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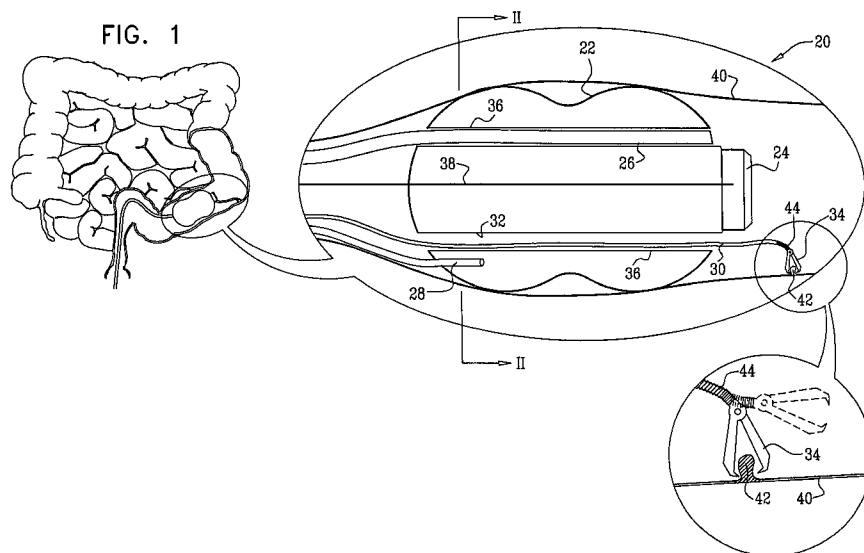
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(57) Abstract: Apparatus (20) is provided for use in a gastrointestinal tract (40) of a patient, including an inflatable device (22) configured to be moved through the gastrointestinal tract (40) to a treatment site in response to a difference between fluid pressure proximal to the inflatable device (22) and fluid pressure distal to the inflatable device (22). An optical system (24) coupled to the inflatable device (22) configured to image the gastrointestinal tract (40). A working channel (32) coupled to the inflatable device (22) and shaped to define a channel lumen therein to provide access from outside of the patient to the treatment site. A tool (34) configured to be passed through the channel lumen and to emerge from a distal end of the working channel (32). The tool (34) comprises a tool steering mechanism (44) to facilitate steering of the tool (34) from outside of the patient. Other embodiments are also described.



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DIAGNOSTIC OR TREATMENT TOOL FOR COLONOSCOPY**CROSS-REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

The present application claims priority from US Provisional Patent Application 60/881,036 to Cabiri et al., filed January 17, 2007, entitled, "Diagnostic or treatment tool for colonoscopy," which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to endoscopic tools, and specifically to treatment and diagnostic tools suitable for use in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Many imaging and biopsy techniques are known for producing medical images and taking samples from body lumens, such as the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. For example, endoscopy is widely used for observing, photographing tissue, and taking specimens from lesions. In a conventional method of examining a colon, for example, a colonoscope is manually inserted into the colon, and manipulated so as to allow viewing of some or all of the colon. If it is desired to biopsy tissue, a biopsy tool is advanced through a working channel of the colonoscope until it emerges from the distal end of the colonoscope, and appears in the viewing field of an imaging system of the colonoscope. The distal end of the colonoscope is rotated by the physician until the biopsy tool is suitably positioned to allow the tissue to be excised. The excised tissue is then sent for laboratory analysis.

PCT Patent Publication WO 05/065044 to Cabiri et al., which is assigned to the assignee of the present patent application and incorporated herein by reference, describes apparatus for use with a biologically-compatible-fluid pressure source, the apparatus including an elongate carrier, adapted to be inserted through a proximal opening of a body lumen, and a piston head coupled to a distal portion of the carrier. The piston head is adapted to form a pressure seal with a wall of the lumen after the carrier has been inserted into the lumen. The piston head is advanced distally through the body lumen in response to pressure from the fluid pressure source. The apparatus is configured to facilitate distal advancement of the piston head by facilitating passage of fluid out of the lumen from a site within the lumen distal to the piston head. The apparatus additionally includes an optical system, coupled to the carrier in a vicinity of the distal portion, the optical system having distal and proximal ends. The optical system includes an image sensor, positioned at the proximal end of the optical system; an optical member having distal and proximal ends, and shaped so as to define a lateral surface, at least a distal portion of which is curved, configured to provide omnidirectional lateral viewing; and a convex mirror, coupled to the distal end of the optical member, wherein the optical member and the mirror have respective rotational shapes about a common rotation axis. In an embodiment, a sufficient net pressure force results in distal movement of the piston head along with the elongate carrier and a tool. The tool may comprise an imaging device, a biopsy device, or other apparatus to be used in the body lumen.

