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(54) **PADDED KNEE AND ELBOW REST FOR OUTER BATHTUB WALL**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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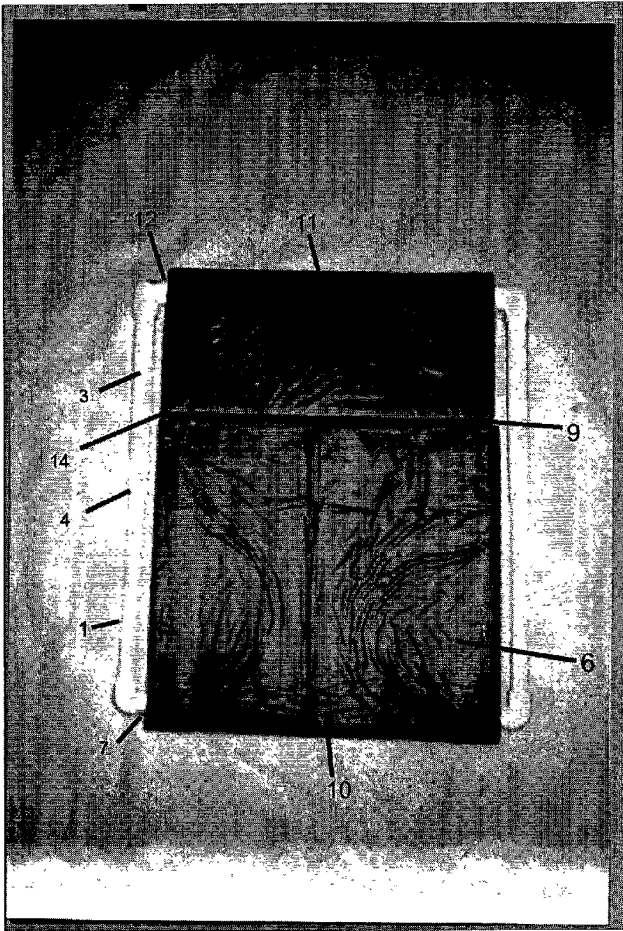
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The invention relates to a padded knee and elbow rest for use with the outer wall of a bathtub. The invention has particular application for people that use a bathtub to bathe their child or pet, or who assist in the bathing of persons with reduced mobility, and provides padded cushions for the user's elbows and knees while the user is, at the side of a bathtub, thereby lessening the strain and discomfort to knees and elbows that can result from kneeling on a bathroom floor and leaning on the top of a bathtub wall, and also reduces the likelihood of slipping on a wet floor or bathtub wall and injuring the user or the person being bathed or damaging the thing of interest within the tub. The device can be easily wiped clean, repels moisture and can be folded into a compact unit for storage.



