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Avery

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[54] **CONTACT LENS CATCHING MEANS**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **224/5 Y**; 224/5 R; 224/5 H; 224/26 R; 248/99

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A45c 11/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 224/5 Y, 5 H, 5 Q, 517 A, 224/5 R, 25 R, 26 G; 248/99, 444; 2/49 A, 453, 174, 50; 4/159; 223/106

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A flexible wire hoop is disclosed with a lightweight fabric net being positioned over the hoop and a link member connecting the hoop to a C-shaped spring wire neck clamp attachable to a user's neck so that contact lens dropped from the user's eye falls into the net which is solely retained by means of the C-shaped clamp; in another embodiment, the link member is provided with a mouthpiece by which the net is suspended beneath the user's head to position the net to receive a dropped contact lens. A cord from the C-shaped neck clamp or mouthpiece extends directly across and is clamped to the opposite side of the flexible wire hoop to provide additional support and a mirror is placed in the bottom of the net.

2 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures

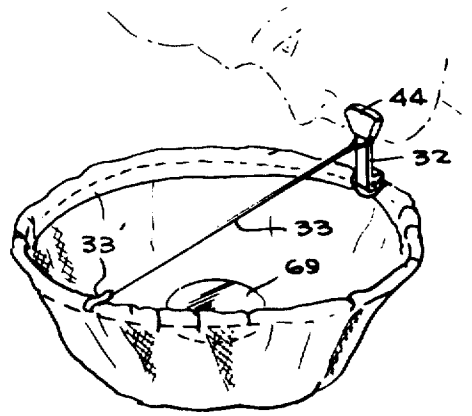


Fig-1

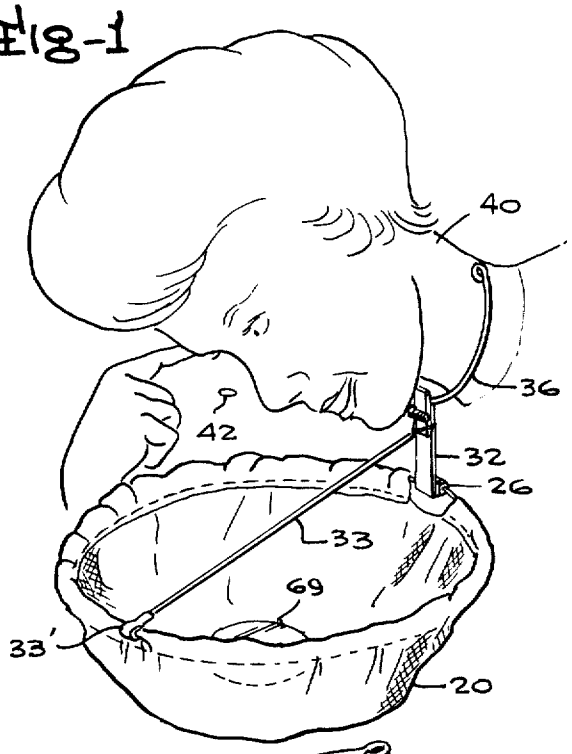
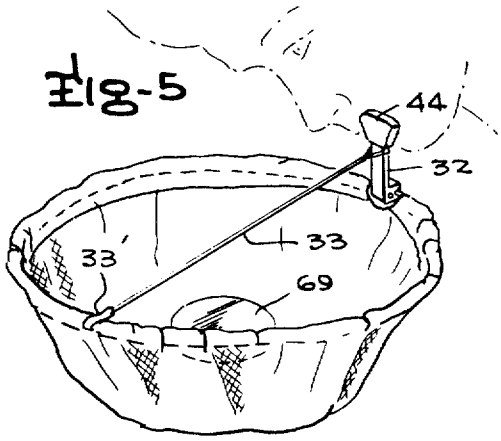


