numerals and characters, unless otherwise stated, are used to denote like features, elements, components or portions of the illustrated embodiments. Moreover, while the subject invention will now be described in detail with reference to the figures, it is done so in connection with the illustrative embodiments. It is intended that changes and modifications can be made to the described embodiments without departing from the scope of the subject invention as defined by the appended claims.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0013] In accordance with the system of the present invention, Fig. 2 illustrates a tissue identification system 2 according to one embodiment of the present invention

for tissue 10 identification using interferometric ranging. The tissue identification system 2 utilizes a one-dimensional data set in order to identify tissue. Unlike many prior art systems, which use two-dimensional data in order to acquire sufficient information to identify tissue, the tissue identification system 2 is able to identify tissue using a one-dimensional data set Differences between two types of tissue may be understood from a one-dimensional data set. For example, Fig. 1 illustrates two graphs that represent a one-dimensional interferometric ranging axial scan of two different tissue types. As can be seen from these graphs, adipose tissue (shown in the bottom graph) has a significantly different axial reflectance profile as compared to the axial reflectance profile of muscle tissue (shown in the top graph). The tissue identification system 5 includes an imaging system 5 and a probe 50.

[0014] The imaging system 5 includes a light source 12, which is provided in an interferometer 14. The interferometer 14 can be a fiber optic interferometer 14. Also, while light is used in the disclosure herein as an exemplary embodiment of the light source 12, it should be understood that other appropriate electromagnetic radiation can be used, such as, microwave, radio frequency, x-ray, and the like. The interferometer 14 or other beam splitting device known to those skilled in the art may make use of circulators for increased sample arm power efficiency. The interferometer 14 includes a beam splitter 18, a reference arm 20, a sample arm 24, and a communications link to at least one detector 26. The light source 12 is connected to the interferometer 14 such that the light emitted from the light source 12 is transmitted to the beam splitter 18. The beam splitter 18 directs portion of the light emitted by the source 12 towards a reference arm 20, while the remainder of light is directed to a sample arm 24. The reference arm 20 includes a mechanism 26'. The mechanism 26' produces a time dependent optical delay. In a certain embodiment, the mechanism 26' can be a movable reference reflector or mirror. The movable reference reflector or mirror can create a variable time delay suitable for a specific application.

[0015] An optical fiber 29, associated with the sample arm 24, is connected to an optical coupler 58. The optical coupler 58 is also connected to an optical fiber 25, which is inserted into the probe 50, as described below. The light signals returned from the sample arm 24 and the reference arm 20 are combined by the beam splitter 18 and reflectivity as a function of depth within the tissue sample 10 (e.g., see Figs. 1A and 1B) is determined by measuring the interference between the two arms with at least one detector 26. Detection of a tissue birefringence (i.e., by splitting a ray into two parallel rays polarized perpendicularly) can be accomplished by using, e.g., two detectors 26, one for each polarization eigenstate. Depending on the type of interferometric ranging used, one to four detectors 26 may be employed.

[0016] In a certain embodiment, one of three types of interferometric ranging can be used: (i) optical time domain reflectrometry, (ii) spectral domain reflectrometry or (iii) optical frequency domain reflectrometry. It should be understood that additional alternate types of interferometric ranging could be used with the tissue identification system 2. If optical time domain reflectometry is utilized, the source 12 can be is a broad bandwidth light source, the interferometer 14 is needed, the reference arm 20 may be a low speed reference arm with delay scanning performing 20 to 50 scans per second, and the detector 26 can include one to four detectors. Optical time domain reflectometry is described in more detail by C. Youngquist et al., "Optical Coherence-Domain Reflectometry: A New Optical Evaluation Technique", Opt. Lett., 12, 158-160 (1987), and K. Takada et al., "New Measurement System For Fault Location in Optical Waveguide Devices Based on an Interferometric Technique", Appl. Opt. 26, 1603-1606 (1987). If spectral domain reflectometry is used, the source 12 is a broad bandwidth light source, the interferometer 14 is required, the detection arm includes a spectrometer, the detector 26 includes a single detector, and low coherence interferometry data is obtained by taking the Fourier transform of the measured spectrum. Spectral domain reflectometry is described in more detail by J. Deboer et al., "Improved Signal to Noise Ratio In Spectral Domain Compared With Time Domain Optical Coherence Tomography", Optics Letters 2003, vol. 28, p. 2067 - 69; and Published Patent No. WO 03062802, entitled "Apparatus and Method for Ranging and Noise Reduction of Low Coherence Interferometry (LCI) and Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) Signals by Parallel Detection of Spectral Bands", to Deboer et al.. . If optical frequency domain reflectometry is used, the source 12 is a swept wavelength optical source, the interferometer 14 is required, the detector 26 includes one to four detectors, and low coherence interferometry data is obtained by taking the Fourier transform of the measured spectrum. Optical frequency domain reflectometry is described in more detail by S. Yun et al., "High Speed Optical Frequency Domain Imaging", Optics Express 2003, vol. 11, p. 2953 - 63, and C. Youngquist et al., "Optical Coherence-Domain Reflectometry: A New Optical Evaluation Technique, Opt. Lett., 12, 158-160 (1987), and K. Takada et al., "New Measurement System For Fault Location In Optical Waveguide Devices Based on an Interferometric Technique", Appl. Opt. 26, 1603-1606 (1987).

[0017] In an alternate embodiment of the present invention, the interferometer 14 is a Mach-Zehinder interferometer, a Michelson interferometer, a non-reciprocal or circular interferometer, a Sagnac interferometer, a Twyman-Green interferometer and the like.

[0018] A probe 50 can include a biopsy device 51, which includes a needle 52 having a bore (not shown) associated with a syringe 54 through which the optical fiber 25 is introduced. The fiber 25 may be inserted into the probe 50 and in turn into the needle 52. The needle 52 and fiber 25 can be inserted percutaneously (or otherwise) toward the tissue 10 to be sampled. In other ex-

emplary embodiments, the needle 52 can be a generic barrel, a specialized barrel, a needle, a stylet, and the like.

[0019] Referring now to Fig. 3, the fiber 25 includes a cladding 60 and a cleaved anoptical fiber core 62, as shown in protion A of Fig. 3. When light signal is directed through the fiber 25 it forms a beam waist 64. The beam waist may be about 9 μm in diameter. Other lenses or optical elements may be attached to the fiber 25 to allow for focusing deeper into tissue, including a gradient index lens 66 (see portion B of Fig. 3), sometimes referred to as a GRIN lens, a ball lens 68 (see portion C of Fig. 3), a drum lens, a microlens, a tapered fiber end, a prism and the like. Alternatively, the fiber 25 may be angle cleaved or otherwise configured to produce an arbitrary pattern of electromagnetic radiation. In a certain embodiment, the cladding 60 has an outer diameter of 125 μm and the anoptical fiber core has an outer diameter of 9 μm.

[0020] For needle biopsies that are traditionally performed using computerized tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), or ultrasound guidance, the fiber 25 may be inserted into the biopsy needle 52 as shown in Fig. 4 and may be embedded within the needle biopsy device, or inserted through the lumen 70 of the needle 52. These types of procedures do not use fine needle aspiration. The lump or mass is not manually identifiable, but can only be identified through some other non-invasive imaging technique, such as CT or MRI. These and other guided needle biopsy procedures may use a larger and longer needle, while still utilizing the fiber 25 to assist in guiding the biopsy procedure.

[0021] To insert the fiber 25 into the needle 52 of the probe 50 for fine needle aspiration, the fiber 25 may be inserted through an aperture 72, wherein Figure 5 does not shown the aperture 72 in the body, in the body of the syringe 51 and then (i) into the needle 52 as shown in Fig. 5, (ii) through the plunger 74 of the syringe 51, and then provided into the needle 52 as shown in Fig. 6, (iii) through an intermediate piece 76 that is attached between the syringe 51 and the needle 52 as shown in Fig. 7, and/or by other insertion configurations. The probe 50 can be configured to allow suction for the aspiration of cells from the tissue 10, while allowing free movement of the fiber 25 at the tip of the needle 52.

[0022] In an exemplary embodiment, as shown in Fig. 8, the use of an intermediate coupler or holder between the syringe and the needle can be utilized. This would allow the use of standard needles and syringes. In this exemplary embodiment, a probe 100 utilizes the imaging system 5 as described above to identify tissue. The probe 100 includes an input fiber 102 attached to the imaging system 5 at one end, and to an optical connector 58 at the other end. The optical fiber 102 is connected to a single mode input fiber 104. The optical fiber 102 is inserted through an intermediate adapter 106, located between a syringe 108 and a needle lock 110. A needle 112 is attached to the needle lock 110. A motion transducer 114 may be used as a result of too little space between the outer surface of the fiber 104 and the inner bore surface of the needle 112. The motion transducer 114 generally allows the fiber 104 to be repositioned in order to allow aspiration of the tissue 10. The motion transducer 114 can be a manual motion transducer, an automated motion transducer, or the like. In another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the needle lock 110 is a Luer lock.

[0023] Fig. 9 illustrates a tissue identification system 122 that includes the syringe 108 held within a device known in the art as a gun 120. This configuration allows for easy aspiration of the tissue 10 into the bore of the needle 112. Many of the components described above can also be incorporated into the tissue identification system 122 for easy access and convenience.

[0024] Fig. 10 illustrates an exemplary operation of placing a cannula 200 for IV access, pleural, perioneal taps, and the like according to a further embodiment of the present invention. The cannula 200 includes a guide catheter 202 and a fiber optic probe 204. The fiber optic probe 204 is provided within the guide catheter 202. Alternatively, the probe 204 may be inserted through the lumen 206 of the guide catheter 202 as shown in Fig. 11.

[0025] Fig. 12 illustrates an intra-operative exemplary embodiment 300 of a probe 306 according to still another embodiment of the present invention. The probe 306 is incorporated into an electrocautery device 301. An optical window 302 may be placed near the distal fiber tip 304 to protect the probe 306 against thermal damage by the cautery electrode 308. In yet another embodiment, the probe 306 may be incorporated into a scalpel, an independent hand-held device and the like instead of being incorporated into the electrocautery device 301. The optical window 302 can be made of sapphire.

[0026] In order to allow for easy insertion of the fiber optic probe 25 into the needle 52, the internal lumen 400 of a standard needle housing 402, as shown in section A of Fig. 13, can be modified such that the internal lumen 404 of a modified needle 406 is tapered, as shown in Fig. 13B.

[0027] Fig. 14 illustrates an interferometric ranging probe optical connector 500, which is one side of the optical coupling 58, which can be used according to the present invention. The optical coupling 58, which connects the probe 50 to the imaging system 5, should be robust and simple to use. In another embodiment, the optical coupling 58 includes a bare fiber connector attached to the probe 50, which is relatively inexpensive, and the interferometric ranging probe optical connector 500 attached to the imaging system 5, which is relatively expensive. The use of a bare fiber connector attached to the probe 50 does not increase the cost of the probe 50. The more expensive portion of the optical coupling 58 is attached to the imaging system 5. The interferometric ranging probe optical connector 500 is constructed so as to engage with a bare fiber connector, such that a robust connection is made. The interferometric ranging probe optical connector 500 may include a cleaved (an-

gle cleaved) fiber 502 (the proximate end of which is connected to the imaging system 5, not shown for the sake of clarity) inserted through a housing 504 having a ferrule 506 connected to a tapered v-groove 508. The tapered v-groove 508 is terminated by a fiber stop 510. The housing 504 has a taper 516 at one end through which a fiber 518 is inserted. The fiber 518 is inserted into the housing 504 via the taper 516 until it reaches the fiber stop 510. Once the fiber 518 comes to a stop, a clamp 512 holds the fiber 518 in place, away from the fiber-fiber interface, such that an air or fluid gap 514 is maintained. The fiber 518 is connected to the probe 50. In anoher embodiment, coupling gel may be used with flat cleaves to eliminate back-reflection from the gap 514.

