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(54) **INFANT PACIFIER HOLDER AND TEETHER**

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(71) Applicant: **Byongchul Kim**, Miramar, FL (US)

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(72) Inventor: **Byongchul Kim**, Miramar, FL (US)

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- A63H 3/36* (2006.01)
- A63H 3/02* (2006.01)
- A61J 17/02* (2006.01)
- A63H 3/00* (2006.01)

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CPC *A63H 3/003* (2013.01); *A61J 17/001* (2015.05); *A61J 17/02* (2013.01); *A61J 17/1111* (2020.05); *A63H 3/02* (2013.01)

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See application file for complete search history.

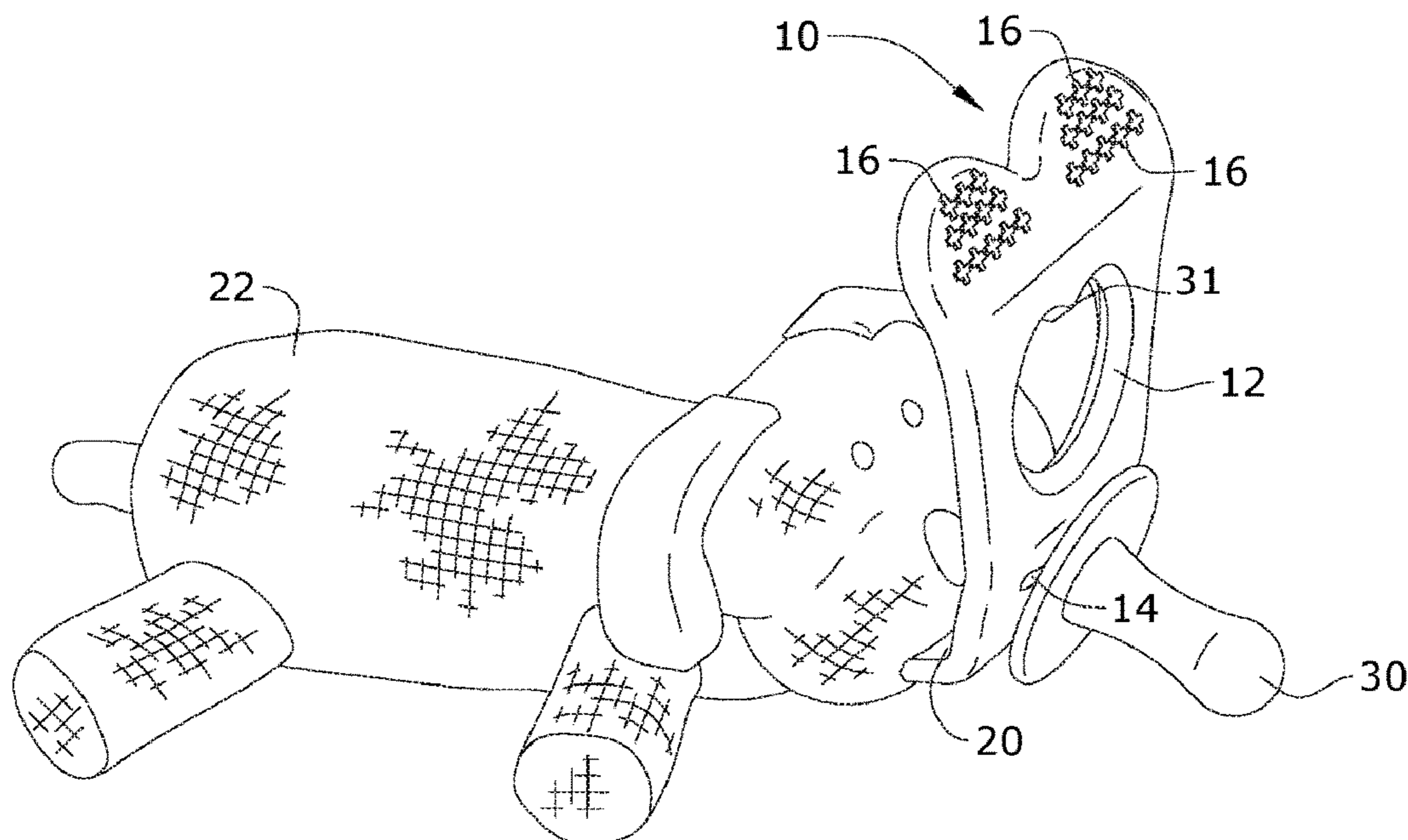
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Primary Examiner — Patricia L Engle
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Mark C. Johnson;
Johnson Dalal

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A teething device that is configured to retain a pacifier in a central aperture of the teething device. The teething device has a plurality of lobes at a first end, with the lobes having a plurality of nubs for teething. The aperture and latch are configured to universally retain the edges of a pacifier shield or handle such that the nipple of the pacifier may be presented to a child utilizing the device. The device may also include a plush toy attached to an attachment ledge of the teething device. The plush toy includes an internal pocket for storing a pacifier.

20 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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FIG. 1