US Patent 6,296,608 to Daniels et al., which is incorporated herein by reference, describes a catheter for diagnosing and performing an interventional procedure on tissue. The catheter has an elongated catheter shaft, and optical fibers, extending through the catheter shaft. The optical fibers transmit light to tissue located at a distal end of the catheter and convey light back from the tissue for analysis by a spectroscopic diagnosis system to determine whether an interventional procedure should be performed on the tissue. An interventional device is located at the distal end of the catheter for engaging tissue diagnosed by the spectroscopic diagnosis system in order to perform the interventional procedure on the tissue. An assembly for imaging and performing an interventional procedure on tissue has an endoscope in combination with an endoscopically insertable catheter. The endoscopically insertable catheter has an ultrasound imaging device for imaging a tissue structure located at a distal end of the endoscope so as to enable the depth of penetration of the tissue structure to be displayed. The endoscopically insertable catheter has an endoscopically insertable interventional device for engaging the tissue structure imaged by the ultrasound imaging device.

The following references may be of interest, and are incorporated herein by reference:

PCT WO 01/68540 to Friend
PCT WO 02/059676 to Gal
PCT WO 02/075348 to Gal
PCT WO 03/026272 to Gal
PCT WO 03/045487 to Gobel
PCT WO 03/046830 to Gal
PCT WO 03/054625 to Gal

- PCT WO 03/096078 to Gal
PCT WO 04/008185 to Gal
PCT WO 04/042428 to Gal
PCT WO 04/069057 to Gobel
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US 2002/0109772 to Kuriyama
US 2002/0109773 to Kuriyama
US 2003/0000526 to Gobel
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US 2006/0164733 to Gal
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US 4,647,761 to Cojan
US 4,690,131 to Lyddy, Jr.
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US 4,976,524 to Chiba
US 5,259,364 to Bob
US 5,337,732 to Grundfest
US 5,473,474 to Powell
- 30 US 5,502,592 to Jamieson
US 5,662,587 to Grundfest
US 5,739,852 to Richardson
US 5,882,108 to Fraizer
US 5,906,591 to Dario

US 5,920,376 to Bruckstein
US 6,007,482 to Madni
US 6,028,719 to Beckstead
US 6,115,193 to Shu
5 US 6,157,018 to Ishiguro
US 6,222,683 to Hoogland
US 6,304,285 to Geng
US 6,333,826 to Charles
US 6,341,044 to Driscoll, Jr.
10 US 6,356,296 to Driscoll, Jr.
US 6,373,642 to Wallerstein
US 6,375,366 to Kato
US 6,388,820 to Wallerstein
US 6,424,377 to Driscoll, Jr.
15 US 6,449,103 to Charles
US 6,459,451 to Driscoll, Jr.
US 6,485,409 to Voloshin
US 6,493,032 to Wallerstein
US 6,503,192 to Ouchi
20 US 6,597,520 to Wallerstein
US 6,611,282 to Trubko
US 6,646,818 to Doi
US 6,702,735 to Kelly
US 6,704,148 to Kumata

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In some embodiments of the present invention, apparatus is provided comprising an endoscope for use in a gastrointestinal tract of a patient. The apparatus
5 comprises an inflatable device, which is configured to be moved by fluid pressure through the gastrointestinal tract towards a treatment site. An optical system is coupled to the inflatable device, and images the gastrointestinal tract, in order to enable a physician to
10 determine if a region being imaged by the optical system includes a target tissue that should be biopsied, examined, and/or treated. If so, a suitable tool is advanced through a working channel that is coupled to the inflatable device. The tool is configured to be passed
15 through a channel lumen of the working channel, and to emerge from a distal end of the working channel. The tool comprises a tool steering mechanism to facilitate steering of the tool from outside of the patient.

The tool steering mechanism is typically
20 controllable using techniques known in the art for transvascular or other intra-body steering of a tool or other longitudinal member, and may be controlled manually or robotically. Once the tool has exited the working channel, the steering mechanism of the tool typically
25 enables the tool to be steered towards the target tissue even in the absence of any steering that may be provided by other portions of the apparatus (e.g., steering that may tilt the working channel towards the target tissue). For some applications, the working channel is not tilted
30 at all to bring the tool nearer to the target tissue.

In an embodiment, the apparatus comprises a guide other than an endoscope. For example, the guide may comprise a laparoscope or a guide for examination,

biopsy, or treatment of an air passage of the patient. Regardless of the form of the guide, the guide typically (but not necessarily) comprises an omnidirectional optical system. Use of a tool with a tool steering mechanism, as described herein, is particularly suitable for use with a guide having an omnidirectional optical system, because the omnidirectional optical system can remain generally stationary, providing full omnidirectional imaging, while the tool with the tool steering mechanism moves independently, in order to interact with tissue anywhere in the field of view of the omnidirectional optical system, in a manner desired by the physician.