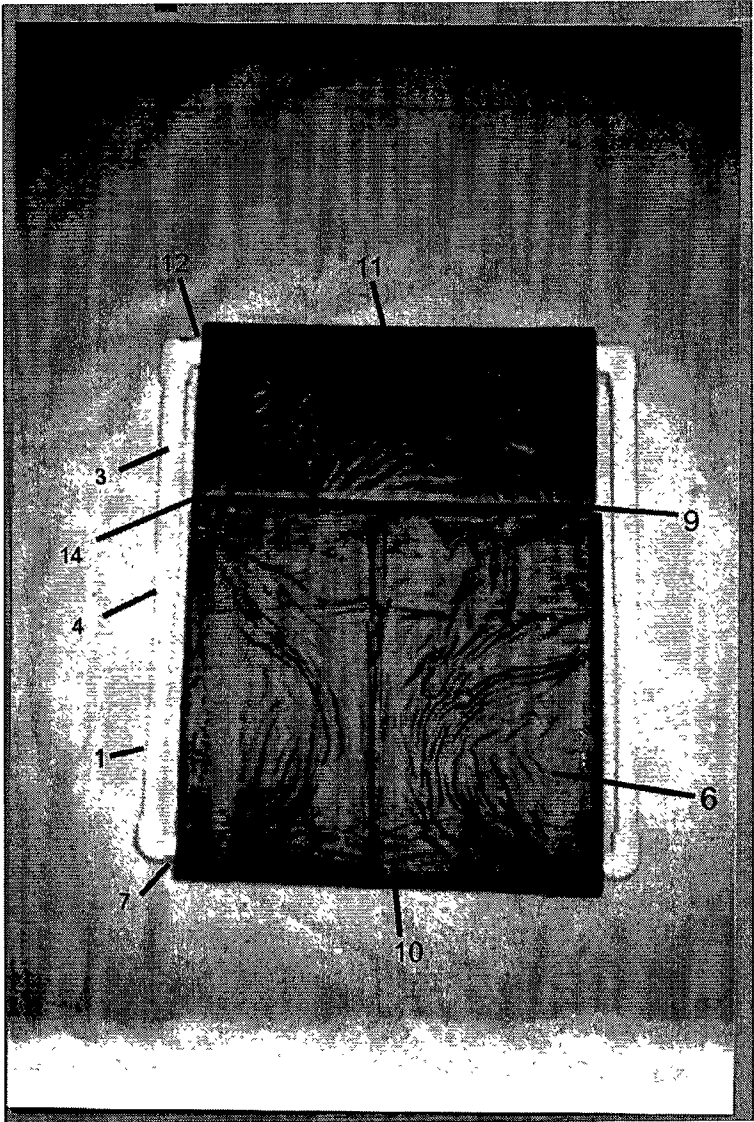


FIGURE 1

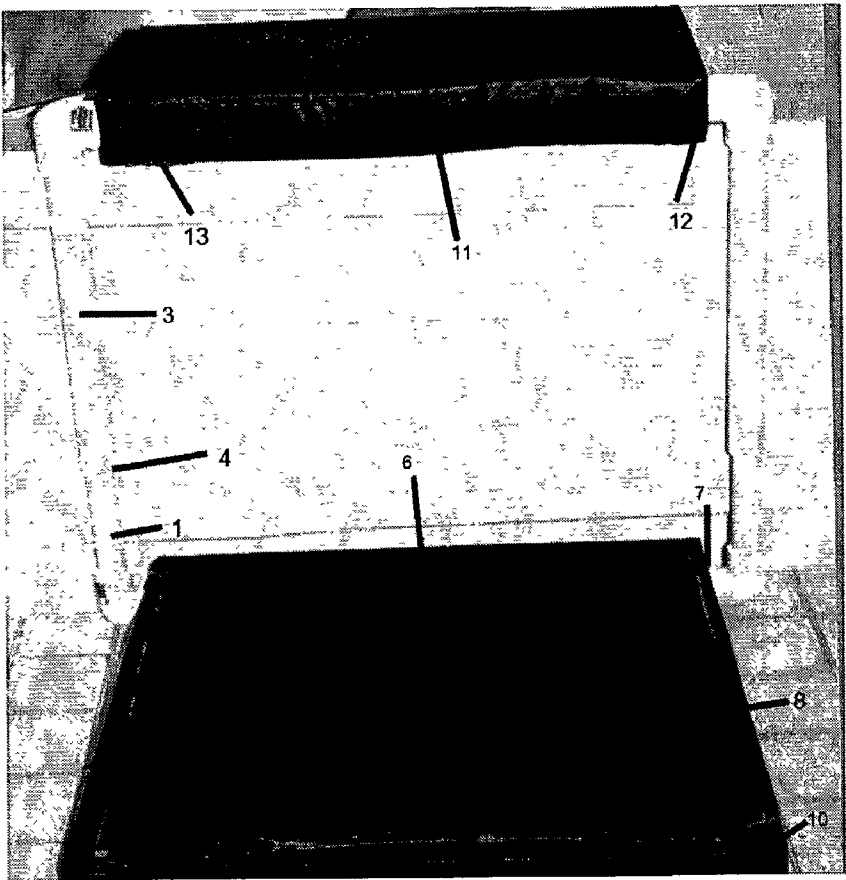


FIGURE 2

PADDED KNEE AND ELBOW REST FOR OUTER BATHTUB WALL

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The invention relates to the field of cushions, padding and comfort devices and to home care. In particular, the invention, in one embodiment, is a device comprised of padded cushions attached to a frame that is used in conjunction with the outer wall of a bathtub to provide a knee and elbow rest to a person who is attending to the contents of the tub, most typically care of another person.