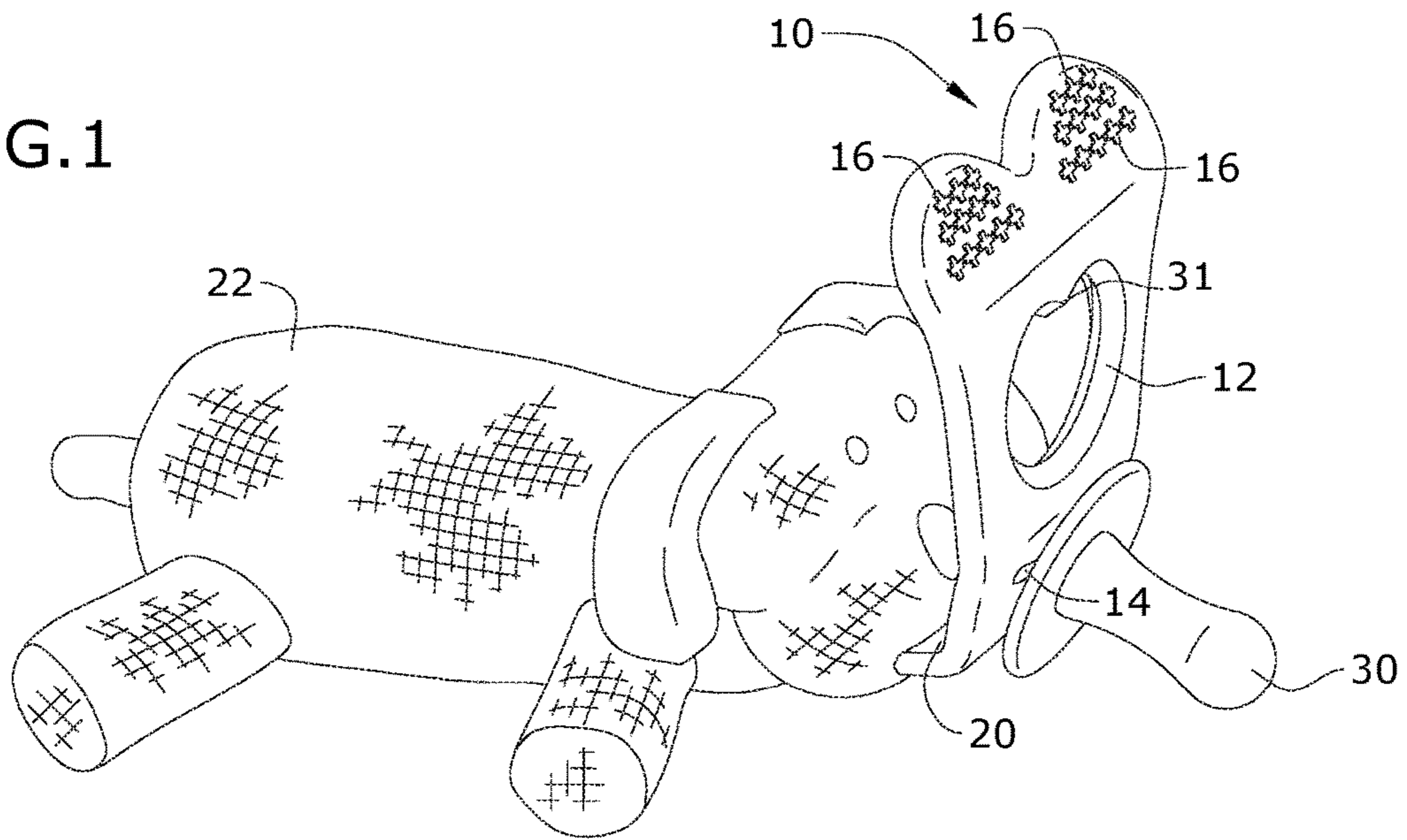


FIG. 2

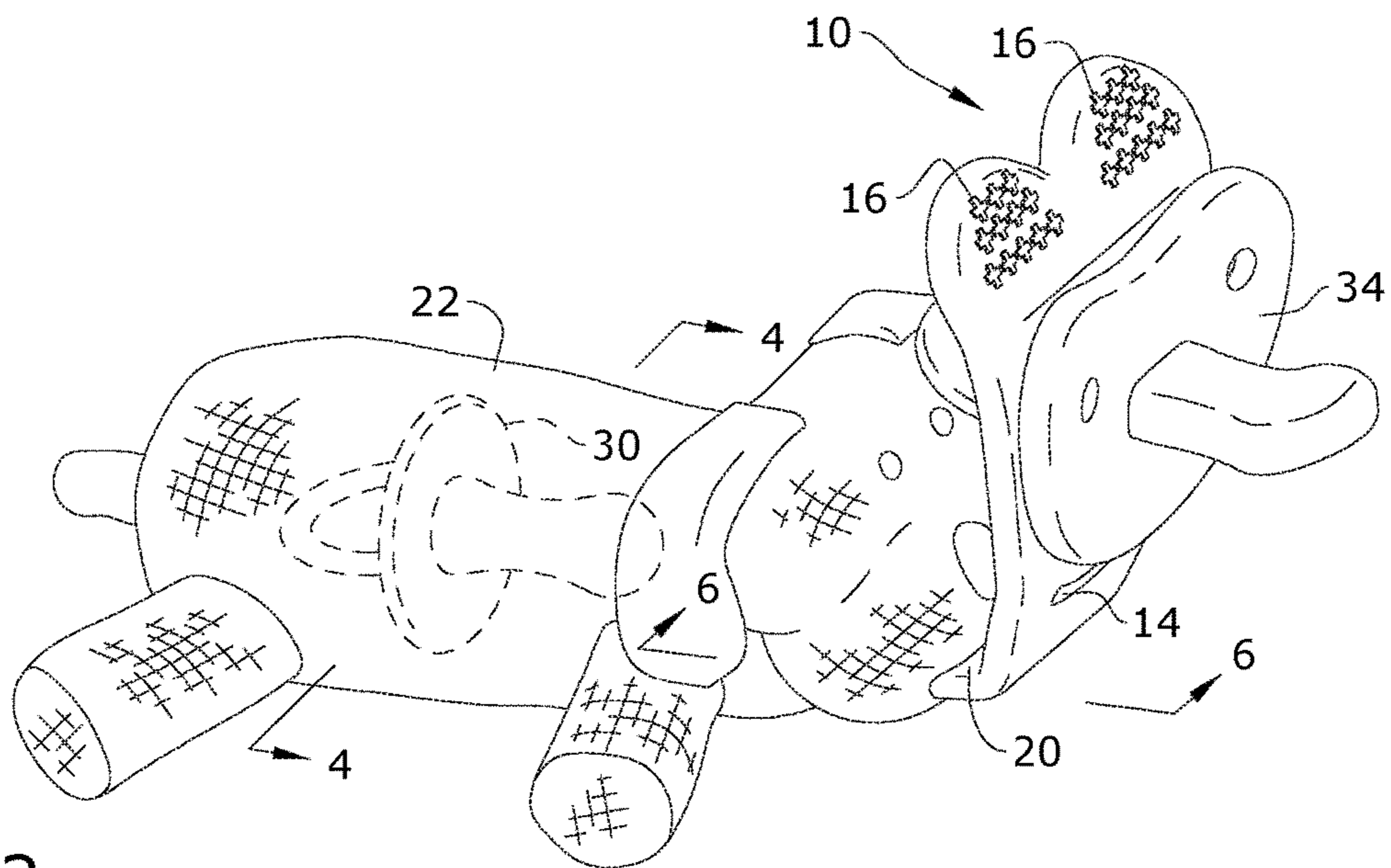


FIG.3

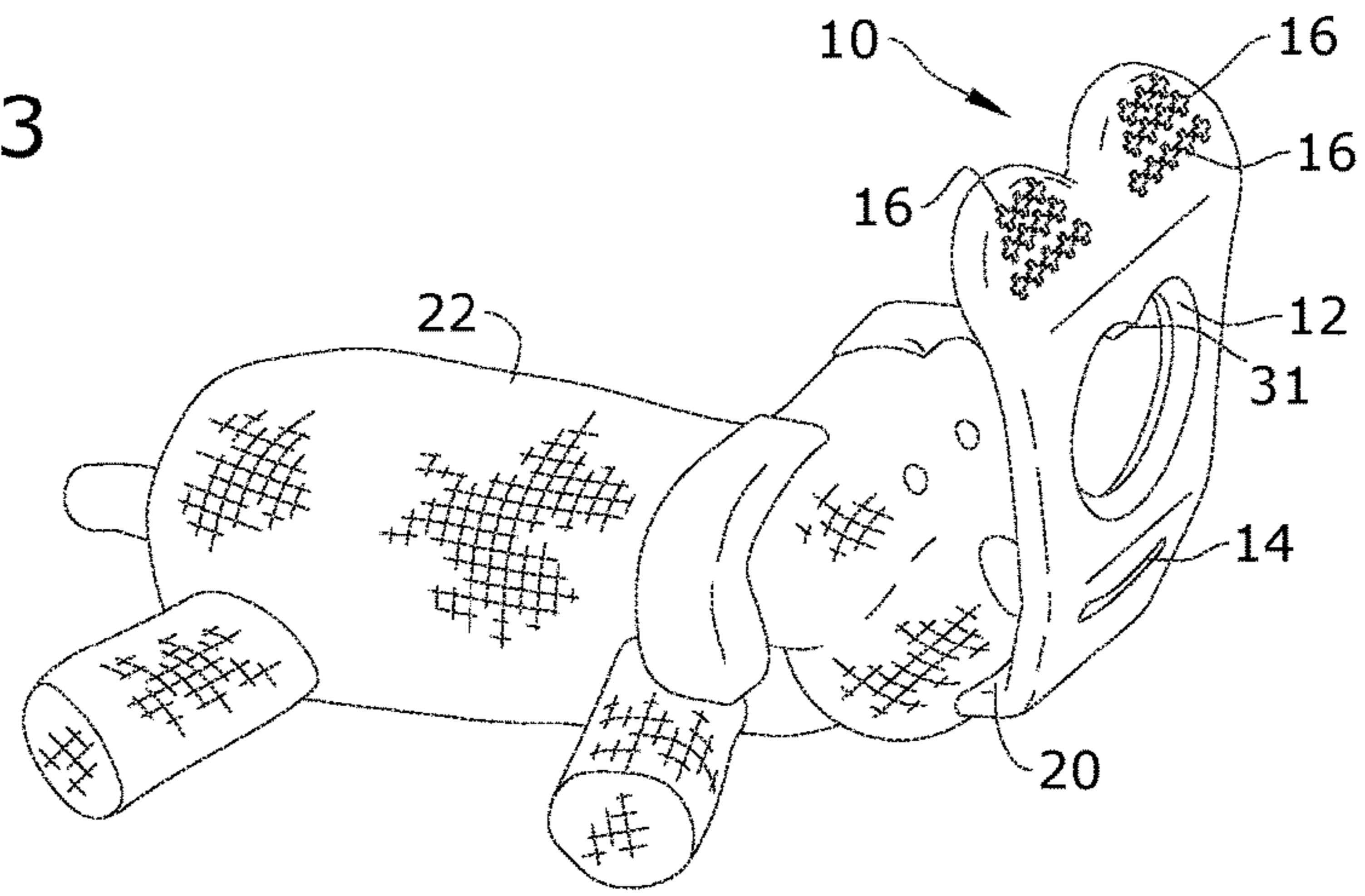


FIG.4

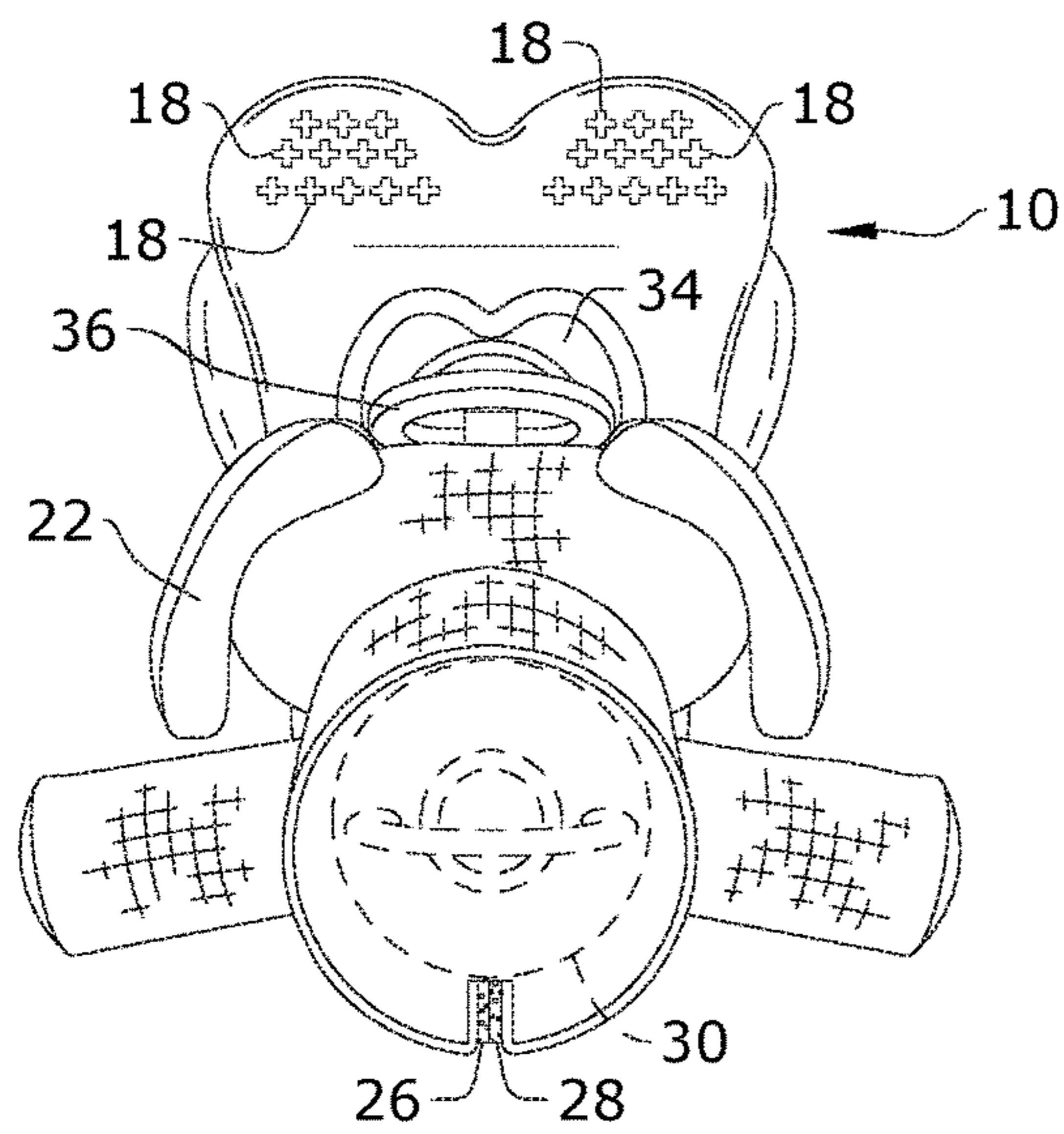


