



AIN SHAMS UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

Electronics & Electrical Communication Engineering

## Wearable Antennas for Medical Applications

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Electrical Engineering

(Electronics & Electrical Communication Engineering Department)

by

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Masters of Science in Wireless Mobile Communications Systems  
Engineering

(Electronics Engineering and Electrical Communications)

Faculty of Engineering, University of Greenwich, 2014

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Cairo - (2020)



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**Date:** 23/11/ 2020

# Statement

This thesis is submitted as a partial fulfilment of Philosophy in Electronics & Electrical Communication Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University.

The author carried out the work included in this thesis, and no part of it has been submitted for a degree or a qualification at any other scientific entity.

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# Thesis Abstract

Antennas should possess certain features and properties to be characterized as wearable, where they are placed all over the body; for instance, wrist, chest, back, thigh, and abdomen, etc. depending on the application targeted. Such characteristics include flexibility, compact size, high gain, low Specific Absorption Rate (SAR), and uni-directional radiation pattern.

With that said, presented in this thesis are three design approaches for wearable antennas, which are designed, fabricated, evaluated and measured in free space and within the vicinity of the human body. The objectives of the different wearable design approaches are to introduce different single/dual-frequency bands with small wearable antennas profile in addition to preserve a high antenna gain and efficiency, as well as, low SAR. Through the fabrication process, all reported antennas have been fabricated using (1) Rogers Ultralam 3850 substrate, which is based on the flexible Liquid Crystal Polymer (LCP) and (2) textile substrate to demonstrate the flexibility features needed for the wearable biomedical antennas.

The first antenna approach is an asymmetric meander line-based antenna operating at 2.4 GHz. Such methodology led to a size reduction of 67.7% in comparison to a printed straight monopole antenna at 2.4 GHz. By extending the Co-Planar Waveguide (CPW) ground planes around the Asymmetric Meander-Line Antenna (AMLA), forming a U-shaped extended ground, and coupling it to the AMLA, gain enhancements were achieved at the desired resonant frequency of 2.4 GHz. The antenna was evaluated at different separations from the human wrist, where performance parameters; such as, realized gain, total efficiency, and SAR were analyzed; thus, leading to the optimum performance. Despite the absence of a backing isolating structure, to de-couple the antenna from the human wrist, the AMLA, spaced by 10 mm from the human wrist, exhibited a SAR level of 1.58 W/kg. Hence, it complies with the American and European standards.

Afterwards, the antenna was backed by a textile-based 1×2 Artificial Magnetic Conductor (AMC) to maintain flexibility, enhance the gain, and reduce the SAR when evaluated at 3 mm from the human hand. According to a comparative study in terms of the AMC material, it was chosen to be based on textiles, as the integrated design achieved optimum results. The integrated design operated at the desired 2.4 GHz and outclassed the AMLA, in the absence of an isolating structure, in terms of gain in free space and within the

vicinity of the human hand at both flat and bent circumstances. Courtesy of the backing reflector, the integrated design attained low SAR levels and complies with both standards.

Further enhancement of single-band antenna properties in terms of size was attained by incorporating a metamaterial Composite Right/Left Handed (CRLH) cell as the second antenna radiator. The antenna was backed by an all-textile  $2 \times 2$  AMC to enhance the gain and reduce the SAR. For this design, a textile material was specifically selected for the AMC to maintain overall design flexibility and for integration with clothes. The antenna is ultra-thin, compact, highly efficient, and operates at 2.45 GHz of the Industrial, Scientific, and Medical (ISM)-band. The antenna physical size is 25 mm  $\times$  25 mm with a realized gain of 2.34 dBi and total efficiency of 87% in free space. In free space, the low profile integrated design exhibited a gain of 7.63 dBi (enhancement of 5.29 dB) and a total efficiency of 96.4%. The integrated design achieved gain and total efficiency enhancements by 14.88 dB and 72.4%, respectively, as well as, lower SAR levels, in comparison to the CRLH antenna, without an isolating structure, for human loading cases. In addition, the CRLH antenna and AMC array structure were fabricated and measurements were undertaken, which agreed well with the simulated results. Therefore, the integrated design is highly suggested to be recognized medical applications