[0028] A number of optional mechanisms or apparatus configured to communicate specific information to a user regarding the tissue 10 being encountered by the tissue identification system 2 during a procedure may be used. Fig. 15 illustrates a schematic diagram of a system 600 with components of an imaging system 5 and the optical fiber 29 connected to the fiber 25 via the optical connector 58. The fiber 25 is operatively associated with a syringe 51 and passes through the bore of a needle 52. A holder 612 is associated with the syringe 51 by the syringe barrel 614. A feedback unit 620 can be associated with the holder 612 in any of several ways.

[0029] The holder 612 can be attached to the syringe 51. In an exemplary embodiment, the holder 612 is removably attachable to the syringe 51, such as, but not limited to, snap fit, removable adhesive, clamping, clipping or the like. By having the holder 612 be removably attachable to the syringe 51, the holder 612 and associated feedback unit 620 can be reused while the syringe 608 can be disposable, thereby enabling conventional syringes to be used and eliminating the need for a custom developed and expensive probes.

[0030] In another embodiment, the holder 612 is removably attachable to the syringe 51 using a gun or syringe holder. In another certain embodiment, the system 600 is integrally related to the gun (described above in relation to Fig. 9). In still another embodiment, the system 600 is embedded within the gun 634, which holds the feedback unit 620 and fiber 606 and improves the ability of the physician to aspirate tissue into the needle 610.

[0031] The feedback unit 620 provides information to the user of the system 600, including that the system 600 has detected tissue of a particular type. In another embodiment, the feedback unit 620 is a visual display, such as, LED, VGA, or other visual feedback system. With an LED display, the software algorithm and tissue identification determinations, as described hereinbelow, can use an output signal to drive one or more LEDs, which can be actuated when the probe tip passes through or in proximity to differing tissue interface types (e.g., adipose versus muscle). As the tip contacts tissue of interest, such as a masticular lump, an LED light can change color or a different colored LED can be actuated to provide the physician feedback that the lump has been contacted and that the biopsy aspiration or other sampling can commence.

[0032] In still another embodiment of the present invention, the feedback unit 620 is an audible tone generator, which provides audio feedback as different tissue or other structures are detected by the system 600. In a further embodiment, the feedback unit 620 is a vibration generator. Each of the visual, audio and vibration feedback units provide simple and yet useful feedback to users of the system 600 to better target a biopsy probe in real time and with confidence. In yet another embodiment, the feedback unit 620 is a visual display screen that can be used to display a one or two-dimensional rolling plot image, comprising accumulated backscattered intensity as a function of z or depth within tissue, i.e. I_z, over time to form an image. The visual display can be a conventional CRT display or an LCD display for providing more detailed or multimodal feedback. The visual display can be as small as or smaller than a conventional cell phone display or large to afford the user of the system 600 with a magnified view of the tissue 10.

[0033] The feedback unit 620 is communicatively coupled to the imaging system 602 by a physical cable connection 622 or via a wireless connection. The wireless connection can be a radio frequency ("RF") connection, electromagnetic radiation signal, or the like. A wireless signal connection allows for reduced weight of the biopsy probe and fewer wires in the surgical site. A simple feedback system can be utilized so that the physician can operate the biopsy probe with one hand and have feedback proximate to the probe body so that the physician's concentration and visual focus does not leave the biopsy area.

[0034] Fig. 16 illustrates a further embodiment of the feedback unit 620 including a display 630, a manually operated button or switch 632 and a gun 634. The switch 632 is operatively connected to the display 630. The actuation of the switch 632 causes the display 630 to show selection of standard biopsy procedures, such as, but not limited to, biopsy of breast tissue, liver tissue, spleen tissue, muscle tissue, lymph tissue, kidney tissue, prostate tissue and the like. Each of these biopsy procedures involves the probe 50 passing through relatively consistent types of layers, including skin, muscle, fascia, and the like, in a similar order for a given procedure. For example, for a lumbar puncture, the order of layers the probe 50 would encounter are skin fascia, vertebrae, muscle, fascia, disk, subdural space, epidural space, the spinal cord fluid area. Each of these tissues can produce a relatively consistent and determinable imaging signal peak which, when normalized over a substantial patient base by comparative image analysis and subtracting the curves of normalized data versus actual patient data, offers an accurate picture of what will be encountered during the biopsy procedure.

[0035] As the needle tip passes through each layer, the imaging system 600 detects the actual signal, and compares it to reference signals stored in a database.

By taking an interferometric ranging scan of, for example, z (shown in Fig. 1) to obtain I(z), and taking the derivative dI/dz over time, a series of lines corresponding to the peaks of the sample may be obtained. The various consecutive peaks can be displayed by the feedback unit 620 to provide the user with accurate feedback of where the probe is and to assist the user in guiding the probe to the target area. The feedback unit can also incorporate an "anti-algorithm" to provide immediate feedback if the probe has wandered, overshot the target site or encountered a tissue type not expected to be detected during a particular procedure, such as, in the example of lumbar puncture, if the probe has passed the target area and hit a nerve. Such feedback can enable the physician to relocate the probe tip to the appropriate area.

[0036] The system and process according to the present invention is also able to determine when a target site has been reached. In order to determine when a target site has been reached, the system processes data from the reflected light to look for backscattering signatures that are indicative of a tissue type within the target site during a given procedure. Such processing consists of feature extraction and inserting these features into a model that predicts tissue type. This model can be a physical model, a chemometric model, or a combination of the two. A physical model generally predicts the scattering signal based on physical principles of light scattering. A chemometric model uses a training set and statistically extracts features using techniques such as Partial Least Squares ("PLS") or Principle Component Analysis ("PCA"). Such model is developed based on known samples, and the new data can be tested using this model. It should also be understood that fringes may be acquired and processed to determine other tissue features including birefringence, Doppler flow, and spectral characteristics.

[0037] Tissue identification can be accomplished by visualizing the intensity, birefringence, Doppler, spectroscopic axial reflectivity profile and/or the like. Additionally, the frequency spectrum (Fourier transform of the intensity data) of the reflectivity scan will provide information relating to the spacing of the scattering structures in the tissue which relates to tissue structure. A more sophisticated analysis, including, but not limited to, variance analysis, one-dimensional texture discrimination (including fractal dimension, spatial gray level co-occurrence matrix parameters, Markovian distance, edge counting), power spectral analysis (including Fourier domain and time domain), n^{th} order histogram moment analysis, and temporal analysis of the reflectivity information (comparing one scan to another separated by a fixed time) using correlation techniques will provide information relating to the type of tissue observed. Other key quantitative metrics that may be used to characterize tissue types include, measurement of the backscattering coefficient, total attenuation coefficient, estimation of the anisotropy coefficient (particle size) from the onset of multiple scattering, particle shape and size from the detected spectrum using coherence-gated light scattering spectroscopy, and the like.

[0038] The following illustrative list of tissue characteristics may be found using the system and process of the present invention: adipose tissue, muscle tissue, collagen, nerve tissue, lymph node tissue, necrosis tissue, blood, glandular tissue and the like. Adipose tissue exhibits low absorbance at water peaks, high low spatial frequency components from the LCI intensity image and a high anisotropy coefficient. Muscle tissue exhibits high absorbance at water peaks, moderate birefringence, moderate anisotropy and decreased variance. Collagen exhibits very high birefringence. Nerve tissue exhibits moderate to high birefringence, high water absorbance and decreased power spectral density. Lymph node tissue exhibits a low anisotropy coefficient and a low temporal variance. Necrotic tissue exhibits high temporal variance of LCI signal, high attenuation coefficient, high water absorbance and low birefringence. Blood exhibits high Doppler shift, high water absorbance, high total attenuation coefficient, and high temporal variance. Glandular tissue exhibits moderate spatial frequency variance and low birefringence. It should be understood that the present invention contemplates the use of more than one analysis method, i.e., a multimodal system. This may provide enhanced detection and analysis of tissue types.

[0039] Fig. 17 illustrates a process 700 for differentiating fat tissue from fibrous tissue according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention. The signal measured by the system 600 is an average of a number M axial scans. The system 600 detects the tissue sample surface using a signal threshold T1 at block 702. The detected signal is divided into N number of windows at block 704. Signal processing is conducted at block 706 to obtain a parameter derived from the interferometric ranging signal, such as the average deviation (ADEV) or standard deviation (STDEV) of the signal in each window (such as, but not limited to, the technique described in "Numerical Recipes in C", Press, W. et al., Cambridge University Press, New York, NY 1992) is calculated. Each window tested to determine if the threshold T2 is exceeded to obtain the tissue type as a function of depth z at block 708. If, at block 710, the system 600 determines that ADEV (or STDEV) is greater than the threshold T2, the tissue is considered to be lipid, and the process 700 advances to block 712. Otherwise, the tissue is not likely to be lipid and the process 700 advances to block 714.

[0040] Applications of this technology can include tissue identification for the purpose of intraoperative guidance, needle biopsy guidance, fine needle aspiration, image guided biopsy, guiding placement of peripheral or central intravenous or intra-arterial catheters, and the like. Different methods of imaging can be used for different applications. These different applications include: guided biopsy; cell methodology; veni-arterio, pattern or Doppler recognition; lumbar, pattern; therapy guidance, pattern and optical methods; and the like. The probe 50 can also be used as a targeting and delivery device for

therapeutics. The probe 50 can image the target area to make sure that needle injection of a therapeutic has reached and/or entered the target tissue or site by detecting the tissue type and interface change, i.e. a change in the refractive index of the tissue.

[0041] In order to determine whether the tissue is fibrous tissue or fat tissue, the process 700 utilizes standard image processing techniques to process data in order to differentiate fibrous (adipose) and fat tissue. Table 1, below, illustrates different measurements of fibrous and adipose tissue following the image processing of the data:

TISSUE TYPE	SENS	SPECIFICITY
Fibrous	.95	.98
Adipose	.97	.94
Fibrous/Adipose	.96	.84

In the table above, sensitivity is true positive, i.e. true positive + false negative, while specificity is true negative, i.e. true negative + false positive.

[0042] Fig. 18 illustrates an interferometric ranging diagnostic system 800 for identifying tissue according to the present invention. The system 800 uses a light source configured to emit light having a optical wavelength of 1.3 microns, 300 microwatts power and a 48 nm bandwidth. The light source allows the system 800 to interrogate tissue with a 15 micron resolution. The system 800 utilizes a low scanning frequency of the reference arm because building a coherent image is not the purpose of the system 800. Information can be gathered to identify the tissue through an average of several A-scans. The A-scan can be performed by one sweep of the reference arm, which corresponds to one depth scan. The system 800 processes and stores digital data, and the tissue type information is displayed on the feedback device in real time.

[0043] The LED source of the system 800 is a 300 microwatts SUPERLUM LED, which can be temperature and current controlled. The light is linearly polarized using a fiber optic polarizer P and sent to a beam splitter. The sample is interrogated with two orthogonally polarized states of the light in order to get birefringence information. The two orthogonally polarized states of the light are created by passing the light through the beam splitter, to two polarization controller PC paddles, one in each arm of the beam splitter. The two orthogonal polarization states are sent alternatively to the fiber optic circulator CIR, which directs the light to the fiber optic Michelson interferometer IF. The optical switch OSW is synchronized with the optical delay line ODL galvanometer, so that the polarization would change alternatively from one scan to the other. A very simple delay line, consisting in a retroreflector mounted to an lever driven by a galvanometer, was used to do the depth scanning. The probe attached to the sample arm of the interferometer IF includes a bare fiber introduced into a syringe needle. The backscattered light is coherently added to the light coming from the ODL and sent to the detectors D1, D2. A polarization splitter PS is used to select the two orthogonal states. The output signals of the detectors are preamplified and digitized using a NI DAQ card.