There is therefore provided, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention, apparatus for use in a gastrointestinal tract of a patient, including:

an inflatable device, configured to be moved through the gastrointestinal tract to a treatment site, in response to a difference between fluid pressure proximal to the inflatable device and fluid pressure distal to the inflatable device;

an optical system, coupled to the inflatable device, and configured to image the gastrointestinal tract;

a working channel, coupled to the inflatable device, and shaped to define a channel lumen therein to provide access from outside of the patient to the treatment site; and

a tool, configured to be passed through the channel lumen and to emerge from a distal end of the working channel, the tool including a tool steering mechanism to facilitate steering of the tool from outside of the patient.

In an embodiment, the tool includes a biopsy tool.

In an embodiment, the tool includes a treatment tool.

There is also provided, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention, apparatus for use with a tool that includes a tool steering mechanism to facilitate steering of the tool from outside of a patient, the apparatus configured for use in a gastrointestinal tract of the patient, including:

an inflatable device, configured to be moved through the gastrointestinal tract to a treatment site, in response to a difference between fluid pressure proximal to the inflatable device and fluid pressure distal to the inflatable device;

an optical system, coupled to the inflatable device, and configured to image the gastrointestinal tract; and

a working channel, coupled to the inflatable device, and shaped to define a channel lumen for passage of the tool therethrough.

There is additionally provided, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention, apparatus for use with a tool that includes a tool steering mechanism to facilitate steering of the tool from outside of a patient, the apparatus configured for use in a gastrointestinal tract of the patient, including:

a device, configured to be moved through the gastrointestinal tract to a treatment site; and

a working channel, coupled to the device, and shaped to define a channel lumen for passage of the tool therethrough.

There is yet additionally provided, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention, a method for

controlling an endoscope that includes a working channel,
including:

- placing the endoscope in a lumen of a patient;
- advancing an endoscopic tool through the working
- 5 channel; and
- utilizing a steering capacity of the endoscopic tool
to control the endoscope.

In an embodiment, controlling the endoscope includes
tilting a distal tip of the endoscope by utilizing the
10 steering capacity of the tool.

In an embodiment, utilizing the steering capacity of
the tool includes determining that distal motion of the
endoscope is at least partially blocked, and restoring
the distal motion of the endoscope by utilizing the
15 steering capacity of the tool.

There is still additionally provided, in accordance
with an embodiment of the invention, a method for
advancing an endoscope that includes a working channel,
including:

- 20 placing the endoscope in a lumen of a patient;
- advancing an endoscopic tool through the working
channel; and
- utilizing a stiffness of the endoscopic tool to
facilitate advancement of the endoscope.

25 In an embodiment, the endoscope includes an
inflatable device, and wherein placing the endoscope in
the lumen includes advancing the endoscope through the
lumen by applying pressure to an external surface of the
inflatable device.

30 In an embodiment, utilizing the stiffness of the
tool includes determining that distal motion of the

endoscope is at least partially blocked, and restoring the distal motion of the endoscope by pushing the tool.

There is also provided, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention, a method for using an endoscopic tool passed through an endoscope that includes a working channel, including:

placing the endoscope in a gastrointestinal tract of a patient;

advancing the endoscopic tool through the working channel and out of a distal end of the endoscope; and

steering the endoscopic tool without steering the distal end of the endoscope.

There is further provided, in accordance with an embodiment of the invention, a method for using a tool passed through a guide that includes a working channel and an omnidirectional optical system, including:

placing the guide in a body of a patient;

advancing the tool through the working channel and out of a distal end of the guide; and

steering the tool independently of any steering of the distal end of the guide, while viewing the tool with the omnidirectional optical system.

In an embodiment, the guide includes a laparoscope, and placing the guide includes placing the laparoscope in the body of the patient.

In an embodiment, the guide includes a guide configured for operation in an air passage of the patient, and placing the guide includes placing the guide in the air passage.

In an embodiment, the guide includes an endoscope, and placing the guide includes placing the endoscope in the body of the patient.

The present invention will be more fully understood
5 from the following detailed description of embodiments thereof, taken together with the drawings, in which:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a schematic illustration of apparatus for performing a biopsy, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

5 Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional illustration of the apparatus of Fig. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 3 is an illustration of the apparatus of Fig. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present
10 invention; and

Fig. 4 is a schematic illustration of a supply cable for the apparatus of Fig. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

Reference is made to Figs. 1 and 2, which are a schematic illustration and a cross-sectional illustration, respectively, of apparatus 20 for performing a biopsy, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. A biopsy is shown by way of illustration and not limitation, and the scope of the present invention includes apparatus for performing other procedures, such as treatment or diagnostic procedures.

