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(54) ORAL HYGIENE SYSTEM

(75) Inventors: **Randy D. LeTang**, Voorhees, NJ (US); **Dale Irby**, Sicklerville, NJ (US)

Correspondence Address:
JOHN F. LETCHFORD
ARCHER & GREINER, P.C., ONE CENENNIAL
SQUARE
HADDONFIELD, NJ 08033 (US)

(73) Assignee: **JEAN FINOLE, LLC**, Marlton, NJ (US)

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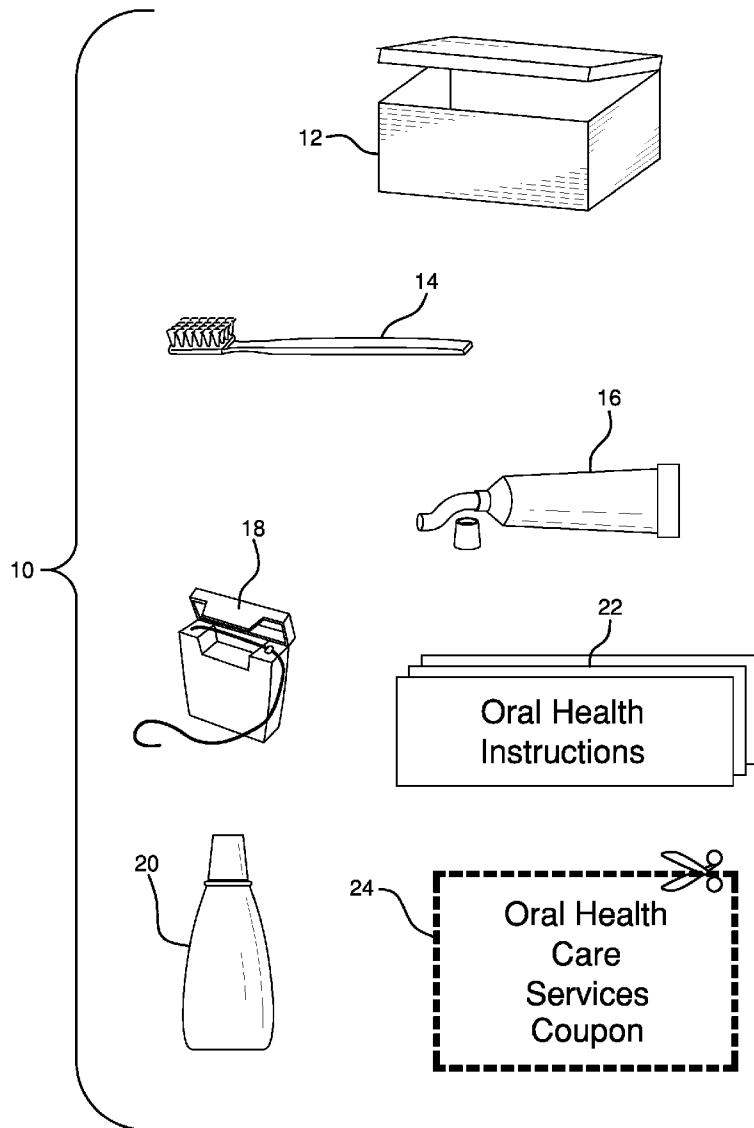
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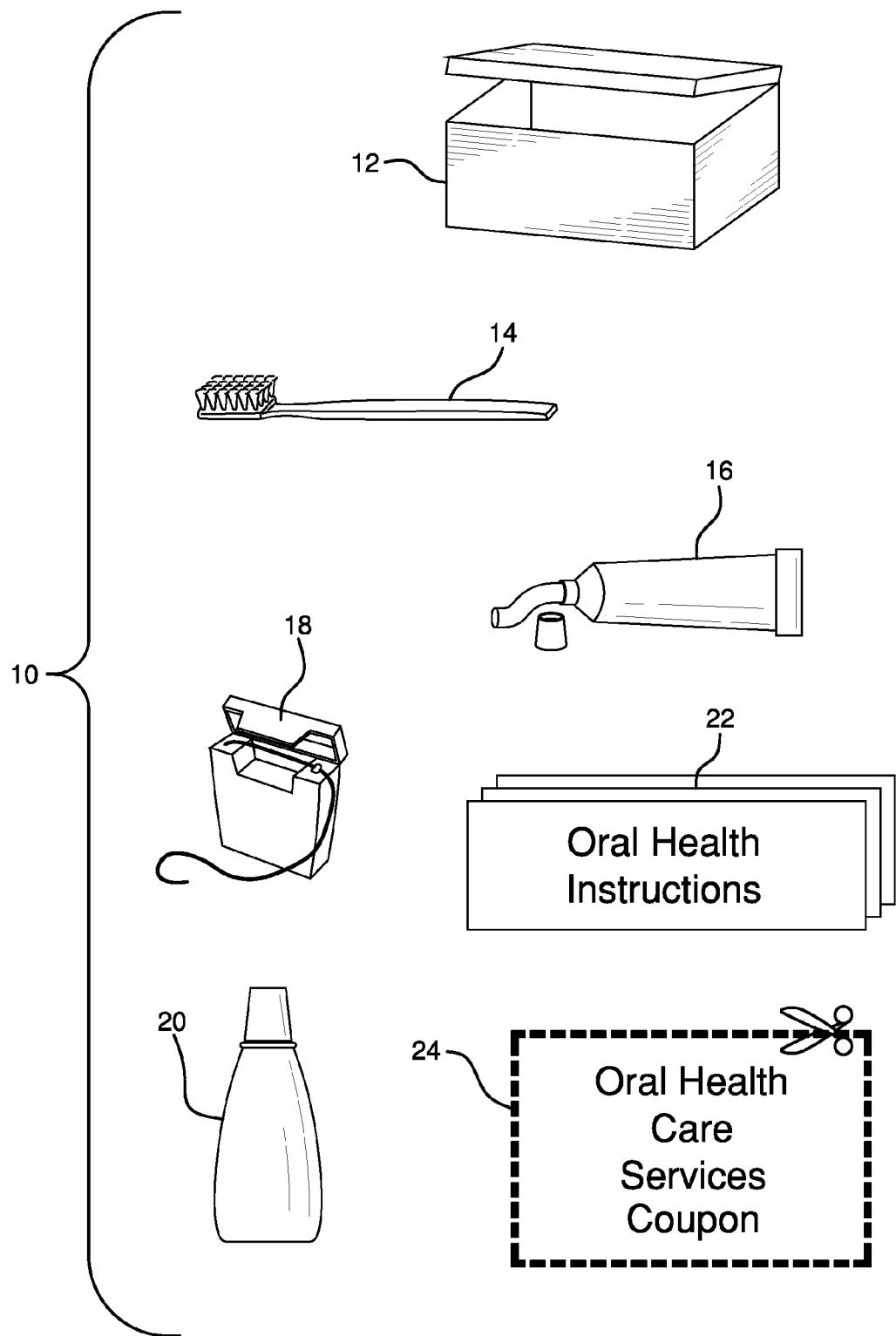
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An integrated oral health hygiene system including at least one oral health care product such as a tooth brush, dental floss and dental rinse/wash. In addition, the system includes instructions for using the oral health care product(s) and a coupon for providing a user access to at least one of discounted and complimentary medical professional services relating to oral health care.