[0044] The system performs the digital acquisition, filtering, and averaging of the fringes, and provides the following information: (1) depth intensity at 15 microns resolution and spectral information, (2) birefringence information: computes stokes parameters-IQUV and extracts phase retardation, and (3) Doppler shift information.

[0045] Fig. 19 illustrates a flow diagram 900 of the signal processing sequence according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention. The simplest form of tissue identification is differentiation of two tissue types. The difference between two tissue types can be seen in Fig. 1, which shows the results of a feasibility study to distinguish cadaver fat from fibrous tissue. For example, adipose tissue has an appearance of multiple peaks separated by low interferometric ranging signal segments, whereas fibrous tissue has a lower degree of variance and decays exponentially.

[0046] Although only a few exemplary embodiments of this invention have been described in detail above, those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that many modifications are possible in the exemplary embodiments without materially departing from the novel teachings and advantages of this invention. Accordingly, all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of this invention as defined in the following claims.

Claims

1. An apparatus (600) for identifying characteristics of tissue (10), comprising:

   a needle (52) configured to provide a radiation therethrough;
   a radiation source (12) configured to perform an axial scan of the tissue through the needle (52) using the radiation; and
   an imaging system (5) adapted to receive axial scan radiation from the needle (52) based on the axial scan, and process data relating to the axial scan radiation that is based on at least one of a spectral domain low-coherence interferometry or an optical frequency domain reflectrometry, to identify characteristics of the tissue (10), wherein the imaging system (5) identifies the characteristics of the tissue by said processing of the data.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the radiation source (12) is a light source (12) configured to emit

light.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the light source (12) is a broad bandwidth light source.

4. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the light source (12) is a swept wavelength optical source.

5. The apparatus of claim 2, 3 or 4 wherein the light source (12) delivers radiation to the tissue via an optical fiber (25) disposed in an insertion device (50) including the needle (52) having a distal end at least partially disposed within the insertion device (50) and a proximal end.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the insertion device (50) is configured to provide the distal end of the optical fiber (25) adjacent to the tissue (10).

7. The apparatus of claim 5 or 6, wherein the insertion device (50) is one of a barrel, a needle, and a stylet.

8. The apparatus of any preceding claim, wherein the imaging system (5) further includes an interferometer adapted to direct a portion of the radiation emitted by the radiation source (12) into a sample arm (24) and detecting radiation reflected from the tissue (10) back through the sample arm.

9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the interferometer directs another portion of the radiation into a reference arm (20).

10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the imaging system (5) identifies characteristics of the tissue (10) by processing the axial scan radiation to provide the characteristics of the tissue, the axial scan radiation including radiation received from the reference arm (20) and radiation received from the sample arm (24), and comparing the characteristics of the tissue with a database of normalized characteristics of a plurality of tissue types.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the axial scan radiation includes at least one of backscattering, spectral properties, birefringence and Doppler shift.

12. The apparatus of claim 10 or 11, wherein the imaging system (5) processes the axial scan radiation by performing at least one of standard deviation, average deviation, and slope of the axial reflectivity profile.

13. The apparatus of claim 10, 11 or 12, wherein the imaging system (5) inputs data derived from the axial scan radiation into a statistical model to predict tissue type.

14. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the statistical model extracts features from data derived from the axial scan radiation.

15. The apparatus of claim 13 or 14, wherein the statistical model is at least one of partial least squares or principle component analysis.

16. The apparatus of any preceding claim, wherein the imaging system (5) identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by determining reflectance characteristics of the axial scan radiation using interferometric ranging, and comparing the characteristics of the tissue with normalized reflectance characteristics of a plurality of types of tissue stored in a database.

17. The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the type of interferometric ranging is at least one of optical time domain reflectometry, spectral domain reflectometry and optical frequency domain reflectometry.

18. A method for identifying characteristics of tissue (10), comprising the steps:

performing an axial scan of the tissue using radiation through a needle (52); and
identifying characteristics of the tissue using a processing arrangement by processing data from the needle (52) relating to the axial scan radiation that is based on at least one of a spectral domain low-coherence interferometry or an optical frequency domain reflectrometry.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the axial scan radiation includes at least one of backscattering, spectral properties, birefringence and Doppler shift.

20. The method of claim 18 or 19, wherein the processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by performing at least one of standard deviation of data associated with the axial scan radiation, average deviation of data associated with the axial scan radiation, and slope of the axial reflectivity profile of data associated with the axial scan radiation.

21. The method of claim 18, 19 or 20, wherein a light source (12) delivers the radiation to perform the axial scan of the tissue via an optical fiber (25) disposed in an insertion device (50) including the needle (52) having a distal end at least partially disposed within the insertion device (50) and a proximal end.

22. The method of any of claims 18 to 21, wherein the processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by inputting data derived from the axial scan radiation into a statistical model to predict tissue type.

23. The method of any of claims 18 to 22, wherein the

processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by determining reflectance characteristics of the axial scan radiation using interferometric ranging and comparing the characteristics of the tissue with a database of stored normalized reflectance characteristics of a plurality of types of tissue.

24. A storage medium storing a software program for identifying characteristics of tissue (10), wherein the software program, when executed by a processing arrangement, is configured to cause the processing arrangement to execute the steps comprising:

performing an axial scan of the tissue using radiation through a needle (52); and
processing data from the needle (52) relating to the axial scan radiation that is based on at least one of a spectral domain low-coherence interferometry or an optical frequency domain reflectrometry, to identify characteristics of the tissue, wherein the characteristics of the tissue are identified by said processing of the data.

25. The storage medium of claim 24, wherein the axial scan radiation includes at least one of backscattering, spectral properties, birefringence and Doppler shift.

26. The storage medium of claim 24 or 25, wherein the processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by performing at least one of standard deviation of data associated with the axial scan radiation, average deviation of data associated with the axial scan radiation, and slope of the axial reflectivity profile of data associated with the axial scan radiation.

27. The storage medium of claim 24, 25 or 26, wherein a light source (12) delivers the radiation to perform the axial scan of the tissue via an optical fiber (25) disposed in an insertion device (50) including the needle (52) having a distal end at least partially disposed within the insertion device (50) and a proximal end.

28. The storage medium of any of claims 24 to 27, wherein the processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue by inputting data derived from the axial scan radiation into a statistical model to predict tissue type.

29. The storage medium of any of claims 24 to 28, wherein the processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by determining reflectance characteristics of the axial scan radiation using interferometric ranging and comparing the characteristics of the tissue with a database of stored normalized reflectance characteristics of a plurality of types of tissue.

30. A logic arrangement for identifying characteristics of tissue (10), which, when executed by a processing arrangement, is operable to perform the steps comprising:

performing an axial scan of the tissue using radiation through a needle (52); and
processing data from the needle (52) relating to the axial scan radiation that is based on at least one of a spectral domain low-coherence interferometry or an optical frequency domain reflectrometry, to identify characteristics of the tissue by a processing arrangement, wherein the characteristics of the tissue are identified by said processing of the data.

31. The logic arrangement of claim 30, wherein the axial scan radiation includes at least one of backscattering, spectral properties, birefringence and Doppler shift.

32. The logic arrangement of claim 30 or 31, wherein the processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by performing at least one of standard deviation of data associated with the axial scan radiation, average deviation of data associated with the axial scan radiation, and slope of the axial reflectivity profile of data associated with the axial scan radiation.

33. The logic arrangement of claim 30, 31 or 32, wherein a light source (12) delivers the radiation to perform the axial scan of the tissue via an optical fiber (25) disposed in an insertion device (50) including the needle (52) having a distal end at least partially disposed within the insertion device (50) and a proximal end.

34. The logic arrangement of any of claims 30 to 33, wherein the processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by inputting data derived from the axial scan radiation into a statistical model to predict tissue type.

35. The logic arrangement of any of claims 30 to 34, wherein the processing step identifies the characteristics of the tissue (10) by determining reflectance characteristics of the axial scan radiation using interferometric ranging and comparing the characteristics of the tissue with a database of stored normalized reflectance characteristics of a plurality of types of tissue.

Patentansprüche

1. Vorrichtung (600) zum Identifizieren von Eigenschaften von Gewebe (10), die enthält:

   eine Nadel (52), die konfiguriert ist, eine Strahlung durch sie bereitzustellen;
   eine Strahlungsquelle (12), die konfiguriert ist, eine axiale Abtastung des Gewebes durch die Nadel (52) unter Verwendung der Strahlung auszuführen; und
   ein Abbildungssystem (5), das dafür ausgelegt ist, Strahlung der axialen Abtastung von der Nadel (52) anhand der axialen Abtastung zu empfangen und Daten, die mit der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung in Beziehung stehen, die auf einer Interferometrie mit niedriger Kohärenz im Spektralbereich und/oder einer Reflektometrie im Bereich optischer Frequenzen beruht, zu empfangen, um Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) zu identifizieren, wobei das Abbildungssystem (5) die Eigenschaften des Gewebes durch die Verarbeitung der Daten identifiziert.

2. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Strahlungsquelle (12) eine Lichtquelle (12) ist, die konfiguriert ist, Licht zu emittieren.

3. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 2, wobei die Lichtquelle (12) eine Lichtquelle mit breiter Bandbreite ist.

4. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 2, wobei die Lichtquelle (12) eine optische Quelle mit variierender Wellenlänge ist.

5. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 2, 3 oder 4, wobei die Lichtquelle (12) Strahlung zu dem Gewebe durch eine Lichtleitfaser (25) liefert, die in einer Einsetzvorrichtung (50) angeordnet ist, die die Nadel (52) enthält, die ein distales Ende, das wenigstens teilweise in der Einsetzvorrichtung (50) angeordnet ist, und ein proximales Ende besitzt.

6. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 5, wobei die Einsetzvorrichtung (50) konfiguriert ist, das distale Ende der Lichtleitfaser (25) in der Nähe des Gewebes (10) bereitzustellen.

7. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 5 oder 6, wobei die Einsetzvorrichtung (50) ein Zylinder oder eine Nadel oder eine Sonde ist.

8. Vorrichtung nach einem vorhergehenden Anspruch, wobei das Abbildungssystem (5) ferner ein Interferometer enthält, das dafür ausgelegt ist, einen Anteil der von der Strahlungsquelle (12) emittierten Strahlung in einen Probenarm (24) zu lenken und Strahlung, die von dem Gewebe (10) zurück durch den Probenarm reflektiert wird, zu detektieren.

9. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 8, wobei das Interferometer einen weiteren Anteil der Strahlung in einen Referenzarm (20) lenkt.

10. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 9, wobei das Abbildungssystem (5) Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Verarbeiten der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung, um die Eigenschaften des Gewebes bereitzustellen, wobei die Strahlung der axialen Abtastung Strahlung, die von dem Referenzarm (20) empfangen wird, und Strahlung, die von dem Probenarm (24) empfangen wird, enthält, und durch Vergleichen der Eigenschaften des Gewebes mit einer Datenbank normierter Eigenschaften mehrerer Gewebetypen identifiziert.

11. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 10, wobei die Strahlung der axialen Abtastung eine Rückstreuung und/oder spektrale Eigenschaften und/oder eine Doppelbrechung und/oder eine Doppler-Verschiebung enthält.

12. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 10 oder 11, wobei das Abbildungssystem (5) die Strahlung der axialen Abtastung durch Ausführen einer Standardabweichung und/oder eine Durchschnittsabweichung und/oder einer Steigung des axialen Reflexionsvermögensprofils verarbeitet.

13. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 10, 11 oder 12, wobei das Abbildungssystem (5) Daten, die von der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung abgeleitet werden, in ein statistisches Modell eingibt, um den Gewebetyp vorherzusagen.

14. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 13, wobei das statistische Modell Merkmale, die von der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung abgeleitet werden, extrahiert.

15. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 13 oder 14, wobei das statistische Modell ein Modell partieller kleinster Quadrate und/oder ein Modell einer Hauptkomponentenanalyse ist.

16. Vorrichtung nach einem vorhergehenden Anspruch, wobei das Abbildungssystem (5) die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Bestimmen der Reflexionsvermögenseigenschaften der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung unter Verwendung einer interferometrischen Reichweitenbestimmung und durch Vergleichen der Eigenschaften des Gewebes mit normierten Reflexionsvermögenseigenschaften mehrerer Gewebetypen, die in einer Datenbank gespeichert sind, identifiziert.

17. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 16, wobei der Typ der interferometrischen Reichweitenbestimmung eine

optische Reflektometrie im Zeitbereich und/oder eine Reflektometrie im Spektralbereich und/oder eine optische Reflektometrie im Frequenzbereich ist.

18. Verfahren zum Identifizieren von Eigenschaften von Gewebe (10), dass die folgenden Schritte umfasst:

Ausführen einer axialen Abtastung des Gewebes unter Verwendung von Strahlung durch eine Nadel (52); und
Identifizieren von Eigenschaften des Gewebes unter Verwendung einer Verarbeitungsanordnung durch Verarbeiten von Daten von der Nadel (52), die mit der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung in Beziehung stehen, die auf einer Interferometrie mit niedriger Kohärenz im Spektralbereich und/oder auf einer optischen Reflektometrie im Frequenzbereich beruht.

19. Verfahren nach Anspruch 18, wobei die Strahlung der axialen Abtastung eine Rückstreuung und/oder spektrale Eigenschaften und/oder eine Doppelbrechung und/oder eine Doppler-Verschiebung enthält.

20. Verfahren nach Anspruch 18 oder 19, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Ausführen einer Standardabweichung von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, und/oder einer Durchschnittsabweichung von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, und/oder einer Steigung des axialen Reflexionsvermögensprofils von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, ausführt.

21. Verfahren nach Anspruch 18, 19 oder 20, wobei eine Lichtquelle (12) die Strahlung liefert, um die axiale Abtastung des Gewebes durch eine Lichtleitfaser (25) auszuführen, die in einer Einsetzvorrichtung (50) angeordnet ist, die die Nadel (52) enthält, die ein distales Ende, das wenigstens teilweise in der Einsetzvorrichtung (50) angeordnet ist, und ein proximales Ende besitzt.

22. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 18 bis 21, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Eingeben von Daten, die von der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung abgeleitet werden, in ein statistisches Modell, um einen Gewebetyp vorherzusagen, identifiziert.

23. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 18 bis 22, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Bestimmen der Reflexionsvermögenseigenschaften der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung unter Verwendung einer interferometrischen Reichweitenbestimmung und durch Vergleichen der Eigenschaften des Gewebes mit einer Datenbank gespeicherter normierter Reflexionsvermögenseigenschaften mehrerer Gewebetypen identifiziert.

24. Speichermedium, das ein Software-Programm speichert, um Eigenschaften von Gewebe (10) zu identifizieren, wobei das Software-Programm dann, wenn es von einer Verarbeitungsanordnung ausgeführt wird, konfiguriert ist, die Verarbeitungsanordnung dazu zu veranlassen, die Schritte auszuführen, die Folgendes umfassen:

Ausführen einer axialen Abtastung des Gewebes unter Verwendung von Strahlung durch eine Nadel (52); und
Verarbeiten von Daten von der Nadel (52), die mit der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung in Beziehung stehen, die auf einer Interferometrie mit geringer Kohärenz im Spektralbereich und/oder auf einer optischen Reflektometrie im Frequenzbereich beruht, um Eigenschaften des Gewebes zu identifizieren, wobei die Eigenschaften des Gewebes durch die Verarbeitung der Daten identifiziert werden.

25. Speichermedium nach Anspruch 24, wobei die Strahlung der axialen Abtastung eine Rückstreuung und/oder spektrale Eigenschaften und/oder eine Doppelbrechung und/oder eine Doppler-Verschiebung enthält.

26. Speichermedium nach Anspruch 24 oder 25, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Ausführen einer Standardabweichung von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, und/oder einer durchschnittlichen Abweichung von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, und/oder eine Steigung des axialen Reflexionsvermögensprofils von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, identifiziert.

27. Speichermedium nach Anspruch 24, 25 oder 26, wobei eine Lichtquelle (12) die Strahlung liefert, um die axiale Abtastung des Gewebes durch eine Lichtleitfaser (25) auszuführen, die in einer Einsetzvorrichtung (50) angeordnet ist, die die Nadel (52) enthält, die ein distales Ende, das wenigstens teilweise in der Einsetzvorrichtung (50) angeordnet ist, und ein proximales Ende besitzt.

28. Speichermedium nach einem der Ansprüche 24 bis 27, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes durch Eingeben von Daten, die von der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung abgeleitet werden, in ein statistisches Modell, um einen Gewebetyp vorherzusagen, identifiziert.

29. Speichermedium nach einem der Ansprüche 24 bis

28, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Bestimmen der Reflexionsvermögenseigenschaften der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung unter Verwendung einer interferometrischen Reichweitenbestimmung und durch Vergleichen der Eigenschaften des Gewebes mit einer Datenbank gespeicherter normierter Reflexionsvermögenseigenschaften mehrerer Gewebetypen identifiziert.

30. Logikanordnung zum Identifizieren von Eigenschaften von Gewebe (10), die dann, wenn sie durch eine Verarbeitungsanordnung ausgeführt wird, betreibbar ist, um die Schritte auszuführen, die Folgendes umfassen:

Ausführen einer axialen Abtastung des Gewebes unter Verwendung von Strahlung durch eine Nadel (52); und
Verarbeiten von Daten von der Nadel (52), die mit der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung in Beziehung stehen, die auf einer Interferometrie mit geringer Kohärenz im Spektralbereich und/oder auf einer optischen Reflektometrie im Frequenzbereich beruht, um Eigenschaften des Gewebes durch eine Verarbeitungsanordnung zu identifizieren, wobei die Eigenschaften des Gewebes durch die Verarbeitung der Daten identifiziert werden.

31. Logikanordnung nach Anspruch 30, wobei die Strahlung der axialen Abtastung eine Rückstreuung und/oder spektrale Eigenschaften und/oder eine Doppelbrechung und/oder eine Doppler-Verschiebung enthält.

32. Logikanordnung nach Anspruch 30 oder 31, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Ausführen einer Standardabweichung von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, und/oder einer durchschnittlichen Abweichung von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, und/oder der Steigung des axialen Reflexionsvermögensprofils von Daten, die der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung zugeordnet sind, identifiziert.

33. Logikanordnung nach Anspruch 30, 31 oder 32, wobei eine Lichtquelle (12) die Strahlung liefert, um die axiale Abtastung des Gewebes durch eine Lichtleitfaser (25) auszuführen, die in einer Einsetzvorrichtung (50) angeordnet ist, die die Nadel (52) enthält, die ein distales Ende, das wenigstens teilweise in der Einsetzvorrichtung (50) angeordnet ist, und ein proximales Ende besitzt.

34. Logikanordnung nach einem der Ansprüche 30 bis 33, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Eingeben von Daten, die von der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung abgeleitet werden, in ein statistisches Modell, um einen Gewebetyp vorherzusagen, identifiziert.

35. Logikanordnung nach einem der Ansprüche 30 bis 34, wobei der Verarbeitungsschritt die Eigenschaften des Gewebes (10) durch Bestimmen von Reflexionsvermögenseigenschaften der Strahlung der axialen Abtastung unter Verwendung einer interferometrischen Reichweitenbestimmung und durch Vergleichen der Eigenschaften des Gewebes mit einer Datenbank gespeicherter normierter Reflexionsvermögenseigenschaften mehrerer Gewebetypen identifiziert.

Revendications

1. Appareil (600) pour identifier des caractéristiques d'un tissu (10), comportant :

une aiguille (52) configurée pour produire un rayonnement à travers celle-ci ;
une source de de rayonnement (12) configurée pour effectuer un balayage axial du tissu à travers l'aiguille (52) en utilisant le rayonnement ; et
un système d'imagerie (5) adapté pour recevoir un rayonnement de balayage axial provenant de l'aiguille (52) basé sur le balayage axial, et traiter des données concernant le rayonnement de balayage axial qui sont basées sur au moins une technique parmi une interférométrie à faible cohérence dans le domaine spectral ou une réflectométrie optique dans le domaine fréquentiel, pour identifier des caractéristiques du tissu (10), dans lequel le système d'imagerie (5) identifie les caractéristiques du tissu par ledit traitement des données.

2. Appareil selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la source de rayonnement (12) est une source de lumière (12) configurée pour émettre de la lumière.

3. Appareil selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la source de lumière (12) est une source de lumière à largeur de bande étendue.

4. Appareil selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la source de lumière (12) est une source optique à longueur d'onde balayée.

5. Appareil selon la revendication 2, 3 ou 4, dans lequel la source de lumière (12) délivre un rayonnement au tissu via une fibre optique (25) disposée dans un dispositif d'insertion (50) incluant l'aiguille (52) ayant une extrémité distale au moins partiellement dispo-

sée à l'intérieur du dispositif d'insertion (50) et une extrémité proximale.

6. Appareil selon la revendication 5, dans lequel le dispositif d'insertion (50) est configuré pour fournir l'extrémité distale de la fibre optique (25) au voisinage du tissu (10).

7. Appareil selon la revendication 5 ou 6, dans lequel le dispositif d'insertion (50) est un élément parmi un cylindre, une aiguille et un stylet.

8. Appareil selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le système d'imagerie (5) inclut en outre un interféromètre adapté pour diriger une partie du rayonnement émis par la source de rayonnement (12) dans un bras d'échantillon (24) et détecter un rayonnement réfléchi par le tissu (10) à travers le bras d'échantillon.

9. Appareil selon la revendication 8, dans lequel l'interféromètre dirige une autre partie du rayonnement dans un bras de référence (20).

10. Appareil selon la revendication 9, dans lequel le système d'imagerie (5) identifie des caractéristiques du tissu (10) en traitant le rayonnement de balayage axial pour fournir les caractéristiques du tissu, le rayonnement de balayage axial incluant un rayonnement reçu du bras de référence (20) et un rayonnement reçu du bras d'échantillon (24), et en comparant les caractéristiques du tissu avec une base de données de caractéristiques normalisées d'une pluralité de types de tissu.

11. Appareil selon la revendication 10, dans lequel le rayonnant de balayage axial inclut au moins un élément parmi une rétrodiffusion, des propriétés spectrales, une biréfringence et un décalage Doppler.

12. Appareil selon la revendication 10 ou 11, dans lequel le système d'imagerie (5) traite le rayonnement de balayage axial en effectuant au moins un calcul parmi un écart-type, un écart moyen et une pente du profil de réflectivité axiale.

13. Appareil selon la revendication 10, 11 ou 12, dans lequel le système d'imagerie (5) applique en entrée des données obtenues à partir du rayonnement de balayage axial dans un modèle statistique pour prédire le type de tissu.

14. Appareil selon la revendication 13, dans lequel le modèle statistique extrait des caractéristiques à partir des données obtenues à partir du rayonnement de balayage axial.

15. Appareil selon la revendication 13 ou 14, dans lequel le modèle statistique est au moins une analyse parmi une analyse de régression partielle par les moindres carrés ou une analyse en composantes principales.

16. Appareil selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le système d'imagerie (5) identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en déterminant des caractéristiques de réflectance du rayonnement de balayage axial en utilisant une télémétrie interférométrique, et en comparant les caractéristiques du tissu avec des caractéristiques de réflectance normalisées d'une pluralité de types de tissu mémorisées dans une base de données.