Apparatus 20 is inserted into and advanced through a gastrointestinal tract 40 of a patient, typically using techniques described in PCT Patent Publication WO 05/065044 to Cabiri et al. Apparatus 20 comprises an inflatable device 22, which is configured to be moved through the gastrointestinal tract to a treatment site, in response to a difference between fluid pressure proximal to the inflatable device and fluid pressure distal to the inflatable device. The apparatus may thus be advanced distally (to the right in Fig. 1) by application of a fluid pressure proximal to the inflatable device that is greater than the pressure distal to the inflatable device. Similarly, the apparatus may be moved proximally by application of a fluid pressure distal to the inflatable device that is greater than the pressure proximal to the device. Such distal fluid pressure is typically conveyed via a distal-communication lumen 26. Alternatively or additionally, apparatus 20 is moved proximally through the gastrointestinal tract by being pulled by an operator of the apparatus.

An optical system 24, typically an omnidirectional optical system, is coupled to inflatable device 22 and

images gastrointestinal tract 40, in order to enable a physician to determine if a region being imaged by the optical system includes a target tissue 42 that should be biopsied, examined, and/or treated. If so, a tool 34 (e.g., a therapeutic tool or a diagnostic tool such as a biopsy tool) is advanced through a working channel 32 that is coupled to the inflatable device. For some applications, inflatable device 22 is toroidal, and working channel 32 passes through the hole defined by the toroidal shape of the inflatable device. (An outermost extent of the hole is indicated by dashed line 36 in Fig. 1.) Tool 34 is passed through a channel lumen of working channel 32, and emerges from a distal end of the working channel.

Tool 34 comprises a tool steering mechanism 44 to facilitate steering of the tool from outside of the patient. The exploded view in Fig. 1 shows a previous position of tool 34 in dashed lines, and a current position of the tool (around the target tissue) in solid lines. Thus, as shown, the tool is typically able to be steered by steering mechanism 44 independently of any motion of working channel 32. Typically, inflatable device 22 is stationary after tool 34 has been advanced out of the distal end of working channel 32. If appropriate, the inflatable device is advanced or withdrawn slightly within gastrointestinal tract 20, to facilitate a procedure performed by the tool (e.g., a biopsy or treatment). This motion, however, typically does not involve tilting of the inflatable device so as to better position the tool with respect to target tissue 42. (It is noted that although some embodiments of the present invention are described with respect to the inflatable device not being tilted during a procedure,

the scope of the present invention includes such tilting, if appropriate for a given procedure.)

Tool steering mechanism 44 itself typically comprises control wires within a sheath 30, or other apparatus known in the art for remote steering of an intra-lumen tool.

Typically, the toroidal shape of inflatable device 22 allows various tubes and wires to be in fluid or electrical communication with control and analysis apparatus outside of the patient's body. For example, a distal-communication lumen 26 may allow pressure to be vented from the region distal to the inflatable device to outside of the patient's body. Alternatively or additionally, an intra-balloon lumen 28 allows the pressure within the inflatable device to be regulated.

Fig. 3 is an illustration of apparatus 20, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. It is noted that steering mechanism 44 of tool 34 is typically able to direct the tool to substantially any site of the gastrointestinal tract within view of optical system 24. Thus, for example, the tool can typically be advanced and retracted longitudinally, bent using wires within the tool, and rotated by rotating the body of the tool within the working channel.

Fig. 4 is a schematic illustration of apparatus 20, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. A multi-lumen supply cable 50 provides lumens 52, 54, 56, and 58, respectively, for:

- (1) supplying water,
- (2) controlling various inflatable device ("balloon") pressures,

(3) sensing various inflatable device ("balloon") pressures, and

(4) sensing gastrointestinal tract pressures (e.g., sensing pressure distal to apparatus 20).

5 Examples of suitable apparatus for moving an instrument through the gastrointestinal tract are shown in the figure; other examples are described in the above-referenced WO 05/065044 to Cabiri et al. Typically, supply cable 50 is disposed within working channel 32.
10 As shown in Fig. 3, at least a portion of supply cable 50 is typically disposed longitudinally within inflatable device 22. The portion disposed within inflatable device 22 is shaped to define openings for respective distal ends of lumens 54 and 56 such that lumens 54 and 56 are
15 in fluid communication with the inside of inflatable device 22. The openings in supply cable 50 for lumens 54 and 56 within inflatable device 22 facilitate the respective controlling and sensing of various inflatable device pressures (it being understood that one opening is
20 also suitable for both functions, for some applications).

Openings are provided at the distal end of apparatus 20 for lumens 52 and 58. These openings facilitate, respectively, (1) supplying of water to gastrointestinal tract 40, and (2) the sensing of gastrointestinal tract
25 pressures distal to apparatus 20.