FIG.5

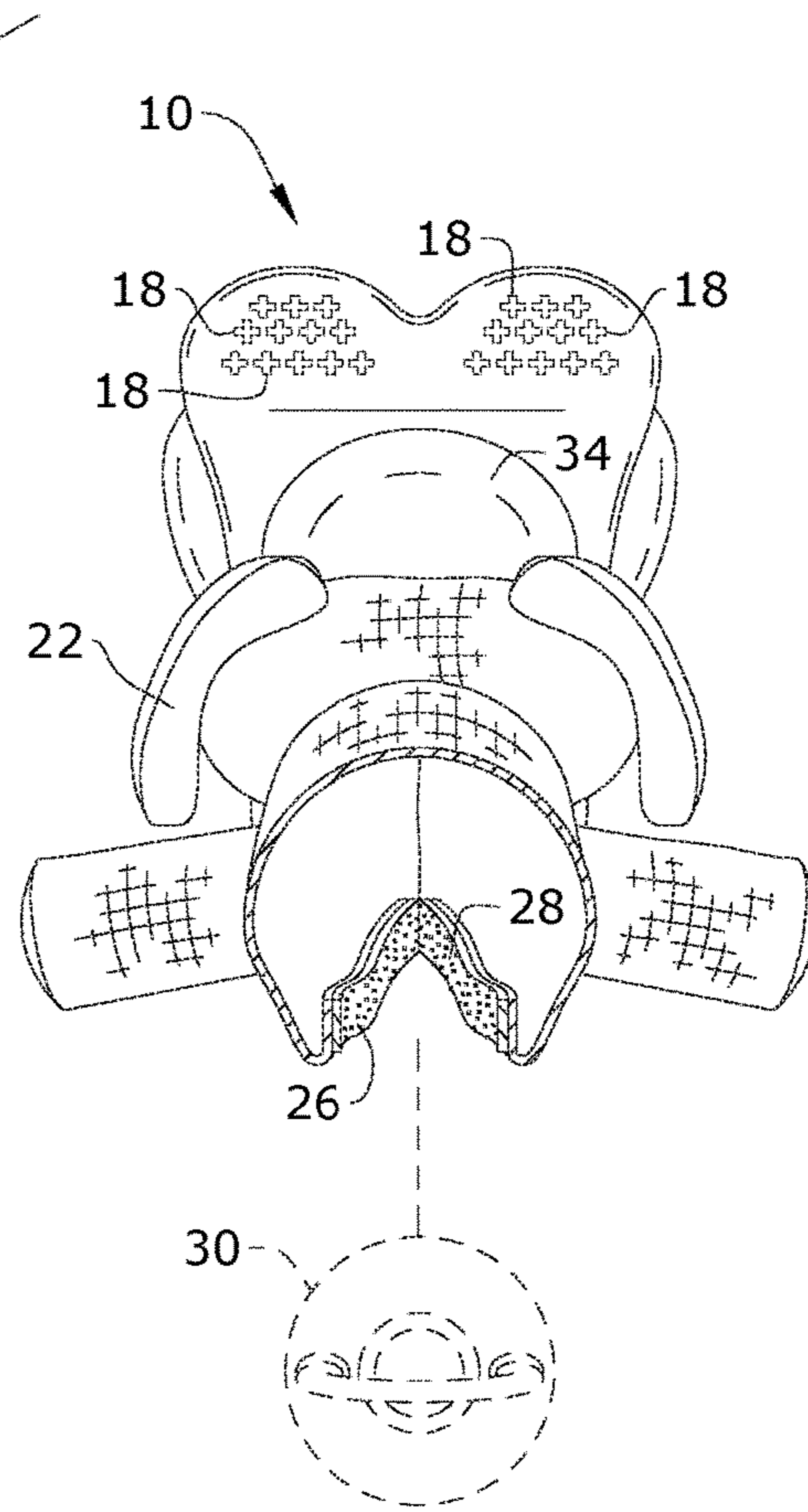


FIG. 6

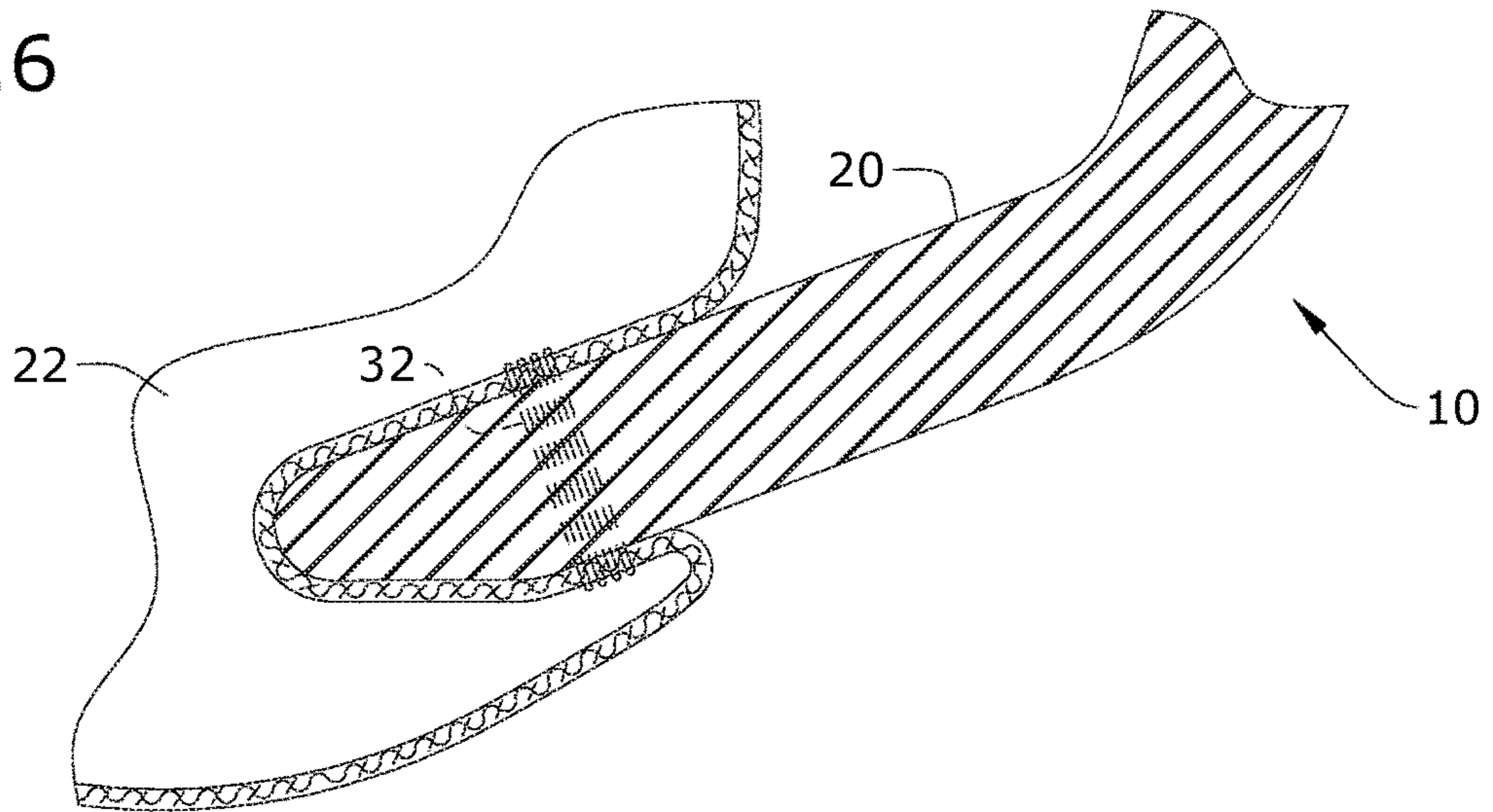


FIG. 7

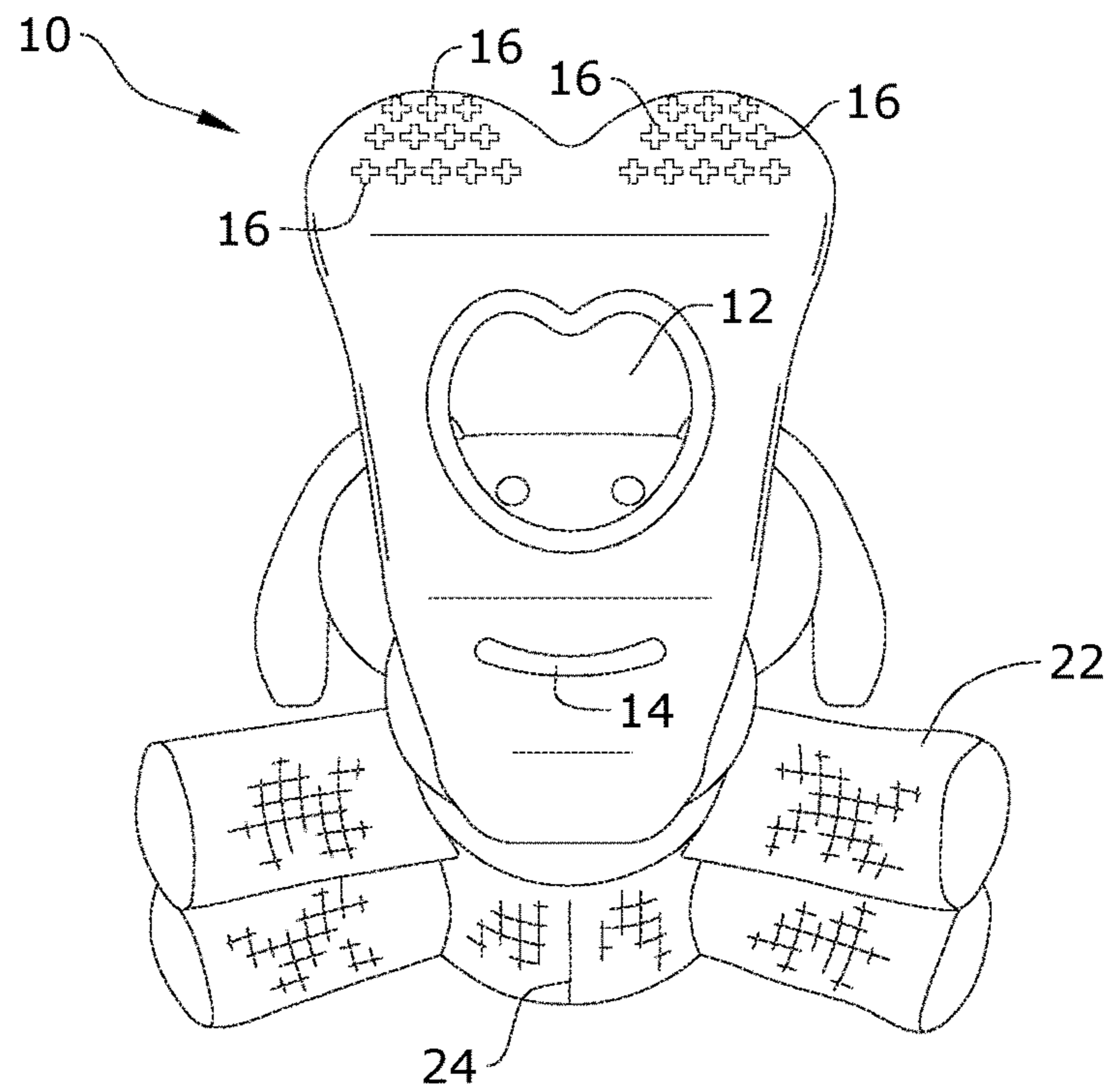