[0002] The invention has particular application, but is not thereby limited, in the field of bathroom accessories and cleaning aids, where it is useful to use a device with padded cushions for kneeling and leaning on that is convenient, compact, easy to store, easy to clean, water resistant, durable and comfortable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] It is commonly understood that padding may be used to protect and provide comfort to the knees and elbows of an individual. Padding may be attached directly to the person, as in the knee-pads and elbow-pads typically seen in sports like volleyball, soccer, hockey, and kick-boxing, and in occupations that require workers to kneel, such as cleaning, painting and construction. Padding may also be placed directly on the floor or ground, such as the mats used in Judo studio floors, wrestling rings, and portable tumbling mats used in gymnastics and other sports.

[0004] The use of a padding device with the wall of a bathtub has also been known. See U.S. Pat. No. 5,313,675, which is comprised of a one-piece, foldable, padded bath aid device with kneeling section, elbow rest and storage area for hanging over a tub's edge, and U.S. Pat. No. 4,937,897, another one-piece folding, padded, collapsible-for-storage, kneeling pad for hanging over the edge of bathtubs, comprised of a plurality of connected cushions with a pocket area. Also see U.S. Pat. No. 4,385,408, a sanitary and washable padded cushioning apparatus for attachment to a sink bowl's edge. These items lack stability, are "floppy", and may be hard to clean or store, lack adjustability, and lack structure.

[0005] It is also known to use a supporting frame with a padding device for bathtubs. See U.S. Pat. No. 4,356,575, which is comprised of a multi-component rigid tubular-framed kneeling appliance with small removable elbow and knee cushions that is designed to rest against the outer wall of a bathtub on the floor. Also see U.S. Pat. No. 5,642,535 (corresponding Canadian Patent No. 2239804), comprised of a complex apparatus to provide a foldable seating and kneeling appliance to hang on a tub's rim; and U.S. Pat. No. 5,983,418, another complex mechanical apparatus providing similar seating and kneeling assembly with adjustable seat and arm rest to hang on the rim of a tub. These inventions, while addressing some of the problems of providing cleanable, portable, padded environments around a tub, are complex, large, difficult to store, and may have hard horizontal surfaces which are not padded along with their provided padding, and thus are not completely successful at providing a solution to the problems identified.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] It is an object of the invention to overcome limitations in the prior art of padding and cushion rest devices

for the wall of a bathtub. The prior art inadequately addresses the need for an affordable, tub-compatible, durable, water-resistant, comfortable and easy to store device. None of the prior art discloses a practical invention that effectively utilizes a folding framed padded knee and elbow rest that is adjustable and compact.

[0007] The invention relates to a padded knee and elbow rest for use with the outer wall of a bathtub. The invention has particular application for people that use a bathtub to bathe their child or pet, or who assist in the bathing of persons with reduced mobility.

[0008] The invention enables the user to rest the user's knees and elbows on padded cushions while, for example, bathing a child, a pet or a person unable to bath themselves, or while washing their hair or scrubbing the bathtub (obviously, it may be used in conjunction with other uses of the bathtub on which it is temporarily installed). This thereby lessens the strain and discomfort to the user's knees and elbows which results from kneeling on the floor and leaning on the top of a bathtub wall. It also reduces the likelihood of slipping and sliding on a wet floor or a bathtub wall and possibly injuring the user or the person being bathed or damaging the thing of interest within the tub. Essentially, the invention provides a buffer between the user's knees and elbows and the hard surface of the floor and bathtub wall, it can be easily wiped clean, it repels moisture and it can be folded into a compact unit for easy storage.

[0009] These and other objects and advantages of the invention are apparent in the following description of an embodiment of the invention, which is not intended to limit in any way the scope or the claims of the invention.

[0010] Other aspects and features of the present invention will become apparent to those ordinarily skilled in the art upon review of the following description of specific embodiments of the invention in conjunction with the accompanying figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] Embodiments of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the attached Figures, wherein:

[0012] **FIG. 1** is a photographic view of an embodiment of the invention (not in use).