Reference is now made to Figs. 3 and 4, which are schematic illustrations of intraluminal apparatus, in accordance with respective embodiments of the present invention. A primary lumen 66 of supply cable 50 is
30 configured for passage therethrough of a cable 60 (such as an electrical cable) (Fig. 4). Typically, cable 60 comprises a hollow tube shaped to define a lumen for

passage therethrough of a tool tube 62 for tool 34 (not shown in Fig. 4 for clarity of illustration). As shown in Fig. 3, a functional working tool 34 is disposed at a distal end of working tool sheath 30. Working tool sheath 30 is typically flexible and configured for sliding advancement through tool tube 62. Typically, a wire 70 is disposed within working tool sheath 30 and facilitates bending and/or steering of sheath 30, and thereby tool 34. Additionally, a wire 72 is disposed within working tool sheath 30 and facilitates the operation of tool 34. Wires 70 and 72 extend through the entire apparatus 20 such that respective proximal ends of wires 70 and 72 are disposed outside the body of the patient. Respective distal ends of wires 70 and 72 are therefore controllable by the operating physician from outside the body of the patient.

Wires 70 and 72 are shown as being disposed in separate lumens within sheath 30 by way of illustration and not limitation. Alternatively, wires 70 and 72 are disposed within the same lumen within sheath 30.

Typically, working tool sheath 30 is configured for sliding advancement through tool tube 62. As such, various working tools may be advanced through tool tube 62. For example, following the use of tool 34, the operating physician may pull on a proximal end of sheath 30 in order to extract tool 34 from apparatus 20. Subsequently, the physician may advance a different tool through tool tube 62.

Typically, but not necessarily, the procedure is performed in the patient's colon. Alternatively, the procedure is performed in another site of the gastrointestinal tract.

Some embodiments of the present invention have been described herein and shown in the figures with respect to a biopsy tool. This is by way of illustration and not limitation, and the scope of the present invention includes the use of tools other than biopsy tools, such as diagnostic and treatment tools. For example, tool 34 may comprise a biopsy tool (e.g., as shown in Figs. 1 and 3), such as a polypectomy snare or any other tissue retrieval mechanism; a therapeutic or diagnostic needle; a treatment tool such as for performing ablation, endoscopic tattooing (e.g., to mark a polyp), manipulating mucosal tissue, endoscopic resection, or another treatment or minimally-invasive surgical procedure; a drug administration tool; an endoscopic cytology tool; or an imaging tool such as a spectral imaging tool. In an embodiment of the present invention, a tool like a conventional tool that has no steering capacity (such as a commercially-available tool in this list of tools) is supplemented by the addition of one or more steering wires to the conventional tool. For some applications, such an enhanced tool is used in combination with an endoscope such as is shown in the figures, or in the above-cited Cabiri PCT publication.

In an embodiment, the steering capacity provided by tool 34 is used to control an endoscope. The endoscope controlled by the tool may be a conventional endoscope (e.g., a conventional colonoscope) or, alternatively, an endoscope such as is shown in the figures, or in the above-cited Cabiri PCT publication. In an embodiment, tool 34 tilts a distal tip of the endoscope. For some applications, if it is determined that distal motion of the endoscope is at least partially blocked, the distal

motion may be restored by utilizing the steering capacity of the tool (e.g., to maneuver the endoscope).

Alternatively or additionally, the stiffness of tool 34 is used to facilitate advancement of an endoscope (e.g., an endoscope such as is shown in the figures, or in the above-cited Cabiri PCT publication). For example, the stiffness of the tool may be used to restore or support the distal motion of the endoscope by pushing the tool.

10 It is noted that although apparatus 20 is described in some embodiments as including an inflatable device to provide movement through gastrointestinal tract 40, the scope of the present invention includes the use of (a) a tool having a steering mechanism, in combination with (b) 15 a conventional endoscope (e.g., a conventional colonoscope), which is advanced through the gastrointestinal tract by being pushed from outside of the patient's body.

The scope of the present invention includes 20 embodiments described in one or more of the following:

US Patent Application 10/753,424 to Gross et al., entitled, "Pressure-propelled system for body lumen," filed January 9, 2004;

25 US Patent Application 10/838,648 to Gross et al., entitled, "Pressure-propelled system for body lumen," filed May 3, 2004;

US Patent Application 10/967,922 to Cabiri et al., entitled, "Pressure-propelled system for body lumen," filed October 18, 2004;

30 PCT Patent Application PCT/IL05/000008 to Cabiri et al., entitled, "Pressure-propelled system for body lumen," filed January 3, 2005;

PCT Patent Application PCT/IL05/000500 to Dotan et al., entitled, "Omnidirectional and forward-looking imaging device," filed May 11, 2005;

5 US Patent Application 10/596,971 to Cabiri et al., entitled, "Pressure-propelled system for body lumen," filed June 30, 2006; and

US Provisional Patent Application 60/881,036 to Cabiri et al., entitled, "Diagnostic and treatment tool for colonoscopy," filed January 17, 2007.