Fig-5



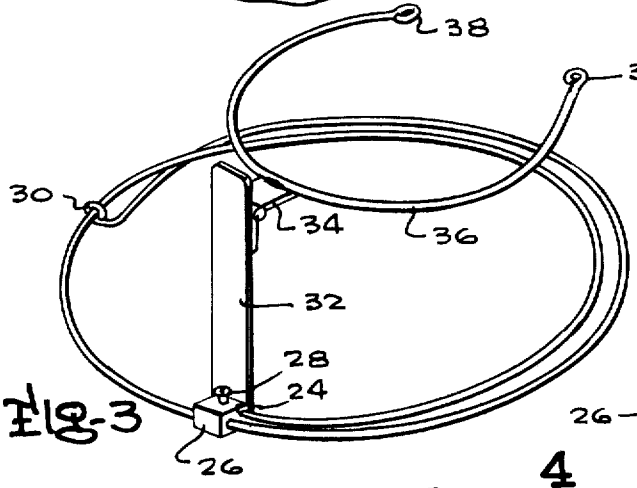


Fig-3

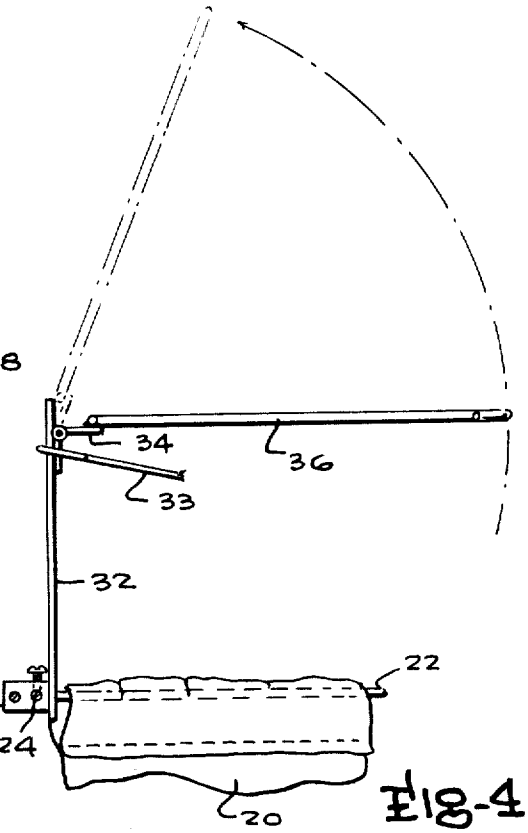


Fig-4

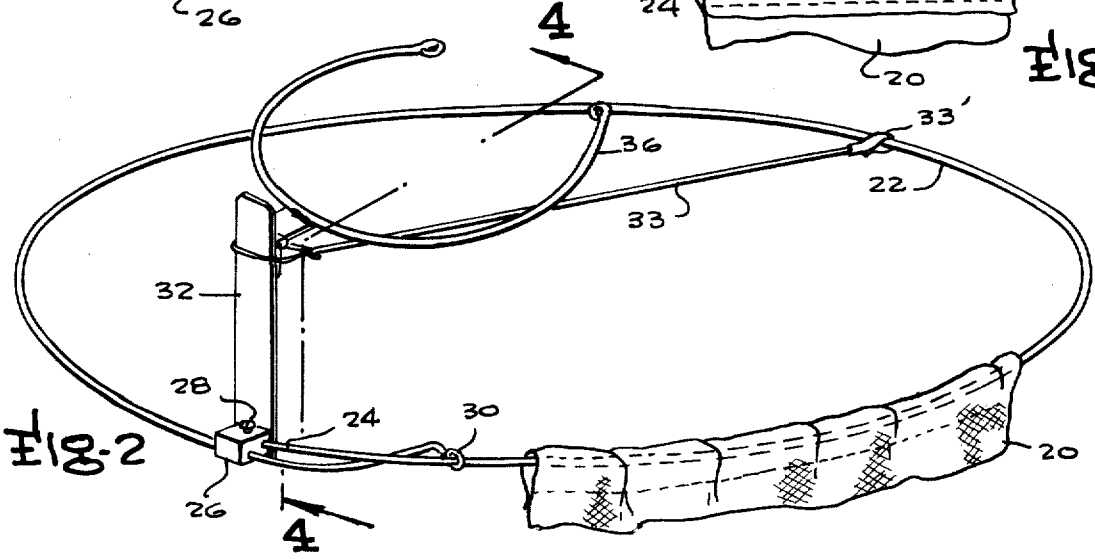


Fig-2

CONTACT LENS CATCHING MEANS

This invention is in the field of personal convenience items and is specifically directed to means for enabling an easy removal or insertion of contact lens with no danger of loss of the lens.

Removal of contact lens from a wearer's eyes is frequently necessary and is normally accomplished by a bending of the wearer's head forwardly followed by a manipulation of the eye which releases the lens to permit it to fall downwardly away from the eye. Unfortunately, while the actual release of the lens from the wearer's eye is a relatively simple matter, the removal of the lens is fraught with substantial difficulty due to the fact that the lens frequently falls in an erratic manner so that the user fails to catch, or drops, the lens.

A similar problem arises in connection with the insertion of contact lens in the user's eye since this operation frequently results in the dropping of the lens. In any event, a dropped contact lens can result in great inconvenience and possible total loss of the lens since the smallness and transparency of a contact lens renders it extremely difficult to find when resting on certain type surfaces. Moreover, the lens seem to have a propensity for falling in inaccessible places such as cracks, drains in lavatories and the like. The problem is rendered all the more acute by virtue of the fact that removal of the lens from a wearer's eyes usually has an adverse affect upon the wearer's vision so as to render finding of the lens all the more difficult. Consequently, many contact lens are lost and never found and must be replaced at substantial cost to the wearer.

Therefore, it is the primary object of this invention to provide a new and improved means for preventing the loss of contact lens.

Achievement of the object of this invention is enabled through the provision of a soft net member mounted on a wire hoop that can be supported from the wearer's body by means of a C-shaped neck clamp so as to position the net beneath the user's eyes when the wearer's head is tilted forwardly to the position from which the contact lens can be released from, or inserted in, the eye. Release of the lens from the wearer's eyes, or inadvertent dropping of the lens during attempted insertion of the lens, results in the lens falling downwardly into the net. The net is of substantial size so as to insure that the lens will fall within its confines. Moreover, the net is supported by an adjustable wire hoop member so that the diameter of the wire hoop can be varied to consequently vary the area beneath the wearer's head into which the lens can fall into the net.