[0013] **FIG. 2** is a photographic view of an embodiment of the invention (in use).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0014] The following described embodiment of the invention displays a preferred composition but is not intended to limit the scope of the invention. It will be obvious to those skilled in the art that variations and modifications may be made without departing from the scope and essential elements of the invention.

[0015] This particular embodiment of the invention is comprised, in summary, of the following components: lower tubular frame with spring-clip or similar pins; upper tubular frame with hollow ends and plurality of pin receiving holes; padded knee rest with lower frame receiving area, knee rest gripping area, knee rest attaching means and handle; padded

elbow rest with upper frame receiving area, elbow rest gripping area and elbow rest attaching means.

[0016] FIG. 1 illustrates an embodiment of the invention not in use, comprised of lower tubular frame 1 with retaining pins 2 (not shown); upper tubular frame 3 with hollow ends 4 and plurality of pin receiving holes 5 (not shown); padded knee rest 6 with lower frame receiving area 7, knee rest gripping means 8 (not shown), knee rest attaching means 9 and handle 10; padded elbow rest 11 with upper frame receiving area 12, elbow rest gripping means 13 (not shown) and elbow rest attaching means 14 (not shown).

[0017] The lower tubular frame 1 is pushed through the lower frame receiving area 7 until the padded knee rest 6 is located roughly centered on the lower tubular frame 1. The upper tubular frame 3 is pushed through the upper frame receiving area 7 until the padded elbow rest 11 is positioned roughly centered on the upper tubular frame 3. Suitable retaining pins 2 are depressed and the ends of lower tubular frame 1 are inserted into the hollow ends 4 until the pins 2 protrude through the first set of pin receiving holes 5. The padded elbow rest 11 and the padded knee rest 6 are rotated until the elbow rest attaching means 14 and the knee rest attaching means 6 may be attached to each other. The handle 10 is used to carry the invention or to hang the invention.

[0018] FIG. 2 illustrates an embodiment of the invention in use with bathtub, comprised of lower tubular frame 1 with retaining pins 2 (not shown); upper tubular frame 3 with hollow ends 4 and plurality of pin receiving holes 5 (not shown); padded knee rest 6 with lower frame receiving area 7, knee rest gripping means 8, knee rest attaching means 9 (not shown) and handle 10; padded elbow rest 11 with upper frame receiving area 12, elbow rest gripping means 13 and elbow rest attaching means 14 (not shown).

[0019] To operate the knee rest attaching means 9 and the elbow rest attaching means 14 are first disengaged. The retaining pins 2 are depressed and the upper tubular frame 3 is pulled until the pins 2 protrude through a set of pin receiving holes 5 required to provide the necessary overall unit length such that the padded elbow rest 11 can be placed snugly on the top of the bathtub wall while the padded knee rest 6 remains flat on the floor and firmly pressed against the outer wall of the bathtub. The padded knee rest 6 is rotated until the knee rest gripping means 8 are facing the floor and the padded elbow rest 11 is rotated until the elbow rest gripping means 13 is facing the top of the outer bathtub wall. The padded knee rest 6 is pressed against the outer wall of the bathtub and is depressed with enough pressure that the knee rest gripping means 8 grips the floor, such that the padded knee rest 6 lies flat on the floor and does not easily shift from side to side or lift from the floor. The padded elbow rest 11 is placed on the top edge of the bathtub outer wall and depressed until the elbow rest gripping means 13 grips the top of the wall and the padded elbow rest 11 lies flat on the ledge and does not easily shift from side to side or lift from the top ledge of the bathtub wall.

[0020] All components used in the invention may be comprised of any suitable material or materials, including but not limited to: plastic, metal or aluminum for the upper and lower frames; any suitable pin-in-hole or similar engaging mechanism for the pins and receiving holes; foam with vinyl covering or similar construction for the padding; gripping strips or suction cups for the gripping means;

Velcro™ strips or snaps for the attaching means; and cloth, leather or plastic for the handle.