FIG. 8

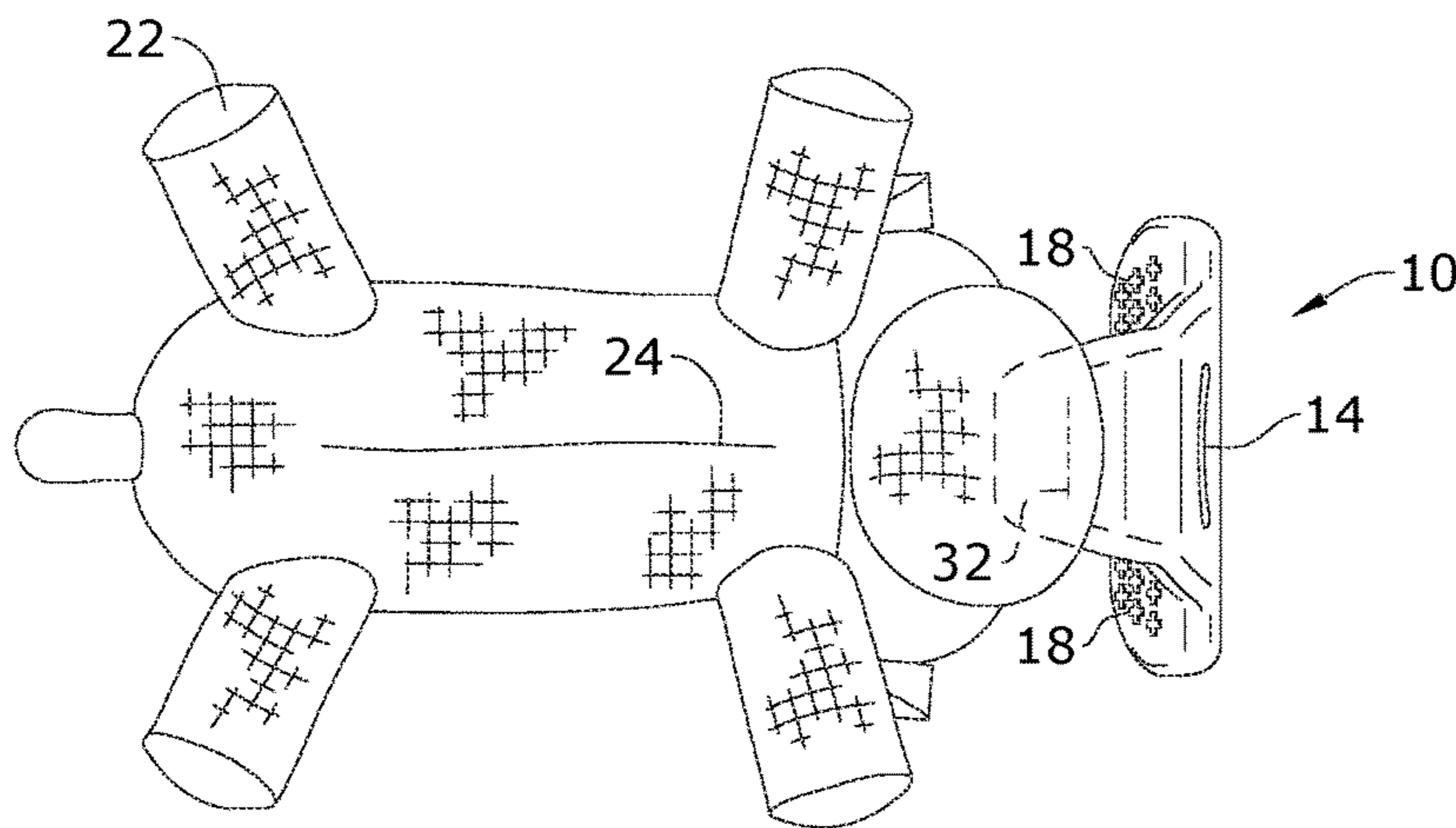
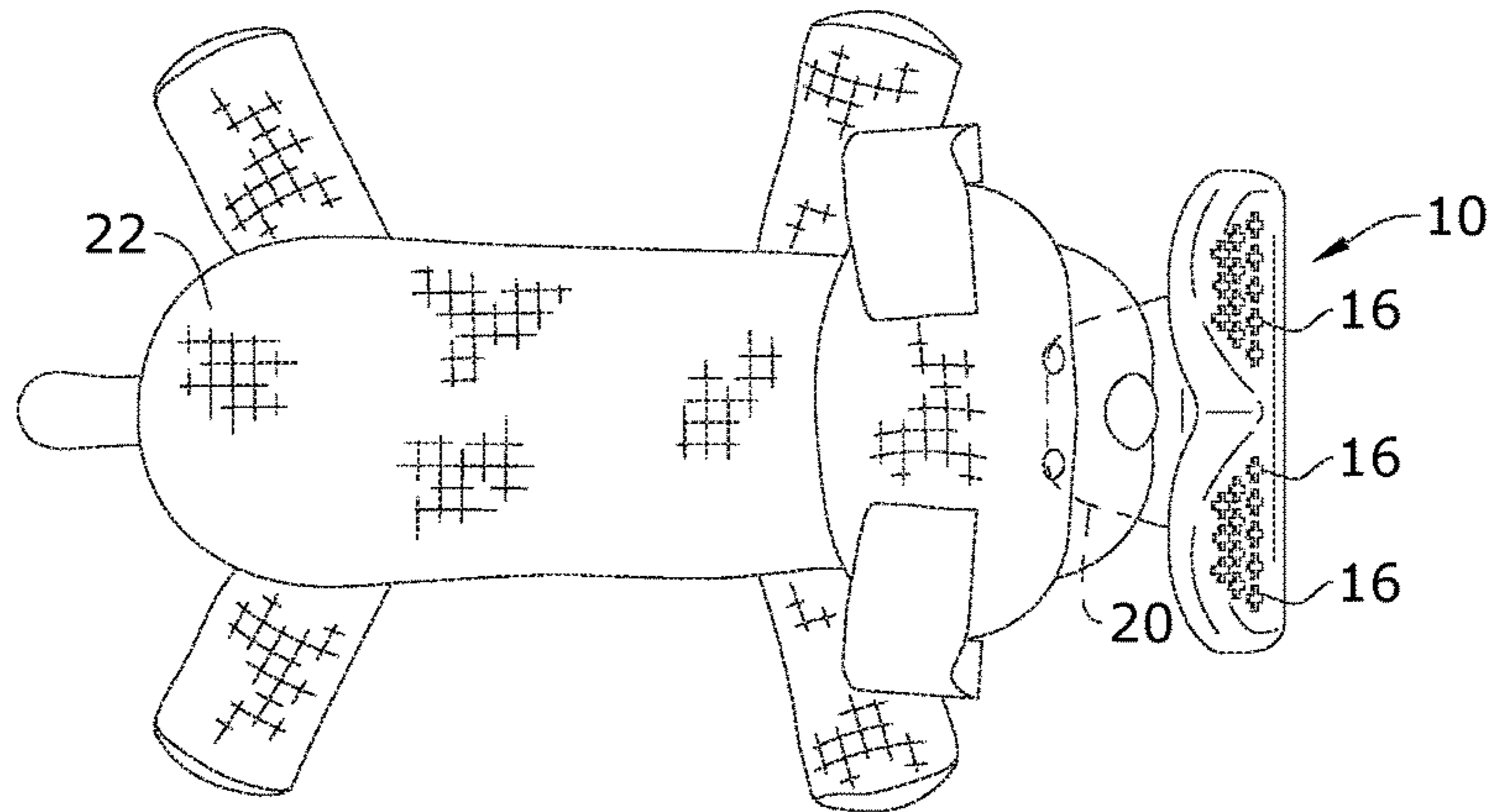


FIG. 9

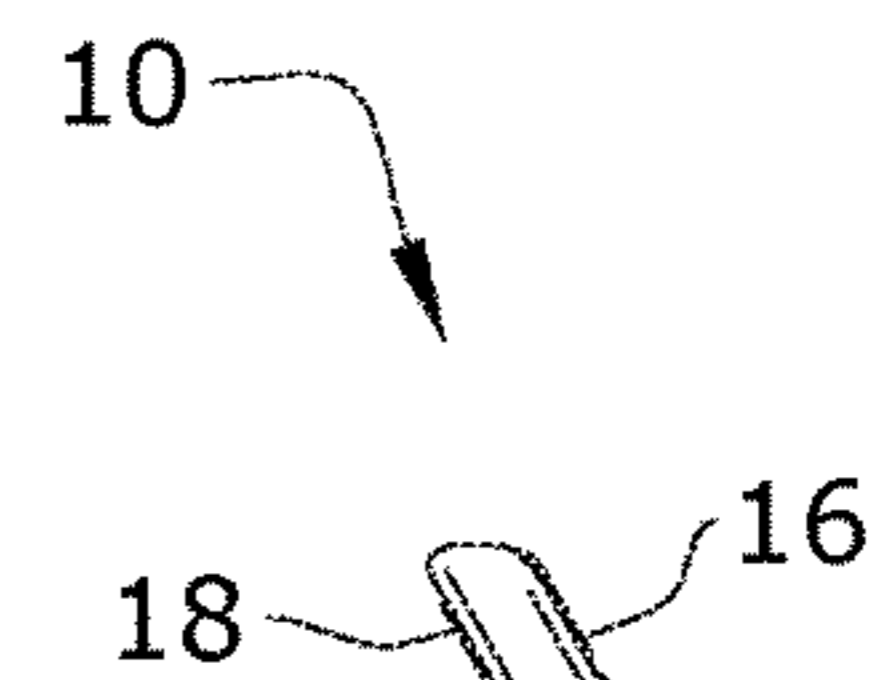


FIG. 10

INFANT PACIFIER HOLDER AND TEETHER

Matter enclosed in heavy brackets [] appears in the original patent but forms no part of this reissue specification; matter printed in italics indicates the additions made by reissue; a claim printed with strikethrough indicates that the claim was canceled, disclaimed, or held invalid by a prior post-patent action or proceeding.