The third antenna was a slotted triangular-shaped antenna backed by a  $4 \times 4$  AMC array. The objectives were to design a dual-band and small-sized antenna to radiate at 3.5 GHz and 5.8 GHz for WiMAX and ISM-bands, respectively. Furthermore, make use of an AMC structure to enhance the antenna gain and efficiency, as well as, reduce SAR, when evaluated within the vicinity of the human body. The antenna radiator size is compact with a size reduction of 70% in comparison to the conventional square-shaped monopole antenna at 3.5 GHz. Whether in free space or at close distances to the human thigh and abdomen, enhancements in terms of realized gain, total efficiency, Front-to-Back Ratio (FBR), and SAR values were attained courtesy of the incorporated de-coupling AMC array structure, in comparison to the monopole antenna, with the absence of the isolator.

Subsequently, a similar design was designed with the differences being in the usage of textile materials and reduction of the AMC array size from  $4 \times 4$  to  $2 \times 2$ . The rationale behind transitioning into an all-textile design is highlighted when compared with a similar but polyimide-based design. Moreover, demonstrated are the evaluations in flat and bent conditions within the vicinity

of the human hand. In addition, the fabricated all-textile prototype is integrated into a wristband where measurements are conducted on a subject's wrist in such an arrangement. Such a scenario replicates a wristband worn by athletes for monitoring the health conditions; such as, blood pressure and pulse rate, at the wrist. The vital signs are then transmitted wirelessly to a physician for diagnosing purposes.

# **Acknowledgment**

First and foremost, I thank Allah for all the blessings that he has bestowed upon me.

My sincere and heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisors and role models, Prof. Dr. Hadia Elhennawy and Prof. Dr. Mahmoud Abdelrahman Abdalla, who believed that I could achieve such work. It is because of all their continuous advice, recommendations, and instructions that guided me to accomplish such achievements.

I would like to extend my sincere thankfulness and passion to my wife, Aliaa, for her unconditional love, non-stop motivation, sleepless nights, and patience. She has been through a lot and I owe all that success to her.

Furthermore, all my extreme respect and admiration go to my colleague and friend Ahmed Hatem for his unconditional assistance. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge all my colleagues whom I met throughout the learning journey and assisted me without expecting anything in return.

Finally yet importantly, I would like to express my utmost appreciation and respect to my parents and family members for their prayers. A big thank you to my parents for raising me to become the man whom I am now, wishing that I made them and will continue making them proud.

**December 2020**

# Table of Contents

<b>List of Figures .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>xix</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>xxi</b>
<b>List of Symbols.....</b>	<b>xxiii</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Wireless Body Area Networks.....	1
1.2 Wearable Antennas Main Requirements and Specifications .....	2
1.3 Different Types of Biomedical-Related Antennas for Health Monitoring Applications.....	3
1.4 Motivation and Aim.....	5
1.5 Thesis Organization .....	5
<b>Background on Recent Wearable and Implantable Antennas Targeting Biomedical Applications.....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	8
2.2 Flexible Materials .....	9
2.2.1 Textiles .....	9
2.2.2 Thin Polyimide .....	11
2.2.3 Papers.....	13
2.3 Compactness Techniques .....	16
2.3.1 Metamaterial-based Radiators .....	16
2.3.2 Fractal-based Radiators .....	20
2.3.3 Winded Radiator.....	22
2.3.4 Shorted-based Radiator.....	23
2.4 Multi-Band Techniques .....	25
2.4.1 Etched Slots .....	25
2.4.2 Defected Ground Structure .....	29
2.4.3 Current Path Variation.....	30
2.5 Low SAR Methodologies .....	32