17. Appareil selon la revendication 16, dans lequel le type de télémétrie interférométrique est au moins une technique parmi une réflectométrie optique dans le domaine temporel, une réflectométrie dans le domaine spectral et une réflectométrie optique dans le domaine fréquentiel.

18. Procédé pour identifier des caractéristiques d'un tissu (10), comportant les étapes consistant à :

effectuer un balayage axial du tissu en utilisant un rayonnement à travers une aiguille (52) ; et
identifier des caractéristiques du tissu en utilisant un agencement de traitement en traitant des données provenant de l'aiguille (52) concernant le rayonnement de balayage axial qui sont basées sur au moins une technique parmi une interférométrie à faible cohérence dans le domaine spectral ou une réflectométrie optique dans le domaine fréquentiel.

19. Procédé selon la revendication 18, dans lequel le rayonnement de balayage axial inclut au moins un élément parmi une rétrodiffusion, des propriétés spectrales, une biréfringence et un décalage Doppler.

20. Procédé selon la revendication 18 ou 19, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en effectuant au moins un calcul parmi un écart-type de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial, un écart moyen de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial, et une pente du profil de réflectivité axiale de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial.

21. Procédé selon la revendication 18, 19 ou 20, dans lequel une source de lumière (12) délivre le rayonnement pour effectuer le balayage axial du tissu via une fibre optique (25) disposée dans un dispositif d'insertion (50) incluant l'aiguille (52) ayant une extrémité distale au moins partiellement disposée à l'intérieur du dispositif d'insertion (50) et une extrémité proximale.

22. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 18 à 21, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en appliquant en entrée des données obtenues à partir du rayonnement de balayage axial dans un modèle statistique pour prédire le type de tissu.

23. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 18 à 22, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en déterminant des caractéristiques de réflectance du rayonnement de balayage axial en utilisant une télémétrie interférométrique et en comparant les caractéristiques du tissu avec une base de données de caractéristiques de réflectance normalisées mémorisées d'une pluralité de types de tissu.

24. Support de mémorisation mémorisant un programme logiciel pour identifier des caractéristiques d'un tissu (10), dans lequel le programme logiciel, lorsqu'il est exécuté par un agencement de traitement, est configuré pour amener l'agencement de traitement à exécuter les étapes consistant à :

effectuer un balayage axial du tissu en utilisant un rayonnement à travers une aiguille (52) ; et
traiter des données provenant de l'aiguille (52) concernant le rayonnement de balayage axial qui sont basées sur au moins une technique parmi une interférométrie à faible cohérence dans le domaine spectral ou une réflectométrie optique dans le domaine fréquentiel, pour identifier des caractéristiques du tissu, dans lequel les caractéristiques du tissu sont identifiées par ledit traitement des données.

25. Support de mémorisation selon la revendication 24, dans lequel le rayonnement de balayage axial inclut au moins un élément parmi une rétrodiffusion, des propriétés spectrales, une biréfringence et un décalage Doppler.

26. Support de mémorisation selon la revendication 24 ou 25, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en effectuant au moins un calcul parmi un écart-type de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial, un écart moyen de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial, et une pente du profil de réflectivité axiale de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial.

27. Support de mémorisation selon la revendication 24, 25 ou 26, dans lequel une source de lumière (12) délivre le rayonnement pour effectuer le balayage axial du tissu via une fibre optique (25) disposée dans un dispositif d'insertion (50) incluant l'aiguille (52) ayant une extrémité distale au moins partiellement disposée à l'intérieur du dispositif d'insertion (50) et une extrémité proximale.

28. Support de mémorisation selon l'une quelconque des revendications 24 à 27, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu en appliquant en entrée des données obtenues à partir du rayonnement de balayage axial dans un modèle statistique pour prédire le type de tissu.

29. Support de mémorisation selon l'une quelconque des revendications 24 à 28, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en déterminant des caractéristiques de réflectance du rayonnement de balayage axial en utilisant une télémétrie interférométrique et en comparant les caractéristiques du tissu avec une base de données de caractéristiques de réflectance normalisées mémorisées d'une pluralité de types de tissu.

30. Agencement logique pour identifier des caractéristiques d'un tissu (10) qui, lorsqu'il est exécuté par un agencement de traitement, peut fonctionner pour exécuter les étapes consistant à :

effectuer un balayage axial du tissu en utilisant un rayonnement à travers une aiguille (52) ; et
traiter des données provenant de l'aiguille (52) concernant le rayonnement de balayage axial qui sont basées sur au moins une technique parmi une interférométrie à faible cohérence dans le domaine spectral ou une réflectométrie optique dans le domaine fréquentiel, pour identifier des caractéristiques du tissu par un agencement de traitement, dans lequel les caractéristiques du tissu sont identifiées par ledit traitement des données.

31. Agencement logique selon la revendication 30, dans lequel le rayonnement de balayage axial inclut au moins un élément parmi une rétrodiffusion, des propriétés spectrales, une biréfringence et un décalage Doppler.

32. Agencement logique selon la revendication 30 ou 31, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en effectuant au moins un calcul parmi un écart-type de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial, un écart moyen de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial, et une pente du profil de réflectivité axiale de données associées au rayonnement de balayage axial.

33. Agencement logique selon la revendication 30, 31 ou 32, dans lequel une source de lumière (12) délivre le rayonnement pour effectuer le balayage axial du tissu via une fibre optique (25) disposée dans un

dispositif d'insertion (50) incluant l'aiguille (52) ayant une extrémité distale au moins partiellement disposée à l'intérieur du dispositif d'insertion (50) et une extrémité proximale.

34. Agencement logique selon l'une quelconque des revendications 30 à 33, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en appliquant en entrée des données obtenues à partir du rayonnement de balayage axial dans un modèle statistique pour prédire le type de tissu.

35. Agencement logique selon l'une quelconque des revendications 30 à 34, dans lequel l'étape de traitement identifie les caractéristiques du tissu (10) en déterminant des caractéristiques de réflectance du rayonnement de balayage axial en utilisant une télémétrie interférométrique et en comparant les caractéristiques du tissu avec une base de données de caractéristiques de réflectance normalisées mémorisées d'une pluralité de types de tissu.

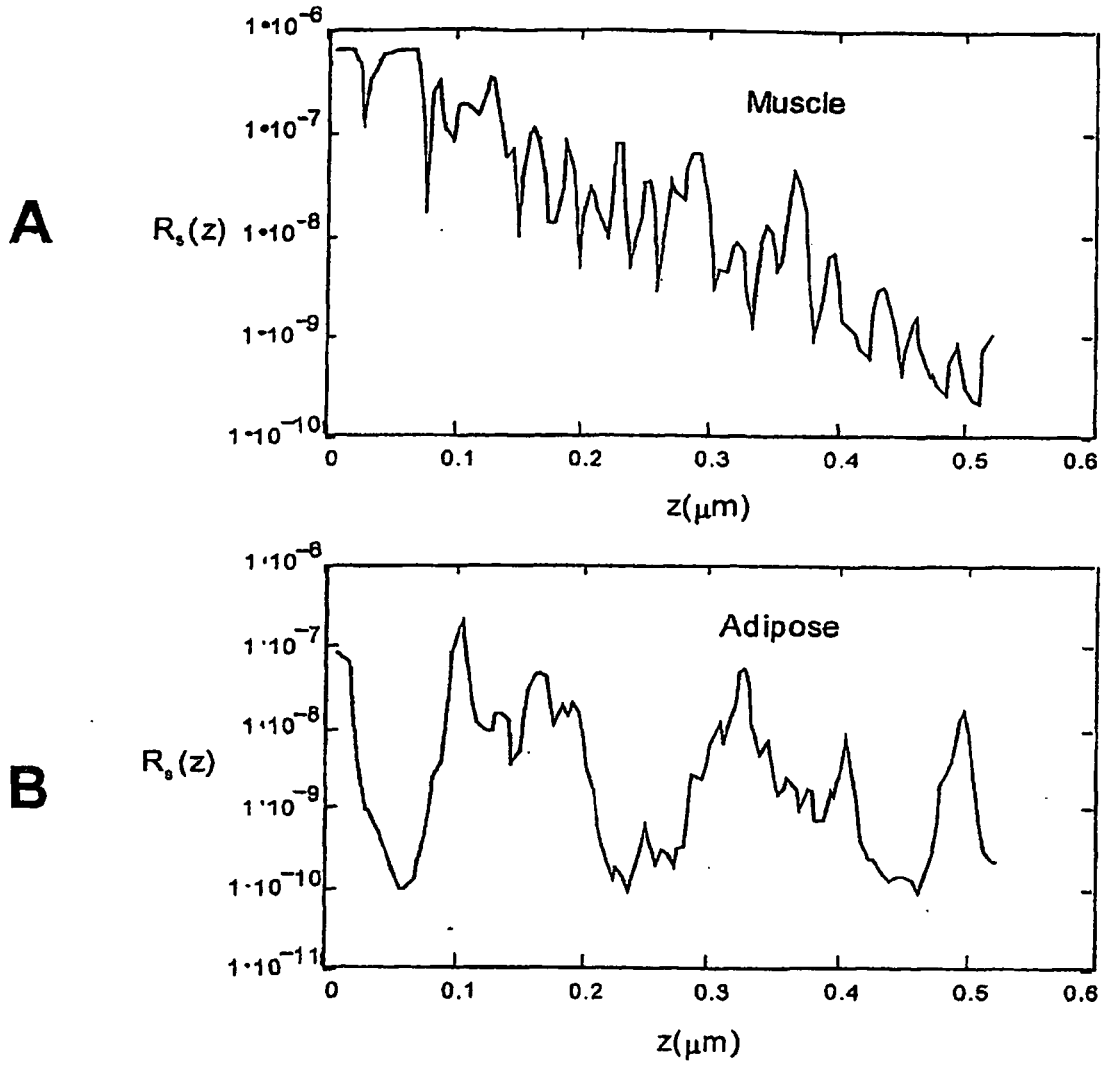

A
B
Muscle
Adipose
$R_s(z)$
$1 \cdot 10^{-6}$
$1 \cdot 10^{-7}$
$1 \cdot 10^{-8}$
$1 \cdot 10^{-9}$
$1 \cdot 10^{-10}$
$1 \cdot 10^{-11}$
0
0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
0.5
0.6
z(μm)

