July 18, 1939. H. J. LUNNEY 2,166,312

MATERNITY SUPPORT

Filed Dec. 23, 1936

Fig. 1.

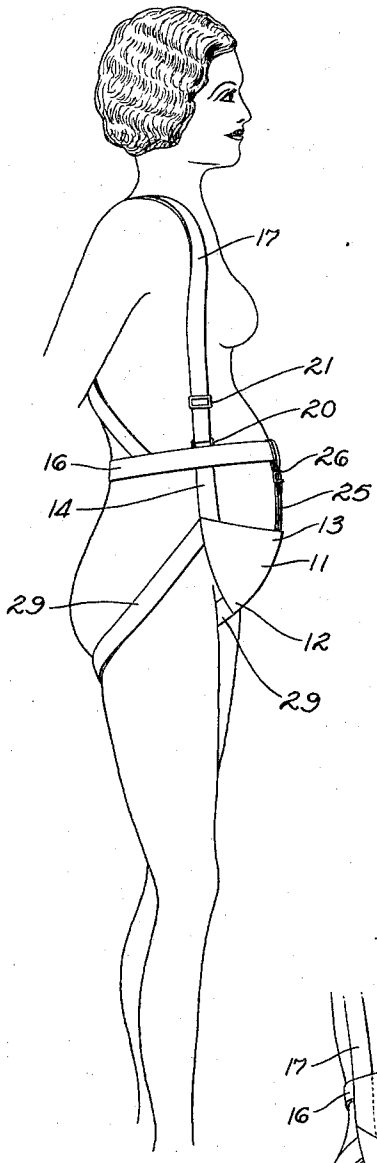


Fig. 2.

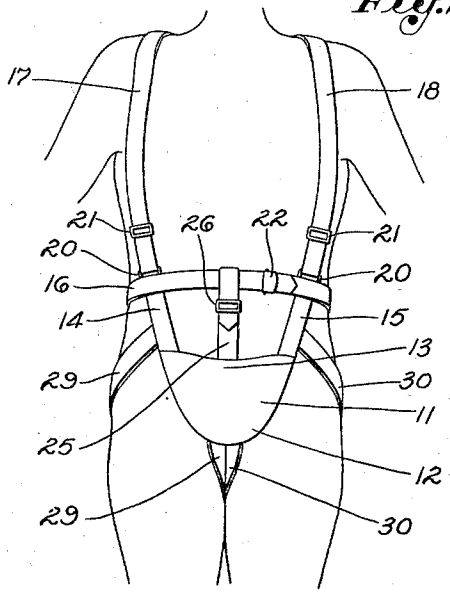


Fig. 3.

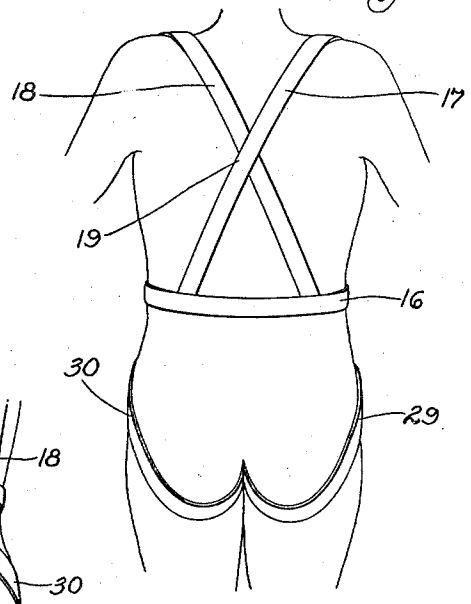
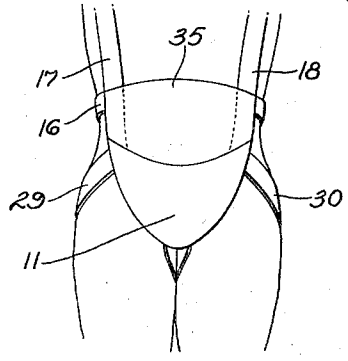


Fig. 4.



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MATERNITY SUPPORT

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3 Claims. (Cl. 2—41)

My invention relates to abdominal supports, and is particularly adapted for use during maternity to effectively support the weight of the abdomen, affording greater comfort to the wearer than the ordinary maternity girdle, and preventing excessive strain or stretching of the abdominal muscles with a consequent preservation of the wearer's figure when pregnancy is over.