2.5.1 Large Ground Planes.....	32
2.5.2 AMC/EBG Array Structures.....	35
2.5.3 SIW-based Radiators .....	39
2.5.4 Metasurface Array Structures .....	42
2.5.5 Polymeric Ferrite Sheet.....	45
2.6 Compact Implantable Antennas .....	46
2.7 Conclusion .....	68
<b>A Compact Single Band Wearable Antenna for Low SAR Wrist Applications .....</b>	<b>70</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	70
3.2 The Monopole Antenna Structure and Performance .....	71
3.2.1 The AMLA Design Simulated Results .....	74
3.2.2 The Reflector Geometry Impact and Analysis.....	75
3.2.3 The AMLA Design Measured Results.....	77
3.2.4 The AMLA SAR Analysis.....	78
3.2.5 The Bent AMLA Design Results .....	81
3.3 The AMLA Backed Textile AMC .....	85
3.3.1 Effects of Various AMC Sizes and Substrate Materials.....	85
3.3.2 The Textile-based AMC Characteristics.....	88
3.3.3 The Integrated Design Free Space Performance.....	90
3.4 On-Hand Integrated Design Evaluation.....	91
3.4.1 The Flat Case Performance .....	91
3.4.2 The Bent Case Performance.....	93
3.5 Summary .....	95
<b>A Compact Highly Efficient <math>\Pi</math>-Section CRLH Antenna loaded with Textile AMC for Wireless Body Area Network Applications.....</b>	<b>97</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	97
4.2 The CRLH Antenna Design and Performance.....	97
4.2.1 The $\Pi$ -Section CRLH Antenna Design.....	98
4.2.2 The CRLH Antenna Free Space Results and Analysis .....	100

4.2.3 The CRLH Antenna Body Loading Results and Analysis .....	103
4.3 The Integrated Design Structure and Performance.....	106
4.3.1 The Single-Band All-Textile AMC Unit-Cell Design.....	106
4.3.2 The Integrated Design Free Space Results and Analysis .....	108
4.3.3 The Integrated Design Body Loading Results and Analysis .....	111
4.4 Summary.....	118
<b>A Dual-Band Compact High Gain Wearable Antenna Loaded with AMC for WBAN Applications .....</b>	<b>119</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	119
5.2 The Design Evolution of the Monopole Antenna.....	120
5.2.1 Free Space Simulated against Measured Results .....	123
5.2.2 The Antenna SAR Result without Backing Reflector .....	126
5.3 The Antenna AMC-Backed Design.....	130
5.3.1 The Dual-Band AMC Unit-Cell Design.....	131
5.3.2 The Integrated Design: Free Space Results and Analysis .....	134
5.3.3 The Integrated Design: Body Loading Results and Analysis .....	138
5.4 Development of the All-Textile Design .....	146
5.4.1 The Flat All-Textile Integrated Design Performance against the Human Wrist.....	146
5.4.2 The Bent All-Textile Integrated Design Performance against the Human Wrist.....	150
5.4.3 The Benefits of an All-Textile over Non-textile Design .....	155
5.5 Summary.....	158
<b>Conclusion and Future Work.....</b>	<b>160</b>
6.1 Conclusion.....	160
6.2 Future Work.....	162
<b>References.....</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>List of Publications .....</b>	<b>172</b>

# List of Figures

Fig. 2. 1. The layout of (a) Stacked layers (left) and monopole antenna top view (right) (b) Fabricated prototype of each layer [3] .....9

Fig. 2. 2. On-body evaluation (a) Measurement setup (b) The simulated and measured reflection coefficients [3]..... 10

Fig. 2. 3. 2D layout top view of (a) Monopole antenna (b) AMC array structure (c) Integrated design fabricated prototype [15] ..... 10

Fig. 2. 4. The AMC structure effect on antenna reflection coefficient [15] .. 11

Fig. 2. 5. The 2D layout of (a) Monopole antenna (b) Integ. design [28]..... 12

Fig. 2. 6. Integrated design performance parameters (a) Reflection coefficient for different cases; Normalized gain radiation pattern at 2.45 GHz in the (b) E-plane (c) H-plane; 5.8 GHz (d) E-plane (e) H-plane; The SAR levels at 2.45 GHz (f) 1 g (g) 10 g; 5.8 GHz (h) 1 g (i) 10 g [28] ..... 13

Fig. 2. 7. The integrated design backed by a full ground plane (a) Stacked layout (b) Side view; Fabricated prototype (c) Top view (b) Bottom view [30] ..... 14

Fig. 2. 8. Effect of the EBG structure with respect to (a) Reflection coefficients against the human body (b) Gain in free space and against the human body [30] ..... 15

Fig. 2. 9. The integrated design layout in (a) Stack-up view (b) Top view (c) Fabricated AMC array structure top view [31] ..... 15