10 All of these applications are incorporated herein by reference. Techniques described herein can be practiced in combination with techniques described in one or more of these applications.

It will be appreciated by persons skilled in the art
15 that the present invention is not limited to what has been particularly shown and described hereinabove. Rather, the scope of the present invention includes both combinations and subcombinations of the various features described hereinabove, as well as variations and
20 modifications thereof that are not in the prior art, which would occur to persons skilled in the art upon reading the foregoing description.

CLAIMS

1. Apparatus for use in a gastrointestinal tract of a patient, comprising:

an inflatable device, configured to be moved through
5 the gastrointestinal tract to a treatment site, in response to a difference between fluid pressure proximal to the inflatable device and fluid pressure distal to the inflatable device;

an optical system, coupled to the inflatable device,
10 and configured to image the gastrointestinal tract;

a working channel, coupled to the inflatable device, and shaped to define a channel lumen therein to provide access from outside of the patient to the treatment site; and

15 a tool, configured to be passed through the channel lumen and to emerge from a distal end of the working channel, the tool comprising a tool steering mechanism to facilitate steering of the tool from outside of the patient.

20 2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the tool comprises a biopsy tool.

3. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1-2, wherein the tool comprises a treatment tool.

4. Apparatus for use with a tool that includes a tool
25 steering mechanism to facilitate steering of the tool from outside of a patient, the apparatus configured for use in a gastrointestinal tract of the patient, comprising:

an inflatable device, configured to be moved through
30 the gastrointestinal tract to a treatment site, in response to a difference between fluid pressure proximal

to the inflatable device and fluid pressure distal to the inflatable device;

an optical system, coupled to the inflatable device, and configured to image the gastrointestinal tract; and

5 a working channel, coupled to the inflatable device, and shaped to define a channel lumen for passage of the tool therethrough.

5. Apparatus for use with a tool that includes a tool steering mechanism to facilitate steering of the tool
10 from outside of a patient, the apparatus configured for use in a gastrointestinal tract of the patient, comprising:

a device, configured to be moved through the gastrointestinal tract to a treatment site; and

15 a working channel, coupled to the device, and shaped to define a channel lumen for passage of the tool therethrough.

6. A method for controlling an endoscope that includes a working channel, comprising:

20 placing the endoscope in a lumen of a patient;

advancing an endoscopic tool through the working channel; and

utilizing a steering capacity of the endoscopic tool to control the endoscope.

25 7. The method according to claim 6, wherein controlling the endoscope comprises tilting a distal tip of the endoscope by utilizing the steering capacity of the tool.

8. The method according to any one of claims 6-7, wherein utilizing the steering capacity of the tool
30 comprises determining that distal motion of the endoscope is at least partially blocked, and restoring the distal

motion of the endoscope by utilizing the steering capacity of the tool.

9. A method for advancing an endoscope that includes a working channel, comprising:

- 5 placing the endoscope in a lumen of a patient;
 advancing an endoscopic tool through the working channel; and
 utilizing a stiffness of the endoscopic tool to facilitate advancement of the endoscope.

10 10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the endoscope includes an inflatable device, and wherein placing the endoscope in the lumen comprises advancing the endoscope through the lumen by applying pressure to an external surface of the inflatable device.

15 11. The method according to any one of claims 9-10, wherein utilizing the stiffness of the tool comprises determining that distal motion of the endoscope is at least partially blocked, and restoring the distal motion of the endoscope by pushing the tool.

20 12. A method for using an endoscopic tool passed through an endoscope that includes a working channel, comprising:
 placing the endoscope in a gastrointestinal tract of a patient;

 advancing the endoscopic tool through the working
25 channel and out of a distal end of the endoscope; and
 steering the endoscopic tool without steering the distal end of the endoscope.

13. A method for using a tool passed through a guide that includes a working channel and an omnidirectional
30 optical system, comprising:

 placing the guide in a body of a patient;

advancing the tool through the working channel and out of a distal end of the guide; and

