

(No Model.)

S. L. FOWLER.
ABDOMINAL SUPPORTER.

No. 606,410.

Patented June 28, 1898.

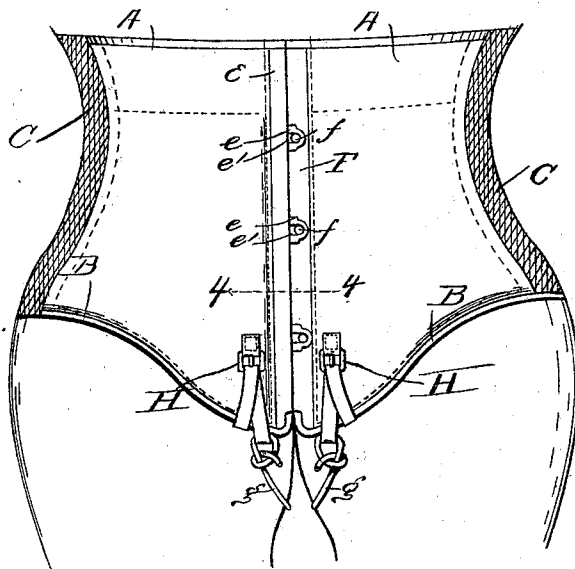


Fig. 1.

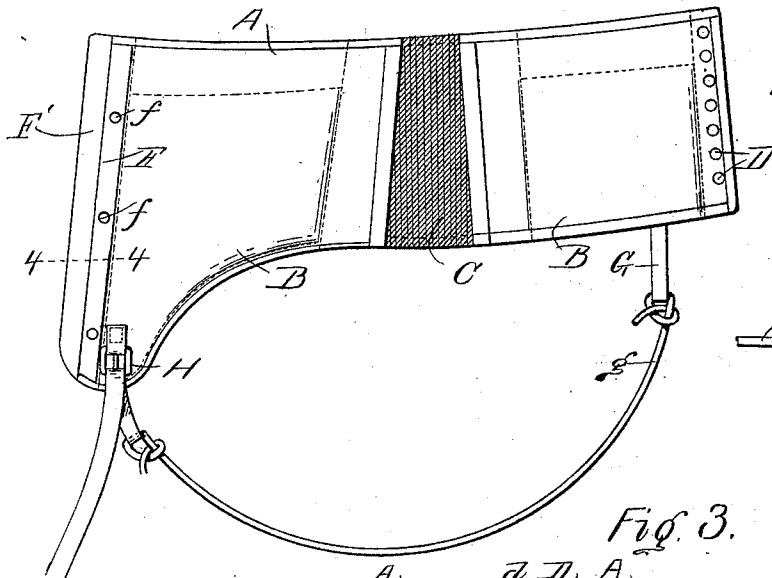


Fig. 2.

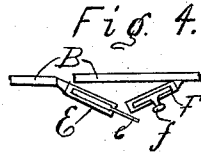


Fig. 4.

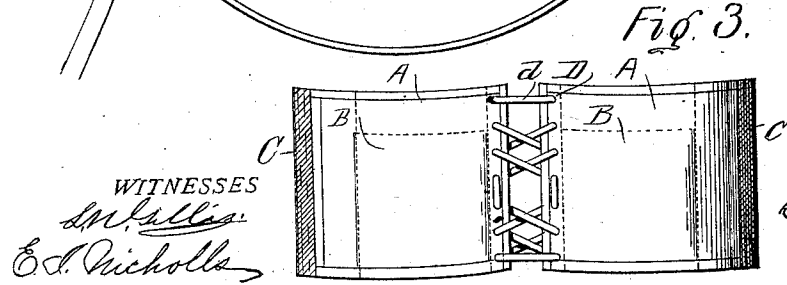


Fig. 3.

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SUSANNAH L. FOWLER, OF KENSINGTON, MARYLAND.

ABDOMINAL SUPPORTER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 606,410, dated June 28, 1898.

Application filed August 13, 1897. Serial No. 648,109. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, SUSANNAH L. FOWLER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Kensington, in the county of Montgomery and State of Maryland, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Abdominal Supporters; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention relates to an improvement in abdominal supporters, and more especially to that class intended for use during convalescence following a surgical operation, such as laparotomy.

In a large number of instances surgeons desire a supporter for their patients which can be made to support a certain portion of the anatomy or some particular organ in addition to affording a general support, and the supporters now in use are not suited to this purpose for several reasons.

The object of my invention is the provision of a supporter, which shall be readily adjustable to the form of the wearer and which shall give support to weak portions of the anatomy without binding or otherwise interfering with the free movement of the body in any desired direction.