Known types of maternity belts or girdles comprising, ordinarily, a band formed of elastic or other material having whale bone or metal ribs therein for stiffening purposes, and which extend around the waist, hips, and abdomen of the wearer, are not capable of supporting the weight of the abdomen except in the sense that they crowd the abdomen inwardly and to some extent prevent sagging of the abdomen and stretching of the abdominal muscles. This confinement of the abdomen during pregnancy is uncomfortable to the wearer and becomes increasingly so as pregnancy advances. During the advancing stages of pregnancy, a wearer of the ordinary type of maternity girdle may find it necessary to change from one size of garment to a larger size two or often more times, to accommodate the increasing size of the abdomen.

It is, therefore, a primary object of my invention to provide a maternity support which supports the weight of the abdomen from beneath and which does not confine the abdomen.

It is another object of the invention to provide a maternity support in which the portions thereof extending over the abdomen are adjustable to compensate for increasing size of the abdomen as pregnancy advances.

It is another object of the invention to provide a maternity support having an abdominal cupping member supported by the shoulders of the wearer, so that the weight of the abdomen is supported directly from the shoulders without confinement of the abdomen.

It is still another object of the invention to accomplish the function specified in the above paragraph by providing suspension means for the abdomen cupping member, which means comprises suspenders secured thereto and extending over the shoulders of the wearer to support the same.

These and other objects of the invention will be made clear in the following part of the specification, in connection with the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a side elevation of the maternity support embodying the features of my invention;

Fig. 2 is a front elevation thereof;

Fig. 3 is a rear elevation thereof; and

Fig. 4 is a front elevation of a modified form thereof.

Referring to Figs. 1 and 2 I show a cup member 11 adapted to be disposed over the lower frontal portion of the abdomen of the wearer, as shown, one portion 12 of the marginal edge thereof extending around the sides and under the abdomen and another portion of the marginal edge thereof extending across the lower frontal portion of the abdomen, as indicated at 13.

The invention includes means for supporting the cup member to support the weight of the abdomen directly from the shoulders of the wearer. In the preferred form of my invention illustrated I show this means as comprising a pair of extension members 14 and 15 disposed on opposite sides of the abdomen and connecting the cup member 11 with a waistband 16 substantially in the manner shown.

The suspension means also includes suspenders in the form of a pair of shoulder straps 17 and 18 respectively connected to the waistband 16, preferably at points adjacent the extensions 14 and 15, the shoulder straps extending upwardly over the shoulders of the wearer, substantially as shown, and being respectively connected to the waistband 16 as points rearwardly from the extension members of the cup member. In practice, I prefer to cross the suspender members 17 and 18 at the back as indicated at 19 in Fig. 3.

I prefer to provide adjustment means for the shoulder suspender members 17 and 18. This may be accomplished by providing eye members 20 secured to the waistband 16 in any suitable manner through which the suspender members 17 and 18 may be looped, there being suitable buckles 21 secured to the respective ends of the suspenders 17 and 18 operable to grip the material of the suspenders in any desired position so that the length of the suspender members 17 and 18 may be adjusted at will.

I also prefer to provide adjustment means for the waistband 16, which may comprise any suitable buckle, or the like, such as is indicated at 22 in the Fig. 2.

The invention includes means for holding the abdomen cupping member in position on the lower frontal portion of the abdomen, so that the abdomen is supported directly from the shoulder rather than being confined inwardly. In the preferred form of the invention this means includes a front band 25 which extends upwardly from the central marginal edge 13 of the cup member

to be suitably secured to the waistband **16**. One means of securing the front band **25** to the waistband **16** comprises looping the front band under and over the waistband and providing a suitable buckle **26**, or the like, for securing the free end of the front band **25**, substantially in the manner shown. This means of securing the front band **25** to the waistband **16** provides adjustment means for adjusting the length of the front band **25** as desired. The means for holding the cup member **11** in position also includes means extending around and between the legs of the wearer. This means preferably comprises a pair of elastic strips **29** and **30**, one end of each of the strips being secured to the cup member at a point adjacent the point at which the extension members **14** and **15** are secured thereto and the opposite ends of the strips **29** and **30** being secured to the marginal edge **12** of the cup member **11** at points adjacent the center thereof so that the strips **29** and **30** extend around the hips and between the legs of the wearer, in a manner to hold the cup member downwardly and inwardly in its preferred position on the lower frontal portion of the abdomen.