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[This application is a continuation in part of U.S. design patent application Ser. No. 29/564,157, filed May 11, 2016, the contents of which are herein incorporated by reference.]

This application is a reissue of U.S. Nonprovisional patent application Ser. No. 15/592,657, now patented in U.S. Pat. No. 10,258,544 issued on Apr. 16, 2019, which is a continuation in part of U.S. design patent application Ser. No. 29/564,157, filed May 11, 2016, the contents of which are herein incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to infant care products and, more particularly, to teething devices.

Currently in the art, parents of infants and small children are provided with a wide variety of teething devices, which facilitate the soothing of the child's gums when its teeth begin to emerge. There are also a variety of pacifiers available for parents to choose from. The pacifiers are also intended to sooth the child when they become restless or irritable.

These devices can be difficult for a parent to locate and may be easily lost, particularly where the child may drop them or spit them out when the parent is not observing the child. Similarly, their relatively small size permits them to become lost under furniture, in seat cushions, bedding, and the like.

Moreover, these items typically are discrete devices and are not usually combined. Accordingly, a parent or caregiver is required to track the location of these separate, readily losable items. When a child has an urge for either item, their level of distress and crying may be exacerbated if the parent or caregiver is unable to quickly locate the items.

As can be seen, there is a need for an improved teether and pacifier configuration that avoids the loss or temporary misplacement of these items.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In one aspect of the present invention, a teether and pacifier holder, includes an elongate body having a teething end and an attachment ledge extending at a reverse angle with respect to a front face of a retainer portion interposed between the teething end and the attachment ledge. A plurality of rounded lobes extend from the teething end and are dimensioned to fit within a child's mouth opening. A plurality of protruding teething elements extend from one or more surfaces of the lobes. An aperture is defined through the elongate body, having a generally rounded shape, with a protruding latch that extends into an interior of the aperture. The aperture may also include an inwardly converging sidewall that converges from a back surface of to the front face.

The teether and pacifier holder may have a slot extending through the retainer portion. The slot is configured to receive a tab handle portion extending from a back surface of a pacifier shield. A plush toy may be operatively connected to the attachment ledge by a fastener.

The aperture is dimensioned to prevent the passage of a shield of a pacifier through the aperture. The latch is configured to retain a top edge of the pacifier shield subjacent to the latch while a lateral and a bottom edge of the pacifier shield is held in abutment against the a back face of the elongate body.

The teether and pacifier holder may also include a pacifier retained in the aperture. Alternatively, a tab handle of a pacifier may be retained in the slot.

These and other features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following drawings, description and claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of a teether and pacifier holder shown in use holding a ring handle type pacifier;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the teether and pacifier holder in use holding a tab type handle pacifier;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the teether and pacifier holder;

FIG. 4 is a section view of the teether and pacifier holder taken from 4-4 in FIG. 2 illustrating a pacifier carried in an internal storage pocket of the plush toy;

FIG. 5 is a section view illustrating the internal storage pocket in an open condition;

FIG. 6 is a section view of the invention taken from 6-6 in FIG. 2;

FIG. 7 is a front elevation view of the teether and pacifier holder;

FIG. 8 is a top plan view of the teether and pacifier holder;

FIG. 9 is a bottom plan view of the teether and pacifier holder; and

FIG. 10 is a side elevation view of the teether and pacifier holder.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The following detailed description is of the best currently contemplated modes of carrying out exemplary embodiments of the invention. The description is not to be taken in a limiting sense, but is made merely for the purpose of illustrating the general principles of the invention, since the scope of the invention is best defined by the appended claims.

Broadly, an embodiment of the present invention provides an improved teether for an infant or small child that also is configured to retain a pacifier. To facilitate the parent's ability to locate the tether and pacifier carried by the teether, the teether and pacifier holder may also be configured with a plush toy attached to the teether holder. The plush toy may have an internal storage pocket to carry a spare pacifier, when not in use by the child.

As shown in reference to the FIGS. 1-10, the teether and pacifier holder 10 may be formed as an elongate body having a teething end and an attachment ledge 20—at the opposite end. The teething end and attachment ledge 20 extend at a reverse angle with respect with the front face of an intermediate retainer portion interposed between the ends. As

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will be appreciated, the teether and pacifier holder **10** may be formed of a child safe silicone material, preferably one that is resilient and pliable.

The teething end has a plurality of rounded lobes dimensioned to fit within the child's mouth opening. A plurality of protruding teething elements **16**, such as ribs, nubs, and the like extend from a front surface of the lobes. Likewise, a plurality of protruding teething elements **18**, may extend from a back surface of the lobes. The teething elements **16**, **18** provide the child with a massaging portion to sooth their gums while teething.

The retainer portion has a substantially flat surface and an aperture **12** defined through the retainer portion of the teether holder **10**. The retainer portion may also be configured with an arcuate slot **14**. As shown in reference to FIG. **1**, the slot **14** is configured to receive a tab type handle extending from a back surface of the pacifier shield **34** of some styles of pacifiers, such as a Phillips AVENT Soothie, 190/01 manufactured by Koninklijke Philips N.V.

The aperture **12** is generally rounded in shape and is configured to receive the nipple of a pacifier **30** there through. A protruding latch **31** extends into an interior of the aperture **12** and is configured retain a shield **34** or handle element **36** of the pacifier **30**. The aperture **12** may also be provided with inwardly converging sidewall that converges from the back surface of the teether and pacifier holder body to the front surface of the teether body. The aperture **12** and latch **31** are dimensioned for nearly universal holding of a pacifier having a ring type handle **36** extending from the back of the pacifier **30**.

The aperture **12** and the inwardly converging sidewalls are dimensioned to prevent the passage of the pacifier shield **34** through the aperture **12**, while the protruding latch **31** is configured such that a top edge of the pacifier shield **34** or handle **36** is tucked under the protruding latch **31** to retain the pacifier within the teether and pacifier holder **10**.

As best seen in reference to FIG. **6**, the attachment ledge **20** is utilized to attach the teether holder **10** to a plush toy **22**, via a fastener **32**, such as stitching. As best seen in reference to FIGS. **4**, **5**, and **9**, the plush toy **22** may have an internal pocket **24** for holding a pacifier internal to the plush toy **22**. The internal pocket **24** may be selectively opened by a cooperating fastener, such as hook **26** and pile **28** fasteners, a slide fastener, a zipper, or a button closure.

