

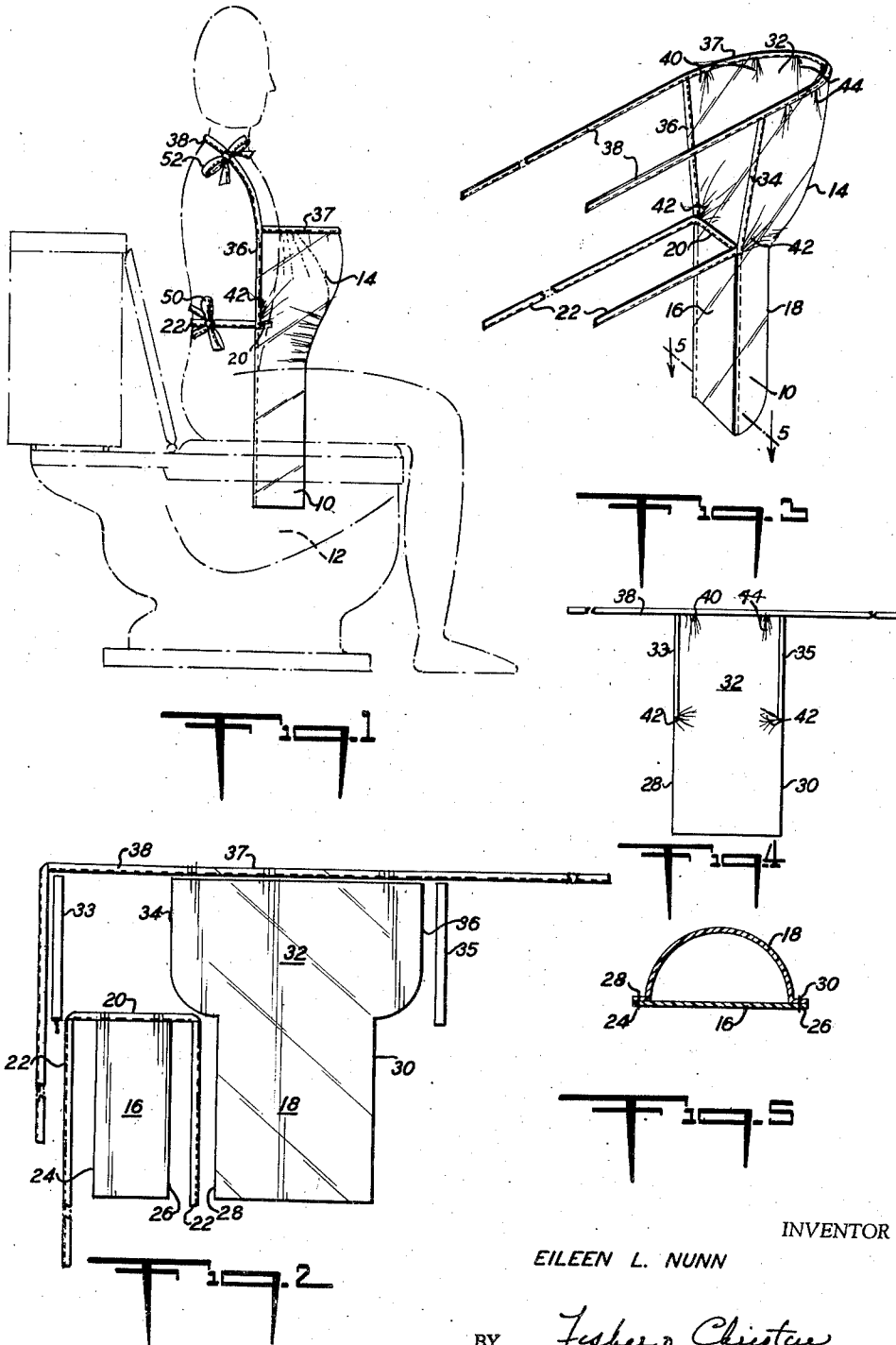
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COLOSTOMY APRON

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COLOSTOMY APRON

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This invention relates to devices for colostomy patients to assist in the performance of the elimination function.