Fig. 2. 10. Comparison in free space between the integrated design simulated and measured (a) Reflection coefficients (b) Realized gain [31] ..... 16

Fig. 2. 11. The metamaterial antenna fabricated prototype 2D layout when the switch is (a) OFF (b) ON [10]..... 17

Fig. 2. 12. Comparison in free space between the antenna sim. and meas. (a) S11; Normalized radiation patterns at 2.45 GHz when switched ON in (b) X-Z plane (c) Y-Z plane; OFF in (d) X-Z plane (e) Y-Z plane [10] ..... 18

Fig. 2. 13. The antenna 2D layout (a) Top and side views (b) Fabricated prototype (c) Measured reflection coefficients for different cases [4] ..... 18

Fig. 2. 14. The SAR at 2.45 GHz and 5.2 GHz on (a) forearm (b) shoulder [4]19

Fig. 2. 15. The antenna geometry (a) Original (b) Fractal-based [62] ..... 20

Fig. 2. 16. The fractal-based antenna (a) Measured S11 in various circumstances (b) SAR at 2.45 GHz, averaged over 10 g, on arm [62] ..... 21

Fig. 2. 17. The top view of (a) Monopole fractal-based antenna (b) EBG unit-cell (c) Integrated design [7] ..... 21

Fig. 2. 18. EBG loading effect on fractal antenna in terms of meas. S11 [7] 22

Fig. 2. 19. The wearable sensor (a) Monopole antenna (b) Placed inside the armband (c) H-shaped parasitic element integrated with the armband [63] .. 22

Fig. 2. 20. The sim. radiation efficiency and parasitic element effect [63] ... 23

Fig. 2. 21. Antenna top view (a) In free space (b) On human phantom [64]. 24

Fig. 2. 22. Sim./meas. S11 in free space and over the human phantom [64]. 24

Fig. 2. 23. Integ. design layout (a) Top view (b) Fabricated prototype [14] .	25
Fig. 2. 24. The various cases simulated and measured reflection coeffi. [14]	26
Fig. 2. 25. The triple-band fabricated antenna views (a) Top (b) Bottom [68]	27
Fig. 2. 26. Sim./meas. S11 in free space showing triple-band resonance [68]	28
Fig. 2. 27. The integrated hepta-band design (a) Top view (b) Side view [69]	28
Fig. 2. 28. The integrated design (a) Simulated and measured S11 indicating hepta-band resonance; SAR levels at (b) 2.45 GHz (c) 3.5 GHz [69].....	29
Fig. 2. 29. Fabricated prototypes (a) Ant. 1 top view (b) Ant. 1 bottom view (c) Ant. 2 top view (d) Ant. 3 top view [70] .....	30
Fig. 2. 30. The multi-band textile antennas sim. S11 in free space [70] .....	30
Fig. 2. 31. Fabricated prototype (a) Separated layouts; integrated design (b) Flat (c) Bent (d) Human thigh reflection coefficient measurement setup [17] .....	31
Fig. 2. 32. (a) Integrated design measured reflection coefficients for different cases; The slot antenna SAR levels, averaged over 1 g of tissue, in OFF mode (b) 2.45 GHz (c) 3.3 GHz; integrated design (d) 2.45 GHz (e) 3.3 GHz [17] .....	32
Fig. 2. 33. The fabricated antenna 2D layout (a) Top view (b) Bent view; On-body evaluation in (c) Flat case; Bent over the (d) Head (e) Wrist [33] .....	33
Fig. 2. 34. Comparison between the antenna simulated and measured VSWR in (a) Free space and flat human phantom (b) Bent human phantom; Normalized gain radiation pattern against the flat human phantom at (c) 5 GHz (d) 7 GHz [33]	34
Fig. 2. 35. The shorted PIFA antenna (a) Top view (b) Bottom view [67] ...	34
Fig. 2. 36. The shorted PIFA (a) S11 along with measurement setups; SAR at 5.5 GHz averaged over (b) 1 g of tissue (c) 10 g of tissue [67].....	35
Fig. 2. 37. The 2D layout top view of (a) Monopole antenna (b) Integrated design; On-body evaluation (c) Reflection coefficient setup (d) Measured integrated design reflection coefficients [11].....	36
Fig. 2. 38. The SAR levels, at 2.45 GHz, for monopole antenna averaged over (a) 1 g of tissue (b) 10 g of tissue ; integrated design (c) 1 g of tissue (d) 10 g of tissue [11].....	37
Fig. 2. 39. The 2D layout top view of (a) Monopole antenna; Fabricated prototype of (b) Monopole antenna (c) Integrated design [13].....	38
Fig. 2. 40. Comparison between the simulated reflection coefficients in free space and on-body loading cases of (a) Monopole antenna (b) Integrated design; The monopole antenna simulated and measured radiation patterns at 5.8 GHz (c) E-plane (d) H-plane; integ. design (e) E-plane (f) H-plane [13] .....	39
Fig. 2. 41. The antenna 2D layout (a) Top and side views; The fabricated antenna (b) Top view (c) Bottom view (d) Reflection coefficient measurement arrangement against a fabricated phantom [65].....	40
Fig. 2. 42. The antenna simulated and measured (a) Reflection coefficients in free space and against human phantom; Gain radiation patterns in the principal planes at 5.8 GHz (b) Free space (c) Against human phantom [65].....	41