Another object is the provision of a supporter which shall retain the parts in a fixed position while healing after an operation. This is a very desirable feature and very necessary. A source of danger in many operations is the tendency of the internal organs to force themselves outward through the incision made by the operator, thus producing rupture and other dangerous complications. The prevention of this is one of the objects of my invention, and I accomplish the same by the construction shown in the accompanying drawings, wherein like letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in the several views, in which—

Figure 1 is a front view of my supporter. Fig. 2 is a side view; Fig. 3, a view of the back; and Fig. 4 is an enlarged section on line 4 4, Fig. 1.

In the drawings, A designates the two sections of the supporter, composed of any suitable material, preferably textile.

B are pads constructed of some stiff material, preferably buckram. The use of buckram or other material of a like character affords sufficient stiffening and permits of the circulation of air. Attention to sanitation must be given, as the constant use of the supporter is sure to produce unpleasant odors and other offensive features if proper precautions are neglected. For this reason all solid or dense material is absolutely to be prohibited.

The pads are broad and flat and located and shaped to extend well down the abdomen and be drawn in to fit the contour thereof at their lower ends. On account of the extended pad, adapted to be fitted to the shape of the abdomen, they exert a pressure at the sides of the incision and hold the incision in the proper closed condition for healing. The arrangement of the pads is effected by securing them in pockets on the outer face of the supporter, constructed by stitching a number of pieces of silk or other smooth fabric of the form and size to be determined by the needs of the particular case to the face of the supporter and inclosing the pad, previously cut to a form to correspond with the size and shape of the pocket within them. The number of pads may thus be controlled by the wants of the wearer and may be shifted from point to point without injury to the rest of the supporter. Silk is preferred for the pockets, because of the smooth finish it gives, but any desired material may be used.

Inserted in the side of each section of the supporter is an elastic web C, the use of which at this point is obvious. For additional support at this point the construction may be altered by inserting the elastic web in the center of the section only, closing the top and bottom by continuing the ducking across the top and bottom, as shown in dotted lines in Fig. 2. At the rear a suitable securing means is provided, such as a lace *d*, preferably elastic, threaded through eyelets D in the ends of the sections.

To the forward end of one of the sections is secured along the edge thereof a thin metal plate E, provided with lugs *e'*, adapted to engage with studs *f* on a similar plate, secured flexibly to the other section back from the edge by means of an inclosing pocket F, which

is affixed to the said second section by sewing it at the top and bottom and at the rear edge, as indicated at f' . One edge of the pocket being thus left free permits of its being grasped in the operation of fastening. The front portion of the section underlying this plate is stiffened and forms a flap F' , which when the two sections are brought together extends to the front edge of the pad B in the first section and affords additional strength to that portion of the supporter which is directly over the incision, thereby insuring against the danger heretofore described of the forcing of the incision, and also serves to prevent discomfort or injury to the wearer which would otherwise result from inward pressure of the metallic fastening means. The two plates coming together at this point also makes it impossible for the internal organs to press their way out of the incision. The importance of this reinforcement at this point will be more apparent when it is understood that a majority of the operations require the incision to be made at a point of the abdomen which would fall directly beneath that point of reinforcement. In operations at other points of the abdomen special supporters are required and the reinforcement is placed accordingly.

Sewed to the rear of each section near the extremity of the same is a band of tape G of sufficient length to permit of its being fastened to a piece of small rubber tubing g . Similar pieces of tape are fastened to the other end of each piece of tubing as a means of fastening the same within buckles secured to the front of each section. After the supporter has been placed upon the wearer the rubber tubing is passed between the legs of the patient and then drawn up in front, and the tape on the free end is passed through the buckle H and after being drawn as tight as desired secured therein. The buckles may be dispensed with entirely, however, and both of the tapes secured direct to the supporter.

When the supporter is thus adjusted and the tapes drawn tight, the lower part of the supporter is drawn well down and close into the body at the lower portion of the abdomen and acts as a support for all of the abdomen, at the same time giving support to all of the other parts desired to be supported. Prolapsus uteri and other kindred complaints can be treated successfully in this manner.

The rubber tubing can be replaced with straps or tape or elastic bands; but I prefer the tubing, because it presents a rounded surface to the wearer at all points, thus avoiding all chafing or cutting of the parts, and for the further reason that it can be washed without injury or inconvenience and is cheap and durable.

The supporter can be made in sizes or can be fitted to measure, according to the taste and means of the wearer. A neat appearance is secured by finishing the edges in silk braid.

I am aware that many minor changes can be made in the construction and arrangement of the several parts without departing from the spirit of my invention.

Having now described my invention, what I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

An abdominal bandage for use after laparotomy comprising two flexible sections A each having a substantially horizontal upper edge and curved lower edge, an elastic web C intermediate the front and rear, steels E provided with fastening devices to unite the fronts, a flap located on one section underlying the steels, textile pads B placed parallel to the front steels, a lacing device for the back of the bandage, and perineal straps G, g .

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

SUSANNAH L. FOWLER.

Witnesses:

J. ENOS RAY, Jr.,
S. DANA LINCOLN.