In many cases, the elimination function for a colostomy patient is a tedious one occupying a considerable period of time. Surgeons having a number of patients of this type indicate that one of their most difficult problems is in post-operative psychological care. The patient, having performed his elimination function in a normal manner until the time of the operation, now realizes that he must undergo a radical change in his daily routine with attendant discomforts and inconveniences. In most cases this has an undesirable effect on the patient's state of mind and his attitude toward his future life and ability to relax during this function.

Accordingly, it is the initial object of the invention to provide a colostomy apron which will permit the patient to eliminate in much the same manner to which he was accustomed. To this end it is necessary to provide a light weight apron having no uncomfortable metal parts and which can be comfortably worn while the patient assumes a normal sitting position, thoroughly relaxed, over the toilet bowl.

Considerable experimentation was necessary involving a large number of unsuccessful experimental apron models. Ultimately an apron was developed having a chute, a portion of the top edge of which could be tied tightly against the body of the wearer immediately below the colostomy button by straps extending around the waist of the patient. The chute portion would extend from the waist between the patient's legs and into the toilet toilet bowl. In order to hold the chute open, the remaining portion of the top edge which should project away from the body is extended upwardly and terminates at the stomach area of the patient. The edges of the extension are curved and are reinforced by being pleated into a facing at the location where the curved edges join the chute. The top edge is gathered and a strap fixed across the top edge. The strap is long enough to extend loosely around the neck of the patient where it can be tied. When the strap is tied, the vertical reinforced edges fit snugly against the upper portion of the body. Thus the outer top is flat and easily washed down with water during irrigation.

It is an object of my invention to provide a light weight plastic apron which is easy to use, convenient to maintain clean during and after the elimination operation and permits the patient to closely approximate a normal elimination function.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a colostomy apron by which the unpleasant odors are substantially eliminated during the irrigation or elimination process.

It is yet another object of the invention to provide a flexible colostomy apron which is not required to be held in the hands of the user thus permitting the patient to perform the washing operation as well as any other operations requiring use of the hands such as holding book or paper to read.

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It is still another object of the invention to provide a flexible plastic colostomy apron which dries quickly and which may conveniently be folded into a small package and carried unobtrusively by the user.

These and other objects will become more readily apparent from the following detailed description of the invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is an elevational view showing the invention in use,

Fig. 2 is a plan view showing the elements from which the apron is constructed,

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the invention,

Fig. 4 is a plan view showing an intermediate step in the formation of the apron, and

Fig. 5 is a cross sectional view along lines 5—5 of Fig. 3.

The apron according to the present invention is best shown in Figs. 2 and 3. It consists principally of two thin polyethylene sheets which are stitched together or otherwise secured together in known manner to form the apron of Fig. 3. Straps are applied for fitting the apron snugly to the body of the wearer.

The invention consists principally of a lower part 10 which is in the form of a chute for permitting the waste material to pass into the bowl of toilet 12 shown in Fig. 1.

The upper portion 14 substantially encloses the front portion of the stomach region of the body of the wearer when in use.

The apron is constructed from a first sheet 16 of polyethylene or like material and a second considerably larger sheet 18 of the same material. The upper edge 20 of the smaller sheet 16 is reinforced by stitching a polyethylene binding 22 long enough to make straps along the edge. The vertically extending edges 24 and 26 are stitched to the vertical edges 28 and 30 respectively of the larger sheet 18. The width of the larger sheet 18 is about twice as great as the width of the sheet 16 so that in use, the sheet 18 will bow outwardly as shown in Fig. 5 to form the chute.

The sheet 18 has an upper portion 32 which is bulge-shaped. The divergent edges 34 and 36 of the bulged portion are pleated at the bulge 42 and straight facings 33 and 35 are stitched on as shown in Fig. 4. It is important to form the pleats at 42 in order to give the apron strength allowing it to stand away from the patient, particularly for repeated washing down of the apron during the irrigation process.

The upper edge of the bulged portion is likewise reinforced in the manner of the upper edge of sheet 16, that is, by binding with a straight piece of some material long enough to make straps 38. It might be noted that the straps 22 and 38 are longer at one side of the apron than at the other to permit the apron to be tied conveniently at the side of the user rather than at the rear. When the strap 38 is sewed to the upper edge 37 of the larger sheet, the sheet is gathered as indicated at 40 and 44 in Fig. 3 so as to cause the sheet to take the concave-convex appearance shown in Figs. 1 and 3.