Fig. 2. 43. The metamaterial SIW cavity-backed antenna 2D geometry (a) Top view; The fabricated antenna (b) Top view (c) Bottom view [66] .....	41
Fig. 2. 44. Performance parameters (a) Reflection coefficients in free space and against the body; Normalized gain radiation pattern polar plots at 2.45 GHz in free space in the (b) X-Z plane (c) Y-Z plane; The antenna SAR levels, averaged over 10 g of tissue, at 2.45 GHz at (d) Thigh (e) Arm (f) Chest [66] .....	42
Fig. 2. 45. The 2D layout top view of (a) PIFA (b) Metasurface structure (c) Loading technique (d) Integrated design [12] .....	43
Fig. 2. 46. The integrated design measured reflection coefficients in free space and on various body parts, and measurement arrangements inset [12] .....	43
Fig. 2. 47. The fabricated prototypes top view of (a) Metasurface structure (b) Integrated design [20] .....	44
Fig. 2. 48. (a) Integrated design measured reflection coefficients in various conditions, with reflection coefficient on-body measurement setup on; The SAR level of (b) Monopole antenna (c) Integrated design [20] .....	44
Fig. 2. 49. The 2D layout of printed IFA, including dimensions in mm [40]	45
Fig. 2. 50. The SAR levels, averaged over 10 g of tissue, at 2.4 GHz of the (a) IFA (b) Integrated design [40] .....	46
Fig. 2. 51. Implantable antenna (a) Top and bottom views (b) Inside a box full of a mixture representing human skin; Fabricated prototype (c) Structure (d) Reflection coefficient measurement setup (e) Plastic pipe cover [45] .....	47
Fig. 2. 52. The implantable antenna different states in terms of measured (a) Reflection coefficient (b) Normalized radiation pattern at 403.5 MHz [45]	48
Fig. 2. 53. The 2D layout of (a) CSRR-loaded loop antenna (b) CSRR unit-cell (c) Fabricated antenna in flat and bent conditions (d) Implanted antenna reflection coefficient measurement setup [46] .....	48
Fig. 2. 54. (a) Simulated and measured reflection coefficients; Simulated 3D radiation pattern at (b) 403 MHz (c) 2.45 GHz [46] .....	49
Fig. 2. 55. The implantable antenna 2D layout (a) Top view (b) Side view (c) Reflection coefficient measurement setup (d) Fabricated prototype [47] .....	50
Fig. 2. 56. Dual-band simulated and measured reflection coefficients at (a) 402 MHz (b) 2.45 GHz [47] .....	51
Fig. 2. 57. The implanted antenna 2D layout (a) Top view (b) Bottom view; Implanted antenna evaluation in (c) Cubic model mimicking the skin (d) Voxel Gustav human model [48] .....	52
Fig. 2. 58. Simulated and measured S <sub>11</sub> , with fabricated prototype inset [48]	53
Fig. 2. 59. The implanted antenna 2D layout (a) Top view (b) Bottom view (c) Fabricated prototype (d) Setup for measuring the reflection coefficient [49]	54
Fig. 2. 60. Implantable antenna (a) Simulated and measured reflection coefficients; The SAR levels at 403 MHz in (b) Chest (c) Shoulder [49] .....	55
Fig. 2. 61. The implanted antenna (a) 2D fabricated prototype (b) Immersed at 2 mm depth inside a liquid mixture mimicking the human skin [51] .....	56