ORAL HYGIENE SYSTEM

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 60/975,656, filed Sep. 27, 2007, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates in general to oral hygiene products and in particular to a comprehensive and fully integrated oral health maintenance regimen.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Currently, companies such as the Colgate-Palmolive Company and the Proctor & Gamble Company offer individually marketed oral hygiene products sold in branded form. For example, Proctor & Gamble offers a separately-sold toothpaste, mouth rinse and dental floss, each under the trademark Crest® Pro-Health®. Other examples include toothpaste and other promotional items which Proctor & Gamble and Colgate-Palmolive provide dental professionals in association with marketing efforts. However, heretofore, no entity has offered a complete oral hygiene care system in an integrated package including one or more oral hygiene products, instructions for proper usage of the oral hygiene products in accordance an oral health regimen and coupon means providing a user either or both of discounted or complimentary professional health services for facilitating access to medical care experts (dentists, physicians and the like) to ensure compliance with the regimen.

[0004] An advantage exists, therefore, for an oral hygiene system including one or more oral hygiene products, instructions for proper usage of the oral hygiene products in accordance an oral health regimen and coupon means providing a user either or both of discounted or complimentary professional health services for facilitating access to medical care experts (dentists, physicians, and the like) to ensure compliance with the regimen.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The present invention provides an oral hygiene system including one or more oral hygiene products, instructions for proper usage of the oral hygiene products in accordance an oral health regimen and coupon means providing a user either or both of discounted or complimentary professional health services for facilitating access to medical care experts (dentists, physicians, and the like) to ensure compliance with the regimen.

[0006] The goal of the invention is to disseminate emerging research which links overall oral health to the health of the body by capturing the attention of, educating, and providing the consumer with products and services which make up the foundation of an integrated oral health care regimen.

[0007] Other details, objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent as the following description

of the presently preferred embodiments and presently preferred methods of practicing the invention proceeds.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] The invention will become more readily apparent from the following description of preferred embodiments thereof shown, by way of example only, in the accompanying drawings wherein:

[0009] FIG. 1 is a package or kit representative of the oral hygiene system of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0010] Referring to the drawings wherein like or similar references indicate like or similar elements throughout the several views, there is shown in FIG. 1 several components of a package or kit representative of the oral hygiene system of the present invention, which system is identified generally by reference numeral 10.