The operation of the invention is shown in Fig. 1. The chute 10 extends downwardly into the toilet bowl 12 as indicated above. The upper portion 14 covers the front of the body of the wearer. When strap 22 is tied as indicated at 50, the top edge 20 of sheet member 16 fits snugly against the body of the wearer below the colostomy opening. Drainage from the opening passes over the edge 20 into the chute 10.

Straps 38 are tied as at 52 to the correct length to slip over the head, after the water has been taken. When once tied to fit the patient, straps 38 may remain tied between uses. The top edge 37 remains hanging loosely away from the stomach of the wearer so that washing

water may be poured through the opening provided between the edge 37 and the stomach of the wearer to clean the apron during the irrigation process.

Between washing operations, the patient may hold the edge 37 against his stomach thereby completely sealing the top portion of the apron against escape of unpleasant odors. The seal is perfected by the edge 20 of the chute 10, the edges 34 and 36 of the upper portion of the apron and the edge 37 being held against the stomach of the wearer in the position shown in broken lines in Fig. 1.

In operation, it is preferred to tie straps 22 around the waist so that upper edge 20 fits snugly against the lower abdomen of the patient immediately below the colostomy opening. The upper portion 32 is allowed to lie loosely across the knees of the patient at this stage. After irrigating water has been introduced into the colostomy opening the loop formed by tied strap 38 is slipped easily over the head of the patient to lie around the back of his neck, thereby drawing edges 34 and 36 against the stomach of the wearer. The bulged portion 32 is allowed to stand away from the body of the patient, forming a funnel for the introduction of cleansing water.

In a general manner, while I have, in the above description, disclosed what I deem to be practical and efficient embodiments of my invention, it should be well understood that I do not wish to be limited thereto as there might be changes made in the arrangement, disposition and form of the parts without departing from the principle of the present invention as comprehended within the scope of the accompanying claims.

I claim:

1. A colostomy apron having an upper part and a lower part, comprising, a chute having an opening at the top and bottom and adapted to extend downwardly from the waist of the user into a toilet bowl to form the lower part of said apron, said upper part of said apron being formed by a sheet of flexible material extending upwardly, bulging outwardly, and terminating at the stomach area of the user, said upper part being connected to said chute, and means intermediate said upper and lower parts of said apron for snugly fixing a portion of the top edge of said chute against the waist of the user immediately below the colostomy opening.

2. A colostomy apron comprising, a lower part and an upper part integral with the lower part, said lower part consisting of a chute having straps for tying a portion of the upper edge thereof against the lower abdomen

of the user, said upper part forming an extension of the remaining portion of said chute and terminating at the stomach area of the user, said upper part having upwardly extending edges, and means for fitting said upwardly extending edges snugly against the body of the user, leaving only the top edge open for admitting irrigating and cleaning water, said last named means comprising a strap fixed across said top edge and having projecting lengths at either end to tie around the neck of the user.

3. An apron according to claim 2 in which said top part is flexible material whereby said top edge may be pressed against the stomach of the user to confine objectionable odors inside the apron.

4. A colostomy apron of flexible material comprising, a chute of flexible material having an opening at the top and bottom, means for fitting a portion of the upper edge of said chute snugly against the abdomen of the user below the colostomy, an upper closure part forming an integral extension of said chute and having upwardly extending edges, and means forming gathers in said upper closure part at the bottom of said upwardly extending edges, to assist in bowing said upper part out away from the body of the user.

5. A colostomy apron comprising, a first elongated strip of flexible material forming the rearward portion of a chute having an opening at the top and bottom, a second sheet of flexible material having a lower rectangular portion with two opposing edges thereof fixed to the longer edges of said first sheet to form said chute, and having an upper bulge-shaped portion adapted to enclose the front upper body portion of the user, and means for attaching the upper edge of said first strip snugly below the colostomy of the user.

6. An apron according to claim 5 further comprising waist straps fixed to the top of said first sheet for tying the top edge of said first sheet against the body of the user, and stitched neck straps for tying and pulling the lateral edges of said bulge-shaped portion against the body of the user, whereby said stitched ties do not loosen during use.

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