FIG. 1

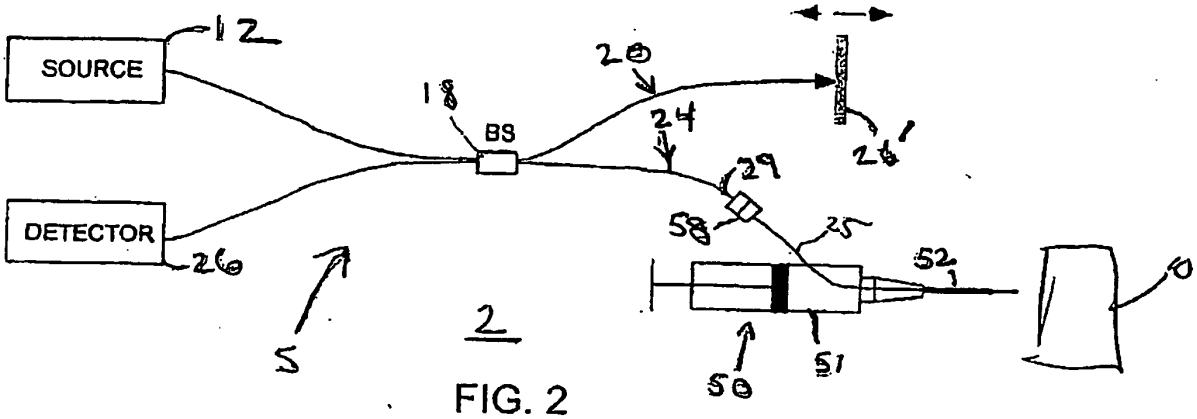

SOURCE
12
18
BS
20
24
26'
29
58
25
52
10
DETECTOR
26
5
2
50
51

FIG. 2

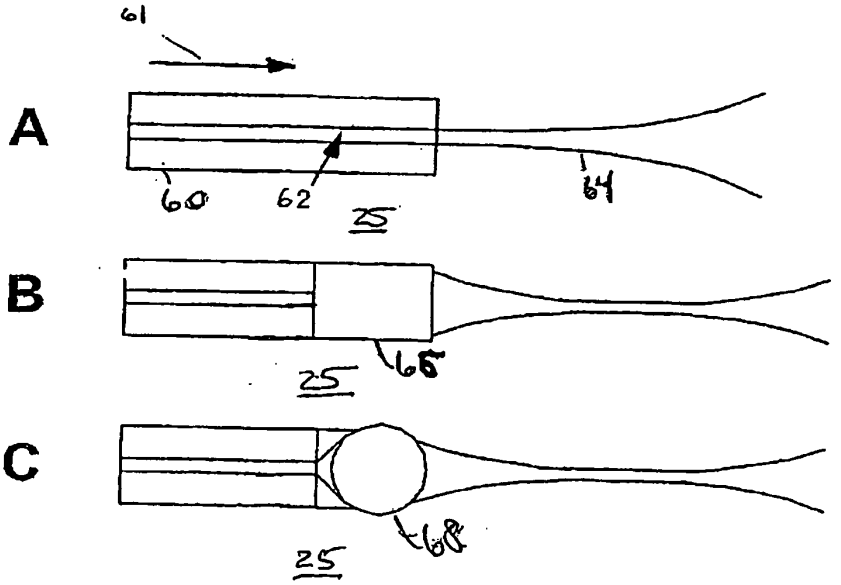

61
A
60
62
25
64
B
25
66
C
25
68

FIG. 3

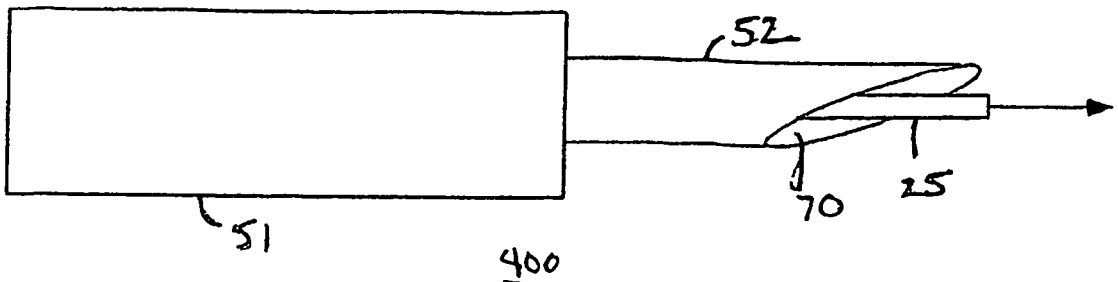


FIG. 4

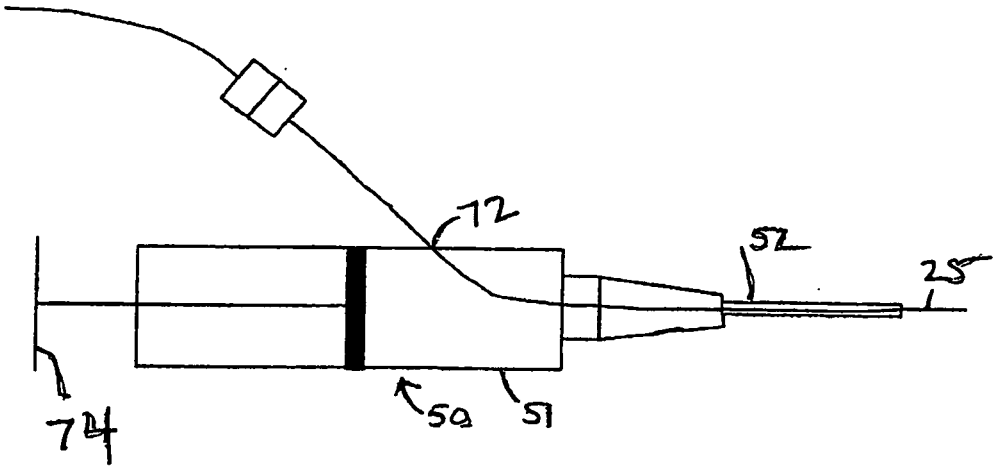


FIG. 5

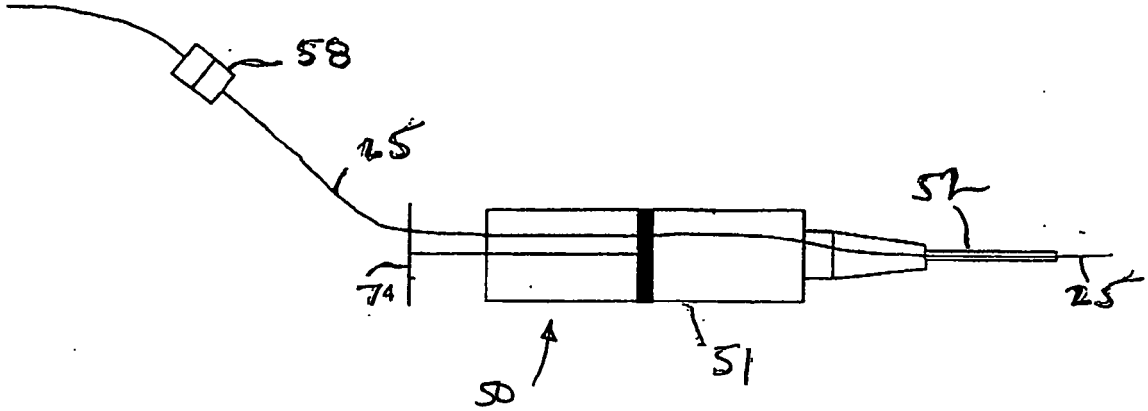


FIG. 6

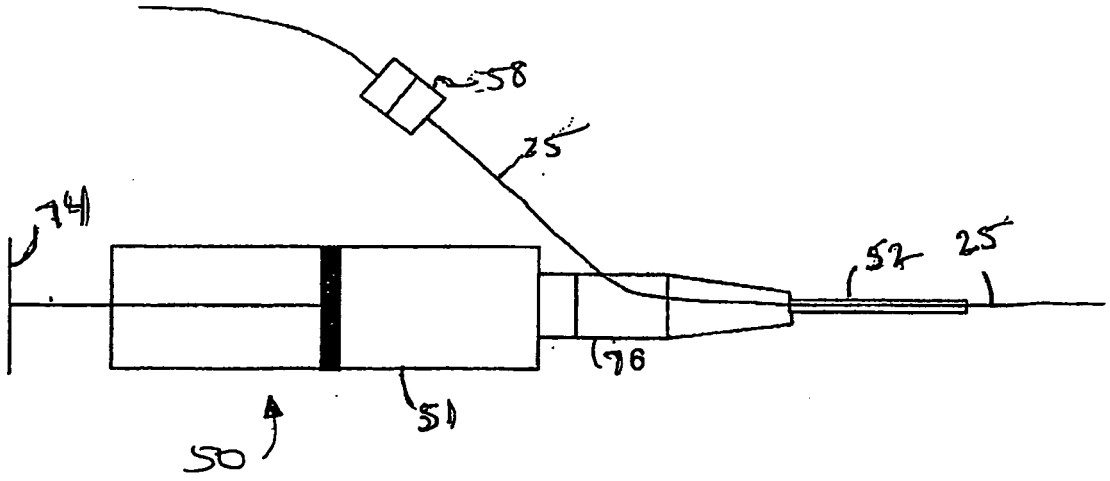


FIG. 7

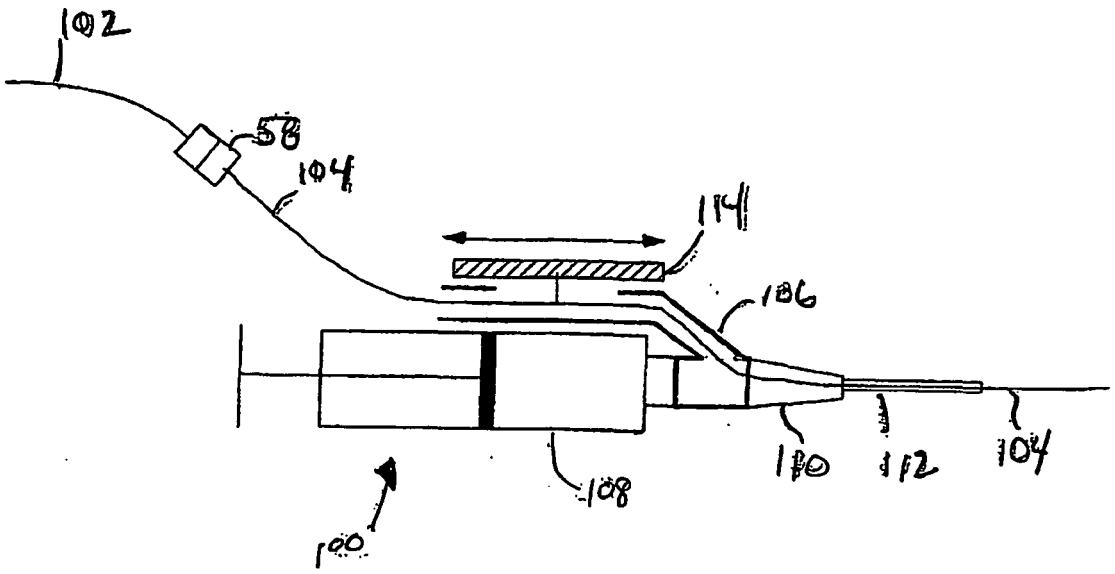


FIG. 8