[0011] System 10 includes a receptacle or box 12 which may be formed from any conventional packaging materials. Suitable materials may include, without limitation, cardboard or generally stiff but lightweight plastic. It is preferred in any event that box 12 be fabricated from recyclable and/or biodegradable materials.

[0012] According to the present invention, system 10 further includes at least one oral health care product. Such health care products may include, without limitation, a toothbrush 14, toothpaste or similar dentifrice 16, dental floss 18 and mouthwash (or mouth rinse) 20. As used herein, the terms mouthwash and mouth rinse shall be considered synonymous and include any liquid for removing or reducing bad breath, solid particles, bacteria and other undesirable matter from the mouth. According to a presently preferred embodiment, the oral health care products of system 10 preferably include at least a toothbrush 14, toothpaste 16, dental floss 18 and mouth rinse 20.

[0013] Any conventional powered or unpowered toothbrush may be employed in accordance with the present invention. However, for optimal results, it is preferred that toothbrush 14 be a medically-recognized, electrically-powered toothbrush such as those included the Sonicare® family of electronic toothbrushes marketed by Koninklijke Philips Electronics N. V. of Eindhoven, the Netherlands, or similar devices.

[0014] Toothpaste 16 preferably, although not necessarily, includes an anti-bacterial/anti-microbial agent such as triclosan (found in Colgate Total® toothpaste) or stannous fluoride (found in many toothpastes such as Crest® Pro-Health toothpaste).

[0015] Dental floss 18 may be any standard brand such as, for example, Crest Glide®, although a floss with an anti-microbial additive would be preferred.

[0016] Mouth Rinse 20 may include, for example, an anti-bacterial/anti-microbial mouth rinse such as Listerine® or Crest® Pro-Health®, although any suitable mouth rinse would suffice.

[0017] Although not illustrated, the oral health care products included in system 10 may include other products such as an oral irrigator. The purpose of an oral irrigator is to penetrate below the gum-line to remove plaque, food particles and bacteria. A presently preferred irrigator is the WaterPik®

oral irrigator, although other irrigators presently known and hereinafter developed would be suitable for purposes of the present invention.

[0018] Also not illustrated, the oral health care products according to the invention may also include a testing kit which is designed to detect, for example, abnormal levels of bacterial carries and/or pathogens in the mouth (a possible early indicator of other medical issues within the body). A current example includes a saliva test currently under development by GeneEx Diagnostics Inc. of Seattle, Wash.

[0019] System 10 further preferably includes instructions 22 (desirably multilingual) for proper usage of the oral health care product(s). Although they may be directed toward interim persons such as dental professionals, the instructions preferably provide an end user with detailed steps regarding not only how to use each of the provided oral health care product(s) but also educational matter regarding why oral hygiene is related to overall physical health. Preferably instructions 22 is a full-color, audiovisual insert, DVD disc and/or other playable/readable medium which outlines the health regimen, contents of the box, and proper use of the contents by a subject matter expert or other model spokesperson (such as a celebrity).

[0020] System 10 further preferably includes coupon means 24 for providing a user with either or both of discounted or complimentary medical professional services relating to oral health care. Such discounted or complimentary medical professional services may be redeemable in advance of or concurrently with performance of the services or the may redeemed after the services are performed in the manner of a rebate. Coupon means 24 may be a conventional coupon included within package 10. Alternatively, coupon means may assume the form of an electronic coupon that may be accessible from the Internet and printed out via conventional printing means. Still further, coupon means may be an Internet-registerable coupon for either or both of discounted or

complimentary medical professional services recognized by the end user's selected medical services professional.

[0021] Such coupon, whether paper or electronic, may be an examination coupon such as a voucher either supported by a medical, dental, or insurance group which provides the holder with a complimentary and/or discounted examination, x-ray or other service or group of services. This service is essential to an effective health regimen as these service providers provide additional instruction, guidance and additional expert solutions (other dental or medical services) to aid in the maintenance of an effective oral health regimen.

[0022] Although the invention has been described in detail for the purpose of illustration, it is to be understood that such detail is solely for that purpose and that variations can be made therein by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as claimed herein.

What is claimed is:

1. An oral hygiene system comprising:
oral health care means; and
coupon means for providing a user at least one of discounted or complimentary oral health care services.
2. The system of claim 1 wherein said oral health care means comprise at least one of teeth brushing, teeth flossing and mouth rinsing means.
3. The system of claim 1 wherein said system comprises a package containing said oral health care means and said coupon means.
4. The system of claim 3 wherein said package further comprises instructions for proper usage of said oral health care means in accordance an oral health regimen.
5. The system of claim 1 wherein said coupon means is a coupon provided in a said package.
6. The system of claim 1 wherein said coupon means is a coupon obtainable via the Internet.

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