[0021] In the foregoing descriptions, the invention has been described in a known embodiment. However, it will be evident that various modifications and changes may be made without departing from the broader scope and spirit of the invention. Accordingly, the present specifications and embodiments are to be regarded as illustrative rather than restrictive.

[0022] The descriptions here are meant to be exemplary and not limiting. It is to be understood that a reader skilled in the art will derive from this descriptive material the concepts of this invention, and that there are a variety of other possible implementations; substitution of different specific components for those mentioned here will not be sufficient to differ from the invention described where the substituted components are functionally equivalent.

[0023] The above-described embodiments of the present invention are intended to be examples only. Alterations, modifications and variations may be effected to the particular embodiments by those of skill in the art without departing from the scope of the invention, which is defined solely by the claims appended hereto.

What is claimed is:

1. An adjustable demountable padded knee and elbow rest for attachment to a bathtub's outer wall, comprising:

- a. a lower frame with detachable washable padding for kneeling on the upper side with non-slip characteristics on the lower side when installed horizontally on the floor adjacent to the outer side of a bathtub's outer vertical wall;
- b. a middle frame of adjustable vertical length hingedly attached to the lower frame and deployed vertically adjacent to said same outer side;
- c. an upper frame with detachable washable padding for resting elbows on the upper side with non-slip characteristics on the lower side when installed roughly horizontally across the upper edge of said bathtubs outer vertical wall, said upper frame hingedly attached to said middle frame, and said lower side having demountable gripping or attaching means to be attached to said upper edge.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 where said middle frame is comprised of hollow tubular material assembled into a rectangular shape when assembled, comprised of an upper substantially "U" shaped part and a lower substantially "U" shaped part, the vertical legs of one "U" shaped part fitting slideably or telescopically within the vertical legs of the other "U" shaped part, the said parts being fitted with means to temporarily affix one part to the other thus forming a stable rectangular shaped middle frame of desired vertical height.

3. The apparatus of claim 2 where the means of affixing one part to the other comprises a pin removably fittable within one set of a series of sets of mating holes in the vertical legs of the "U" shaped parts, which when so fitted cause one part to be fixed to the other at a desired combined vertical height.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 where the demountable tub-gripping means comprises one of the following means: suction cups, non-skid coatings, Velcro™ strips installed on tub and padding, non-skid strips applied to lower side of padding.

5. The apparatus of claim 1 where the hinged attachments between middle, upper and lower frames are comprised of fabric sleeves within the padding elements within which matching horizontal tubing parts of the middle frame are rotatably fitted.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 which when demounted from said bathtub can be folded to a substantially flat package by deploying the upper, lower and middle frames in substantially parallel positions to each other for storage or transport, with a handle and means for fastening the apparatus in such a flattened deployment.

7. An adjustable demountable padded knee and elbow rest apparatus for attachment to a bathtub's outer wall comprising a lower frame of rigid tubular material of rectangular shape upon which is fitted a padding element with washable outer surface, said lower padded element being fitted as well with non-skid material in strips on the lower padded element's bottom side to engage with the floor upon which said lower padded element rests when the apparatus is mounted; a middle frame of rigid tubular material comprised of two mating "U" shaped elements which when mated are

engaged at their respective legs by insertion of one "U" shaped frame element's legs within the other element's legs telescopically and which when mated are capable of being fixed one to the other to a configured rectangular shaped middle unit with desired vertical height when mounted with said middle frame vertically deposited near to said bathtub's outer wall's outer surface; said middle frame hingedly attached to said lower frame and padding element at the middle frame's lower side, and hingedly attached to an upper frame element at the middle frame's upper side; said upper frame comprised of rigid tubular material formed into a rectangular shape and having mounted thereupon an upper padded element being fitted with a washable outer surface and as well with a means of non-skid attachment to said bathtub's outer wall's upper surface; said attachment means being chosen from among: non-skid strips, mating Velcro™ strips on tub and pad, suction cups on pad's lower surface, non-slip material.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 which when demounted from said bathtub can be folded to a flat package by deploying the upper, lower and middle frames in substantially parallel positions to each other for storage or transport, with a handle and means for fastening the apparatus in such a flattened deployment.

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