My invention contemplates various modifications of the structure shown; for instance, the support may be made entirely of strap material, so that instead of the cup member **11** being formed as shown, the suspenders **17** and **18** and the extension members **14** and **15** are formed of one continuous piece of strap material which extends from the back of the waistband **16**, over the shoulder, downwardly on one side of the abdomen, under the abdomen and upwardly over the other shoulder to be secured to the other side of the waistband **16**. The front band **25** may then be extended downwardly to be secured to the strap extending under the abdomen, and a transverse strap may be extended across the abdomen to be secured to the shoulder straps at opposite sides of the abdomen. Likewise, the leg straps **29** and **30** may be secured to the continuous strap, in a manner similar to that described in connection with the form of the invention shown in the drawing to hold the portion of the strap extending under the abdomen in position. Such a structure provides an extremely light weight, efficient support capable of supporting the weight of the abdomen from the shoulders without confining the abdomen.

In Fig. 4 I show one modification of the support shown in Figs. 1, 2, and 3 in which the adjustable front band **25** and the adjustment of the waistband **16** are dispensed with. This is accomplished by providing an elastic band **35** secured to the upper marginal edge of the cup member **11** and extending over the upper frontal portion of the abdomen, substantially as shown. In this form, the waistband **16** extends only from opposite sides of the elastic band **35**, it being secured thereto at points adjacent the suspender members **17** and **18** and extending around the back of the wearer. In this form of elastic band **35** is not intended as a confining member but is intended to provide only sufficient tension to keep the waistband **16** fitting snugly and to hold the cup member **11** in position when tension is relieved from the suspender members **17** and **18** as, for instance, when the wearer is seated and the shoulders are slack.

I am aware of various other modifications of the structure shown all coming within the range of equivalents of the structure specified therefore the scope of my invention should not be limited thereto but should be interpreted only by the appended claims.

I claim as my invention:

1. In a support of the character described, the combination of: a member formed to cup only the lower frontal portion of the abdomen of the wearer so as not to prevent outward expansion of the abdomen; a waist band extending entirely around the body above said cup member; extension members disposed on opposite sides of the abdomen and connecting said waist band with the side portions of said cup member; suspension means arranged to support the weight of the abdomen directly from the shoulders, said means comprising a pair of adjustable straps connected at the sides of said waist band adjacent said extension members and arranged to extend over the shoulders, crossing on the back of the wearer, and respectively connecting with said waist band at relatively spaced points rearwardly from said extension members; a front band connected to said member and extending upward to said waist band; adjustment means associated with said front band allowing lengthening thereof to properly position said cup member on the lower frontal portion of the abdomen; and a pair of elastic strips connected to said member adjacent said extension members and extending around and between the legs of the wearer and connected to the lower portion of said member at the center thereof to hold said member in position.

2. In a support of the character described, the combination of: a member formed to cup only the lower frontal portion of the abdomen of the wearer so as not to prevent outward expansion of the abdomen; a waist band extending entirely around the body of the wearer and connected to said cup member; suspension means arranged to support the weight of the abdomen directly from the shoulders, said means comprising a pair of straps connected at the sides of said waist band and arranged to extend over the shoulders, and connecting with said waist band at relatively spaced points rearwardly from the connections between said waist band and said cup member; a front band connected to said member and extending upwardly to said waist band; adjustment means associated with said front band allowing the lengthening thereof to properly position said cup member on the lower frontal portion of the abdomen; and strips connected to said member and extending around and between the legs of the wearer and connected to the lower portion of said member at the center thereof to hold said member in position.

3. In a support of the character described, the combination of: a member formed to cup only the lower frontal portion of the abdomen of the wearer; a waist band extending around the front of the body of the wearer and connected to said cup member at points spaced from the middle thereof; suspension means including a pair of straps each of which is connected to said waist band and extends over a shoulder of the wearer; a front band connected to said member and to said waist band adjacent the upper middle thereof; and adjustment means associated with said front band for varying its effective length whereby said cup member may be positioned on the lower frontal portion of the abdomen.

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