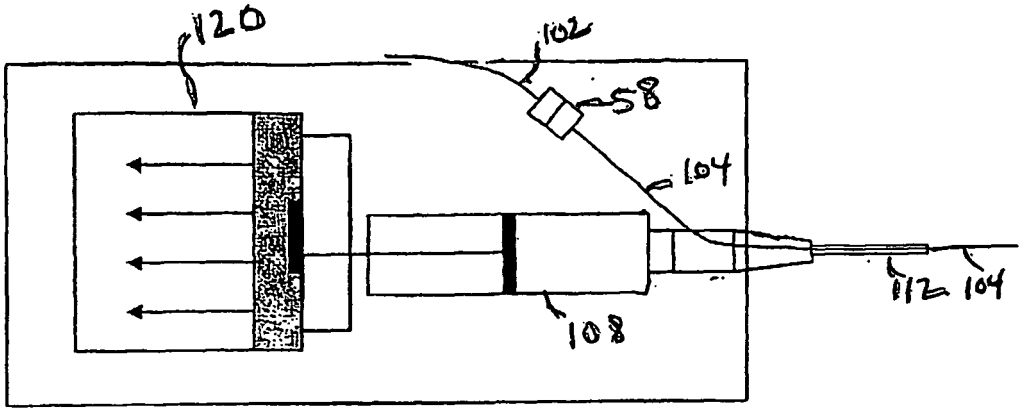


FIG. 9

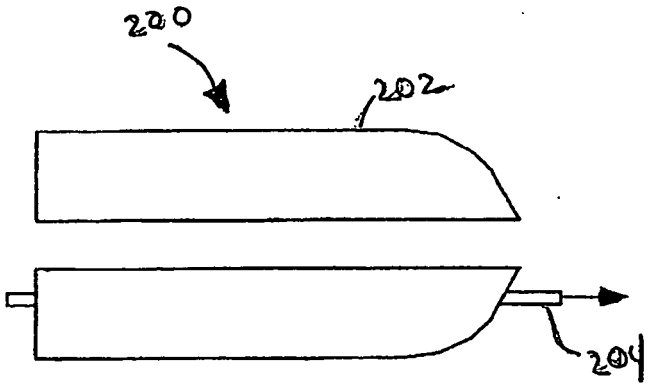


FIG. 10

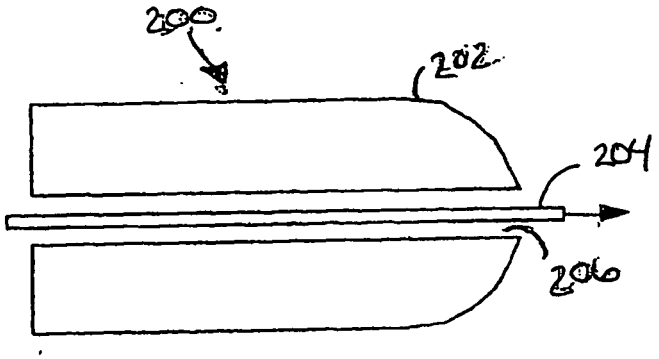


FIG. 11

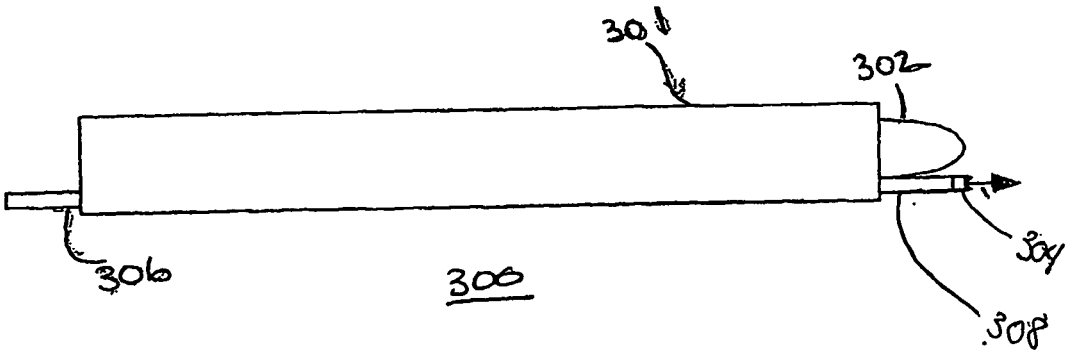


FIG. 12

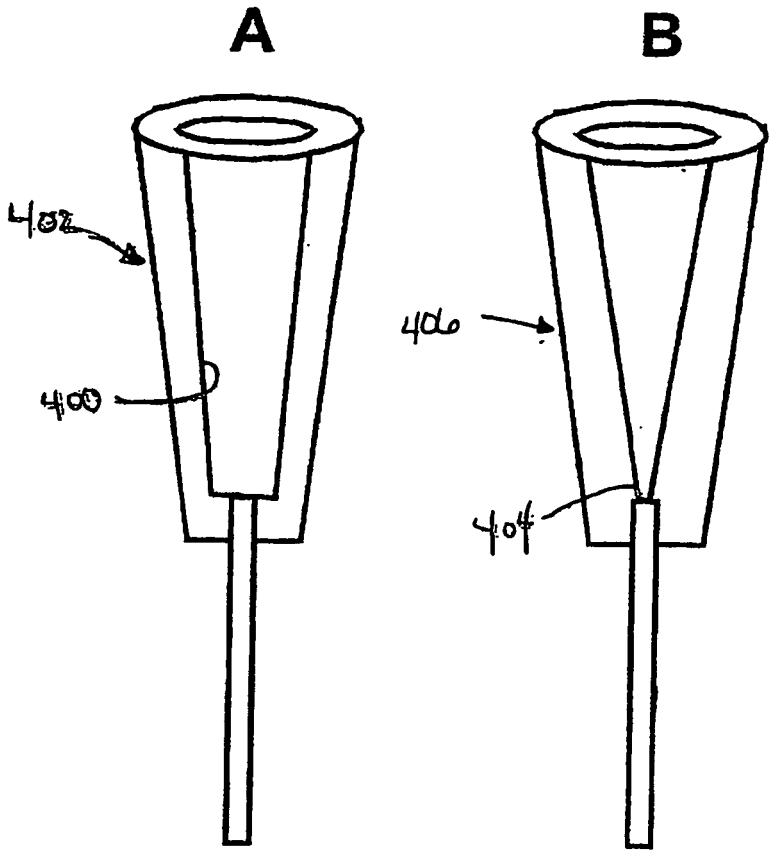


FIG. 13

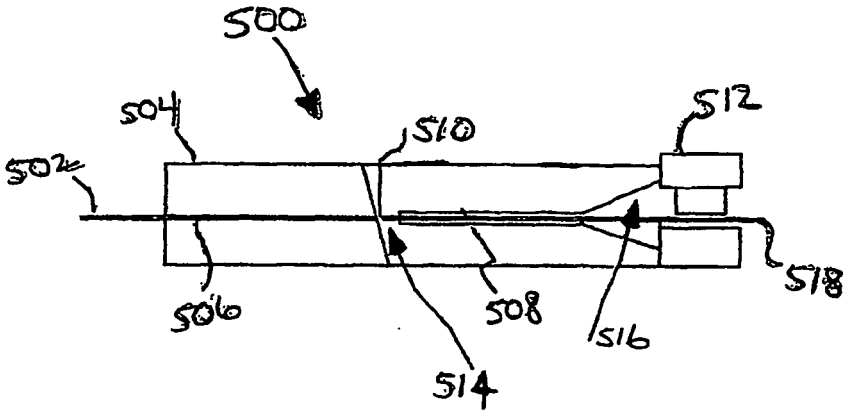


FIG. 14

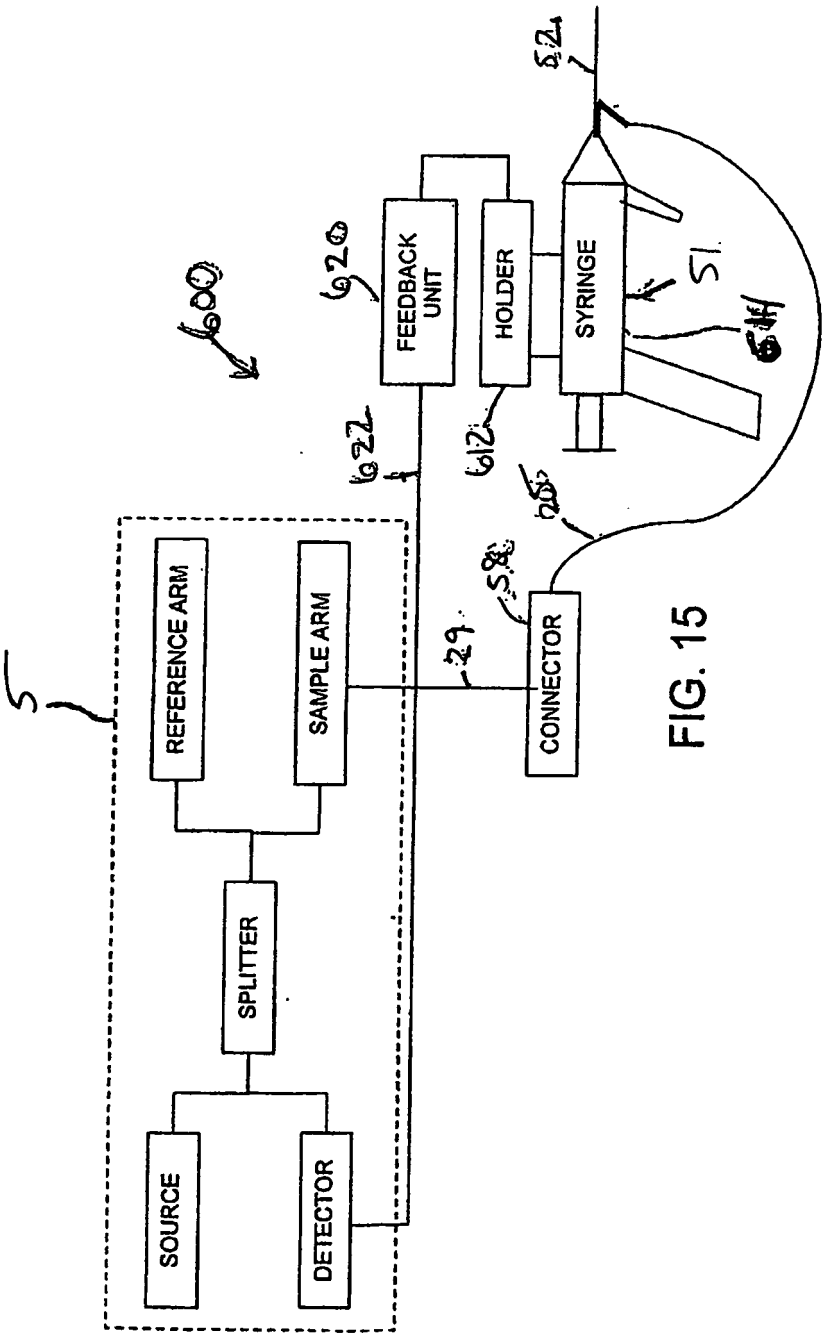

600
620
622
612
624
FEEDBACK UNIT
HOLDER
SYRINGE
51
61
25
58
29
CONNECTOR
5
REFERENCE ARM
SAMPLE ARM
SPLITTER
SOURCE
DETECTOR