In another embodiment of the invention, the hoop supporting the net is connected by a link mmber to a mouthpiece receivable in the wearer's mouth for holding the net beneath the wearer's head to receive the released contact lens.

A better understanding of the subject invention will be achieved when the follwong written description is considered in conjunction with the appended drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective veiw illustrating the manner of use of a first embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of portions of the first embodiment with parts removed to illustrate the construction of the net supporting members with the hoop in an enlarged condition of adjustment;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the first embodiment illustrating the hoop member in a reduced size condition of adjustment in which the hoop member has a small diameter;

FIG. 4 is a side elevational view of a portion of the first embodiment; and

FIG. 5 is a perspective view illustrating a second embodiment of the invention.

The first embodiment of the invention is illustrated in FIGS. 1 through 4 and attention is initially invited to FIG. 2 which illustrates all of the components of this embodiment. A support member is provided for a net 20 with the support member comprising an adjustable wire hoop 22 over which the net 20 is fastened. Hoop 22 has a first end 24 receivable in an aperture in a bail mounting member comprising a metal connector block member 26 with the end 24 being fixed in the block by means of a set screw 28 communicating with the aperture in which the end 24 is inserted. The end of hoop 22 opposite the end 24 extends through a slide aperture in block 26 outwardly of the aperture in which end 24 is inserted and the extreme end of the hoop is provided with a bent eyelet portion 30 which encircles the hoop 22 as clearly shown in FIG. 2. Eyelet portion 30 does not tightly engage hoop 22 so that the eyelet can slide along the hoop and the hoop can slide in the slide aperture in block 26 so as to adjust the diameter of the hoop. For example, FIG. 2 illustrates the hoop in an enlarged position of adjustment in which the diameter is quite substantial with eyelet 30 being adjacent connector block 26 and FIG. 3 illustrates the hoop in a second position in which the eyelet portion 30 has been moved around a substantial portion of the hoop 22 so as to provide a resultant hoop constructionn of greatly lessened diameter as compared to the hoop of FIG. 2.

The connector block member 26 is connected to a link member 32 extending upwardly therefrom with a hinge 34 being attached to the upper end of the link. A C-shaped neck clamp 36 in the form of a wire member is affixed to the hinge 34 with the ends of the C-shaped neck clamp 36 being provided with rounded eyelet portion 38 as clearly shown in FIG. 3. C-shaped clamp 36 is dimensioned so as to be easily received about the neck of a wearer 40 so as to provide support for the link 32 and the net 20 as clearly shown in FIG. 1. A cord 33 having a clamp 33 releasably engaging hoop 22 on one end is fixed on its other end to link 32 to provide additional support for hoop 22. Attachment of the device to the wearer's neck is shown in FIG. 1 and enables the easy removal of a contact lens such as lens 42 illustrated in FIG. 1. Moreover, the device can also be effectively employed when positioning a contact lens in the eye of a wearer in order to catch the lens in the event it should be accidentally dropped.

The hinge 34 enables the device to be folded down to a more compact size and in conjunction with the adjustability of the hoop 22 enables the device to be carried in a relatively small space such as a purse or other suitable holding container.

An optional mirror 69 can be affixed to the bottom of net 20 if desired.

FIG. 5 illustrates a second embodiment of the invention that is identical to the first embodiment in all respects with the exception that a mouthpiece 42 is employed in place of the C-shaped clamp 36 and hinge 34. Such a mouthpiece is receivable in the user's mouth for supporting the net 20 beneath the user's eyes in the same manner as the first embodiment as shown in FIG. 5.

Numerous modifications of the invention will occur to those of skill in the art. For example, the link member **32** could be attached to the connector block **26** by means of a slide clamp type coupling to enable vertical adjustment of the link with respect to the member **26**. Also, the device could be modified such as to include a mirror either supported in the net or on the hoop **22** for aiding the user in removing a contact lens. In addition, numerous parts could be formed of plastic or the like rather than metal. Therefore, it should be understood that the spirit and scope of the invention should be limited solely in light of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A contact lens receiving means for catching a contact lens released from a wearer's eye comprising net mounting means comprising a flexible wire bail supporting a soft flexible net member, wearer engaging holding means engageable with the wearer comprising a mouthpiece receivable in the mouth of the wearer for unaided retention on the wearer and linkage means connecting said flexible wire bail and said mouthpiece

for positioning said net beneath the wearer's eyes when the wearer's head is oriented to release a contact lens to fall from the wearer's eye so that the released lens falls into said net wherein said linkage means includes a bail mounting member to which one end of said bail is fixedly connected, a slide aperture extending through said bail mounting member with said bail extending outwardly from said fixed connection in a circular manner back to and through said slide aperture and eyelet means formed on the end of said bail member opposite the end connected to said mounting member for enabling manipulation of said bail to adjust the diameter thereof.

2. The invention of claim **1** additionally including a mirror mounted in the bottom of the net and cord means having one end extending from said linkage means across and above the net and attached on its other end to said hoop for providing support for said hoop.

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