When attached to the plush toy **22**, the lobes carrying the teething elements **16**, **18** are angled rearwardly towards the plush toy **22**, which in conjunction with the angular deflection of the attachment ledge **20**, positions the teething elements **16**, **18** so that the child may teethe while holding the plush toy. Similarly, the angular deflection of the attachment ledge **20** permits the pacifier to be presented at a convenient angle while the child is holding the plush toy **22**.

It should be understood, of course, that the foregoing relates to exemplary embodiments of the invention and that modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A pacifier holder and teether, comprising:
 - an elongate body having a teething end and an attachment ledge each extending at a reverse angle with respect to a front face of the elongate body with a retainer portion interposed between the teething end and the attachment ledge;
 - a plurality of rounded lobes extending from the teething end dimensioned to fit within a child's mouth opening;

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a plurality of protruding teething elements extending from one or more surfaces of the plurality of rounded lobes; and

an aperture defined through the elongate body, having a generally rounded shape, with a protruding latch that extends into an interior of the aperture.

2. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **1**, further comprising:

an inwardly converging sidewall of the aperture that converges from a back surface of the elongate body to the front face.

3. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **1**, further comprising:

a slot extending through the retainer portion.

4. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **3**, wherein the slot is configured to receive a tab handle of a pacifier received in the slot.

5. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **3**, further comprising:

a plush toy operatively connected to the attachment ledge via a fastener.

6. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **5**, wherein the fastener is a stitch.

7. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **6**, further comprising:

an internal storage pouch defined within the plush toy.

8. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **7**, further comprising:

a fastener operable to selectively open or close the internal storage pouch.

9. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **1**, wherein the aperture is dimensioned to prevent the passage of a shield of a pacifier through the aperture.

10. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **9**, wherein the latch is configured to retain a top edge of the pacifier shield subjacent to the latch, while a lateral and a bottom edge of the pacifier shield are held in abutment against a [back] front face of the elongate body.

11. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **10** further comprising] *1*, wherein:

the latch is configured to retain a top edge of the pacifier shield subjacent to the latch, while a pacifier is retained in the aperture.

12. The pacifier holder and teether of claim **9**, wherein the aperture is dimensioned to retain a handle of a pacifier.

13. A pacifier holder and teether comprising:

a plush toy; and

an elongate body having:

a distal end and an end of an attachment ledge, opposite the distal end, operatively connected to a front the plush toy via a fastener; and

a front face with a retainer portion of a selectively pliable and resilient polymeric material and having two opposing lateral side edges, interposed between the distal end and the end of the attachment ledge, and defining an enclosed arcuate slot centrally disposed between the two opposing lateral side edges of the retainer portion, centrally aligned with the plush toy, and operably configured to receive and retain, with the retainer portion of the elongate body defining the enclosed arcuate slot, a tab handle extending from a back surface of a pacifier shield, the retainer portion having an enclosed aperture defined through the elongate body, having a generally rounded shape, and having an inwardly converging sidewall defining a protruding latch that extends into an interior of the enclosed aperture.

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14. The pacifier holder and teether according to claim 13, wherein:

the enclosed aperture is interposed between the distal end and the enclosed arcuate slot, the enclosed aperture operably configured to receive and retain, with the 5
retainer portion of the elongate body defining the enclosed aperture, a handle element of a pacifier.

15. The pacifier holder and teether according to claim 13, wherein:

the distal end is a teething end, the teething end and an 10
attachment ledge each extending at a reverse angle with respect to the front face of the elongate body; and the front face of the retainer portion defining the enclosed arcuate slot is substantially flat.

16. The pacifier holder and teether according to claim 15, 15
further comprising:

a plurality of rounded lobes extending from the teething end dimensioned to fit within a child's mouth opening; and

a plurality of protruding teething elements extending from 20
one or more surfaces of the plurality of rounded lobes.

17. A pacifier holder and teether comprising:

a plush toy; and

an elongate body having:

a distal end and an end of an attachment ledge, 25
opposite the distal end, operatively connected to the plush toy via a fastener; and

a front face with a retainer portion of a selectively 30
pliable and resilient polymeric material, interposed between the distal end and the end of the attachment ledge, the retainer portion of the elongate body defining an:

enclosed aperture defined through the elongate body and having a generally rounded shape; and

enclosed arcuate slot operably configured to receive 35
and retain, with the retainer portion of the elongate body defining the enclosed arcuate slot, a tab handle extending from a back surface of a pacifier shield, the enclosed arcuate slot is interposed 40
between the end of the attachment ledge and the enclosed aperture and the retainer portion of the elongate body with an inwardly converging sidewall defining a protruding latch that converges to a point that extends into and is disposed within an 45
interior of the enclosed aperture, the enclosed aperture operably configured to receive and retain, with the protruding latch and retainer portion of the elongate body defining the enclosed aperture, a handle element of a pacifier.

18. The pacifier holder and teether according to claim 17, 50
wherein:

the distal end is a teething end, the teething end and an 55
attachment ledge each extending at a reverse angle with respect to the front face of the elongate body, the elongate body having a plurality of rounded lobes extending from the teething end dimensioned to fit

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within a child's mouth opening and having a plurality of protruding teething elements extending from one or more surfaces of the plurality of rounded lobes.

19. A pacifier holder and teether comprising:

a plush toy; and

an elongate body having:

a distal end that is a teething end;

an end of an attachment ledge, opposite the distal end, 5
operatively connected to a front the plush toy via a fastener, the teething end and an attachment ledge each extending at a reverse angle with respect to the front face of the elongate body; and

a front face with a retainer portion of a selectively 10
pliable and resilient polymeric material and having two opposing lateral side edges, interposed between the distal end and the end of the attachment ledge, and defining an enclosed arcuate slot centrally disposed between the two opposing lateral side edges of the retainer portion, centrally aligned with the plush 15
toy, and operably configured to receive and retain, with the retainer portion of the elongate body defining the enclosed arcuate slot, a tab handle extending from a back surface of a pacifier shield, wherein the front face of the retainer portion defining the enclosed arcuate slot is substantially flat.

20. A pacifier holder and teether comprising:

a plush toy; and

an elongate body having:

a distal end that is a teething end;

an end of an attachment ledge, opposite the distal end, 20
operatively connected to the plush toy via a fastener; and

a front face with a retainer portion of a selectively 25
pliable and resilient polymeric material, interposed between the distal end and the end of the attachment ledge, wherein the teething end and the attachment ledge each extending at a reverse angle with respect to the front face of the elongate body, the retainer portion of the elongate body defining an enclosed aperture defined through the elongate body and 30
having a generally rounded shape and with an inwardly converging sidewall defining a protruding latch that converges to a point that extends into and is disposed within an interior of the enclosed aper- 35
ture, the elongate body having a plurality of rounded lobes extending from the teething end dimensioned to fit within a child's mouth opening and having a plurality of protruding teething elements extending from one or more surfaces of the plurality of rounded lobes, and with the enclosed aperture operably con- 40
figured to receive and retain, with the protruding latch and retainer portion of the elongate body defining the enclosed aperture, a handle element of a pacifier.

* * * * *