FIG. 15

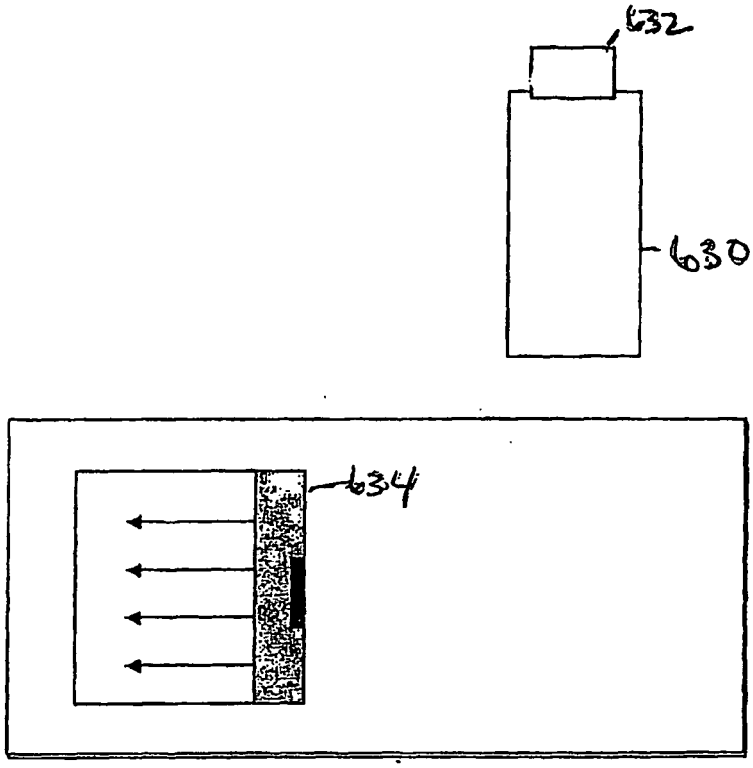


FIG. 16

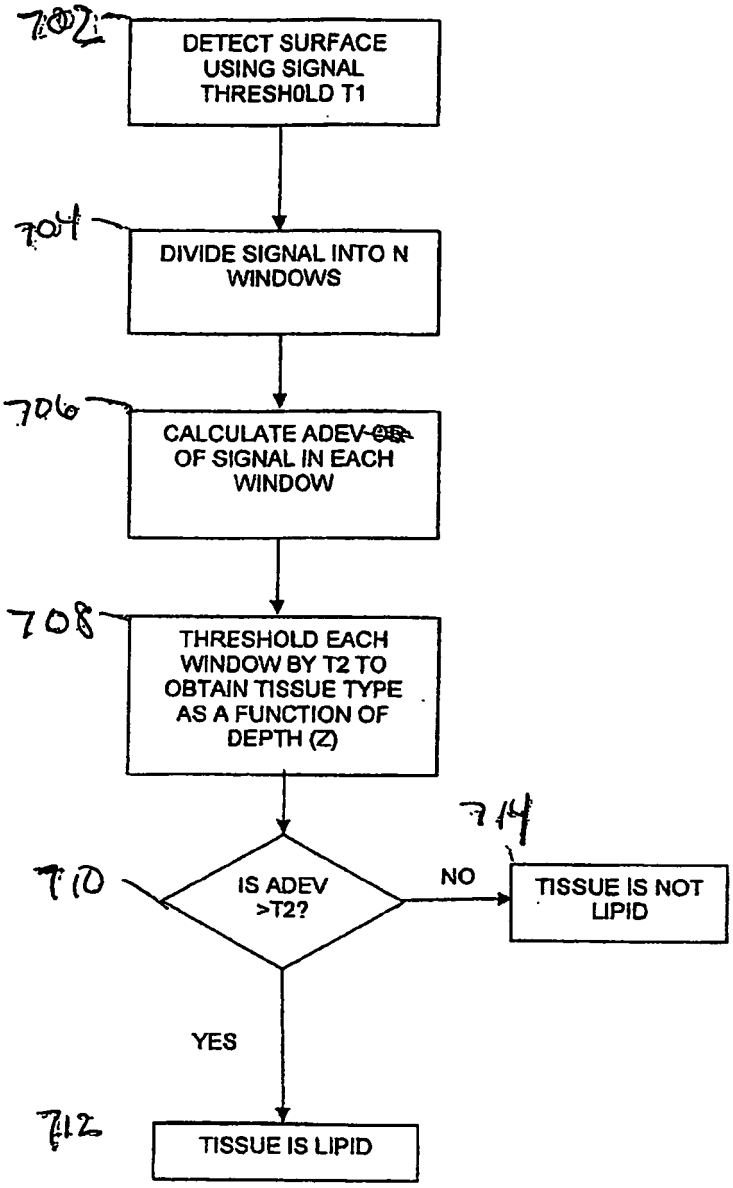
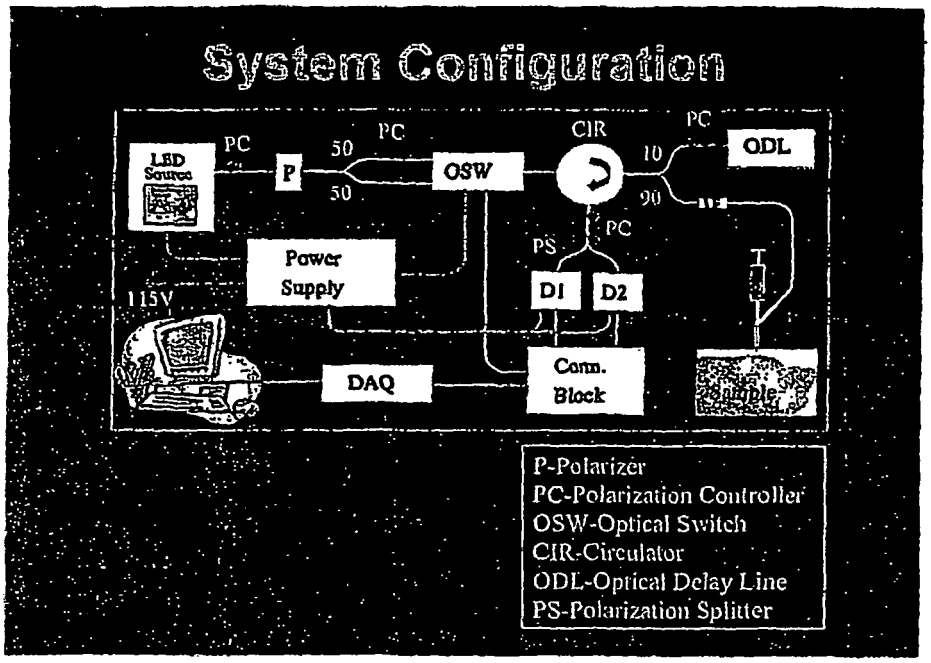

702
DETECT SURFACE USING SIGNAL THRESHOLD T1
704
DIVIDE SIGNAL INTO N WINDOWS
706
CALCULATE ADEV OF SIGNAL IN EACH WINDOW
708
THRESHOLD EACH WINDOW BY T2 TO OBTAIN TISSUE TYPE AS A FUNCTION OF DEPTH (Z)
710
IS ADEV >T2?
NO
714
TISSUE IS NOT LIPID
YES
712
TISSUE IS LIPID
700

FIG. 17


System Configuration
LED Source
PC
P
50
PC
50
OSW
CIR
PC
10
ODL
90
PC
PS
D1
D2
Power Supply
115V
DAQ
Comm. Block
P-Polarizer
PC-Polarization Controller
OSW-Optical Switch
CIR-Circulator
ODL-Optical Delay Line
PS-Polarization Splitter

800

FIG. 18

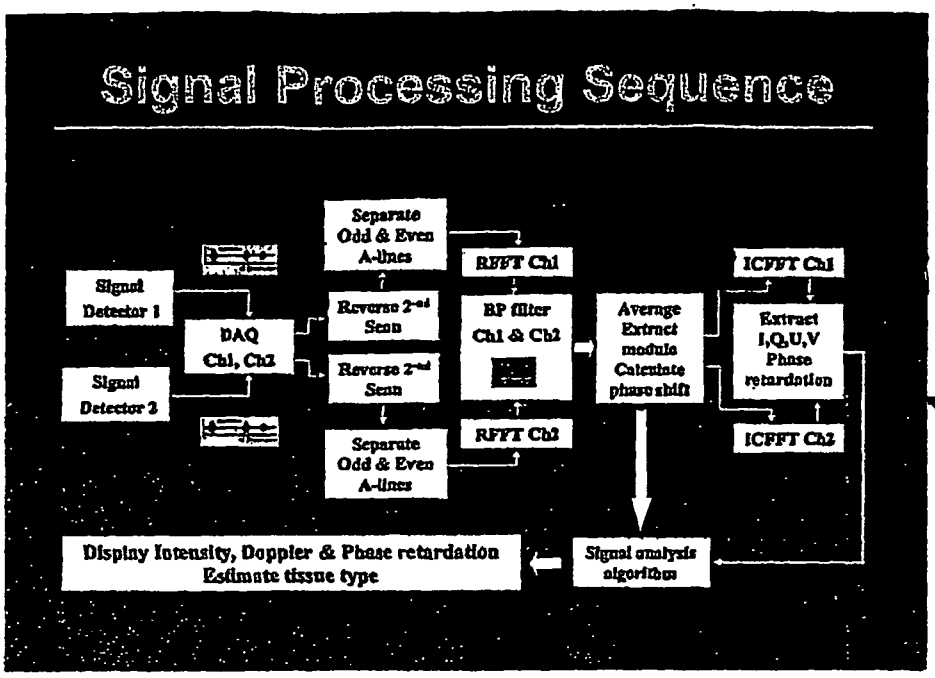

Signal Processing Sequence
Separate Odd & Even A-lines
RFFT Ch1
ICFFT Ch1
Signal Detector 1
DAQ Ch1, Ch2
Reverse 2nd Scan
BP filter Ch1 & Ch2
Average Extract module Calculate phase shift
Extract I,Q,U,V Phase retardation
Signal Detector 2
Reverse 2nd Scan
RFFT Ch2
ICFFT Ch2
Separate Odd & Even A-lines
Display Intensity, Doppler & Phase retardation Estimate tissue type
Signal analysis algorithm
900

FIG. 19

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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Patent documents cited in the description

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- **K. TAKADA et al.** New Measurement System For Fault Location in Optical Waveguide Devices Based on an Interferometric Technique. *Appl. Opt.,* 1987, vol. 26, 1603-1606 **[0016]**
- **J. DEBOER et al.** Improved Signal to Noise Ratio In Spectral Domain Compared With Time Domain Optical Coherence Tomography. *Optics Letters,* 2003, vol. 28, 2067-69 **[0016]**
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- **K. TAKADA et al.** New Measurement System For Fault Location In Optical Waveguide Devices Based on an Interferometric Technique. *Appl. Opt.,* 1987, vol. 26, 1603-1606 **[0016]**
- **PRESS, W. et al.** Numerical Recipes in C. Cambridge University Press, 1992 **[0039]**

专利名称(译)	使用低相干干涉测量法识别组织的系统和方法		
公开(公告)号	EP1596716B1	公开(公告)日	2014-04-30
申请号	EP2004705347	申请日	2004-01-26
[标]申请(专利权)人(译)	通用医疗公司		
申请(专利权)人(译)	总医院CORPORATION		
当前申请(专利权)人(译)	总医院CORPORATION		
[标]发明人	TEARNEY GUILLERMO J SHISHKOV MILEN STEFANOV IFTIMIA NICURSOR BOUMA BRETT E PITMAN MARTHA		
发明人	TEARNEY, GUILLERMO, J. SHISHKOV, MILEN, STEFANOV IFTIMIA, NICURSOR BOUMA, BRETT, E. PITMAN, MARTHA		
IPC分类号	A61B5/00 A61B A61B6/00		
CPC分类号	A61B5/6852 A61B5/0066 A61B5/415 A61B5/416 A61B5/418 A61B5/6848		
代理机构(译)	WILSON，TIMOTHY JAMES		
优先权	60/442392 2003-01-24 US		
其他公开文献	EP1596716A4 EP1596716A2		
外部链接	Espacenet		

摘要(译)

一种用于使用一维干涉测距成像进行实时组织分化的针穿刺活检的装置，包括具有针筒和针的活检装置，插入针中的光纤，以及连接到光纤的光纤成像系统。成像系统获得图像并将光学性质和图案与标准化组织样本图像的数据库进行比较以确定不同的组织类型。执行活组织检查的医生通过与活检装置相关联的反馈单元获得反馈并且连接到成像系统。当针朝向目标组织插入时，反馈单元可以提供关于所遇到的组织类型的视觉，听觉或振动反馈。反馈单元可以被编程用于不同的活组织检查程序，使得用户可以致动按钮以选择显示器或其他反馈机构以用于期望的过程和将要遇到的预期组织。

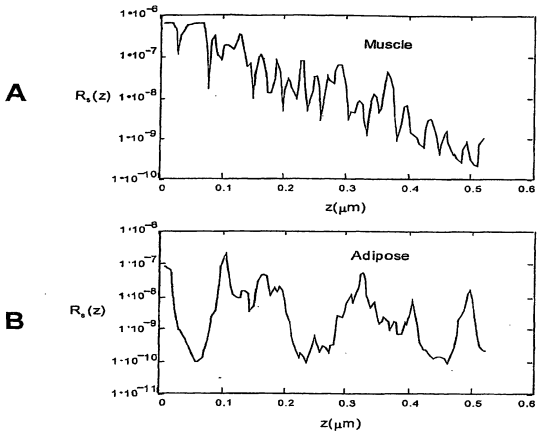

FIG. 1