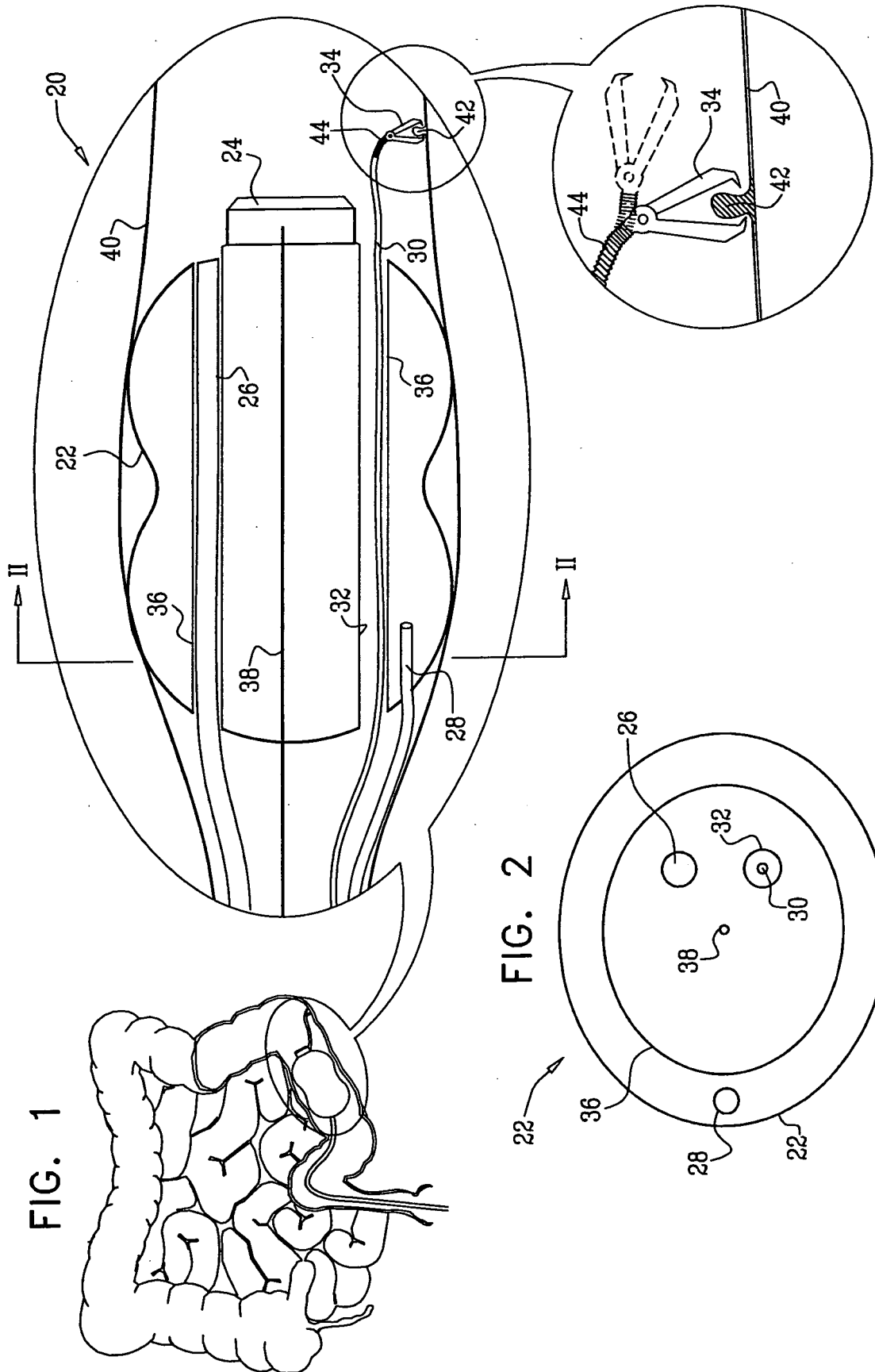
steering the tool independently of any steering of the distal end of the guide, while viewing the tool with
5 the omnidirectional optical system.

14. The method according to claim 13, wherein the guide includes a laparoscope, and wherein placing the guide comprises placing the laparoscope in the body of the patient.