Fig. 2. 62. Implantable antenna (a) Simulated/measured S11 (b) Maximum SAR and input power (c) Simulated 3D gain radiation pattern at 4 GHz [51].....	57
Fig. 2. 63. Implanted antenna different views (a) Top (b) Bottom (c) Side (d) 3D stacked (e) S11 measurement setup (f) Fabricated prototype [52] .....	58
Fig. 2. 64. Implanted antenna (a) Simulated/measured reflec. coeff. (b) SAR levels, at various resonant frequencies, with an input power level of 1 W [52] .....	58
Fig. 2. 65. Implanted antenna views (a) Top (b) Bottom (c) Side (d) 3D stacked (e) Fabricated prototype (f) Setup for measuring the S11 [53] .....	59
Fig. 2. 66. Triple-band implanted antenna simulated and measured S11 [53]	60
Fig. 2. 67. Implanted antenna 2D layout (a) Top view (b) Bottom view (c) Fabricated prototype (f) Setup for measuring the reflection coefficient [54]	61
Fig. 2. 68. Dual-band implantable antenna simulated and measured S11 [54]	62
Fig. 2. 69. Implantable antenna fabricated prototype (a) CLL, CSRL, and IDCL (b) S11 measurement setup inside a pig's brain [55].....	63
Fig. 2. 70. The CLL SAR levels averaged over 1 g and 10 g of tissues [55]	63
Fig. 2. 71. Implanted antenna 2D layout (a) Top view (b) Bottom view (c) Fabricated prototype (f) S11 measurement setup inside a phantom head [56]	65
Fig. 2. 72. Dual-band implantable antenna sim. and meas. ref. coeff. [56]...	66
Fig. 2. 73. Implanted antenna 2D layout top view (a) W/O metamaterial (b) Metamaterial unit-cell geometry (c) Integrated structure; S11 measurement setup in (d) Container filled with liquid solution (e) Chicken breast [50] .....	67
Fig. 2. 74. Effect of adding the metamaterial structure with respect to simulated and measured gain enhancements [50].....	68
Fig. 3. 1. The 2D layout of (a) Conventional PMA (b) SMLA (W= 25 mm, L= 80 mm, W1= 7.38 mm, L1= 6 mm, W2= 18 mm, L2= 11.1 mm, L3= 9.25 mm) (c) AMLA.....	72
Fig. 3. 2. The reflection coefficients of (a) Sim. AMLA, sim. PMA, meas. AMLA (b) Sim. AMLA including the reflector, sim. SMLA with and without the reflector; Sim. co-polarization and cross-polarization, at 2.4 GHz, in E-plane of (c) AMLA, including the reflector (d) SMLA, including the reflector.....	75
Fig. 3. 3. The current distribution at 0° phase at 2.4 GHz of AMLA with reflector geometry (a) U-shaped (b) Left inverted L (c) Right inverted L.....	76
Fig. 3. 4. AMLA (a) Fabricated layout (b) Radiation pattern measurement setup; Normalized polar plot representation of the radiation pattern, at 2.4 GHz, for (c) X-Z plane (d) Y-Z plane .....	78
Fig. 3. 5. Effect of different separations in terms of (a) Sim. and meas. S11 (b) Broadside radiation pattern at 2.4 GHz (c) The AMLA SAR level at 2.4 GHz averaged over 10 g of tissue at 10 mm separation.....	80
Fig. 3. 6. The setup for measuring the AMLA S11 against the human wrist	81
Fig. 3. 7. The bent AMLA (a) Free space (b) Cubic human hand model; Cases 1 (solid black) and 2 (dotted red) simulated (c) S11 (d) Normalized radiation pattern polar plots at 2.4 GHz in the Y-Z plane.....	83