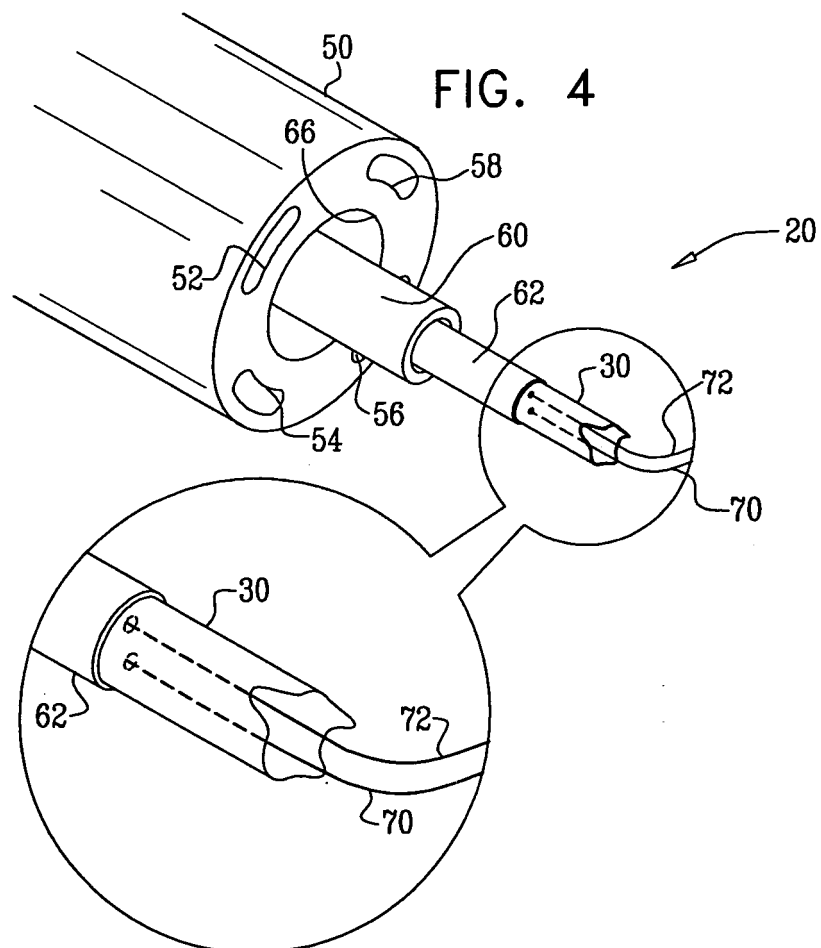
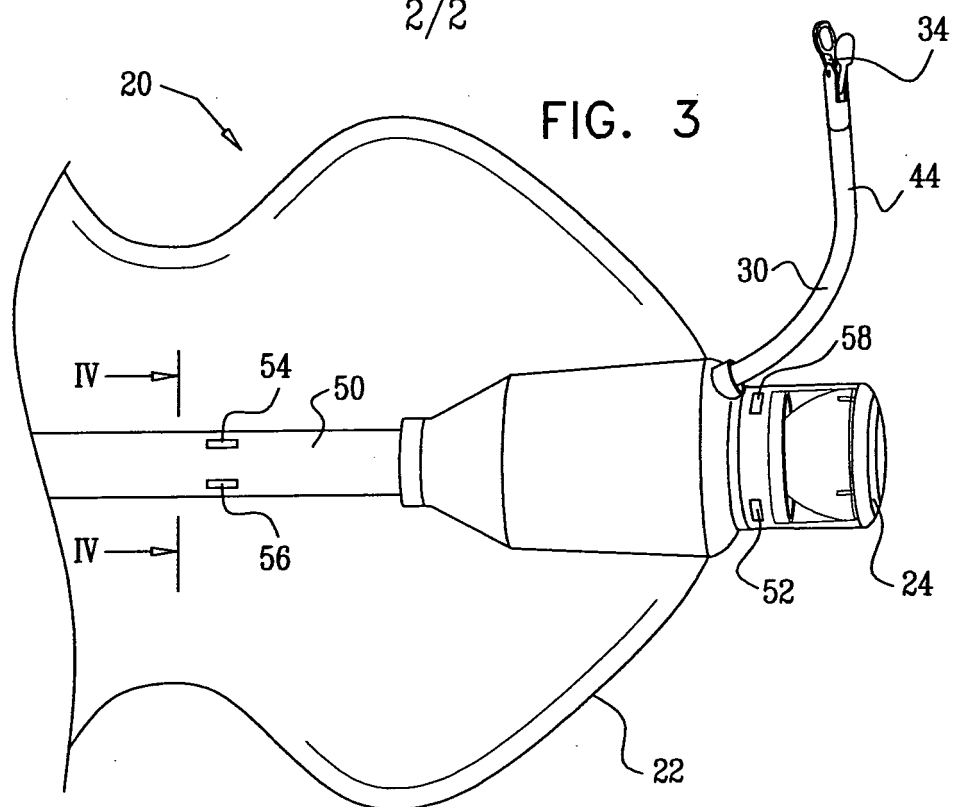
10 15. The method according to claim 13, wherein the guide includes a guide configured for operation in an air passage of the patient, and wherein placing the guide comprises placing the guide in the air passage.

15 16. The method according to any one of claims 13-15, wherein the guide includes an endoscope, and wherein placing the guide comprises placing the endoscope in the body of the patient.

1/2



2/2



专利名称(译)	用于结肠镜检查的诊断或治疗工具		
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摘要(译)

提供用于患者的胃肠道 (40) 的装置 (20) , 包括充气装置 (22) , 其被配置成响应于近端流体压力之间的差异而移动通过胃肠道 (40) 到达治疗部位。充气装置 (22) 和充气装置 (22) 远端的流体压力。耦合到可充气装置 (22) 的光学系统 (24) , 其配置成使胃肠道 (40) 成像。工作通道 (32) 连接到可充气装置 (22) 并形成在在其中限定通道内腔以提供从患者外部到治疗部位的通路。工具 (34) 构造成穿过通道内腔并从工作通道 (32) 的远端伸出。工具 (34) 包括工具转向机构 (44) , 以便于工具 (34) 从患者外部转向。还描述了其他实施例。