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(54) **ADJUSTABLE MATERNITY PANT EXPANDER**

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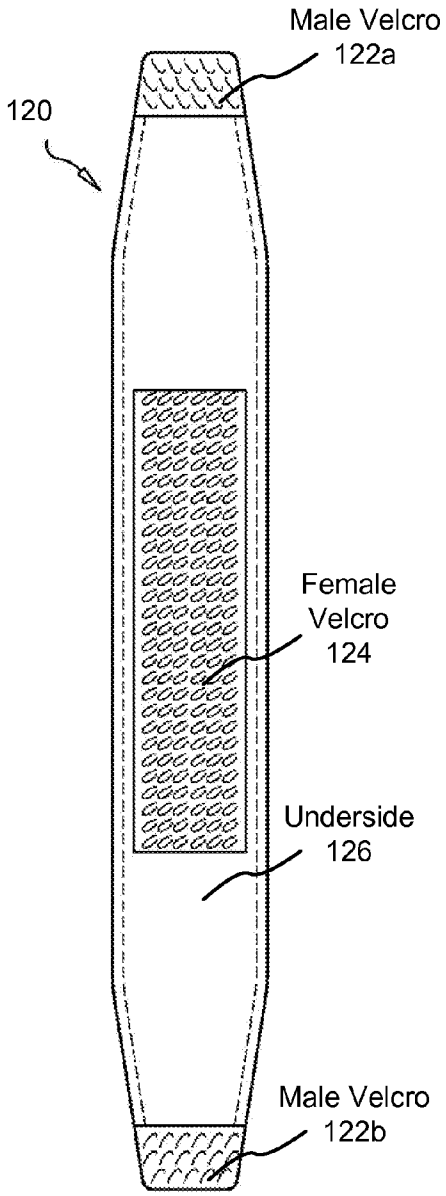
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An adjustable maternity pant expander is provided for bridging the gap in the waistband of a pair of pants worn by a pregnant woman. The pant expander comprises a strip, with tapered ends in some embodiments. The pant expander uses Velcro and/or buttons to fasten under or over belt loops on pants worn by a user.



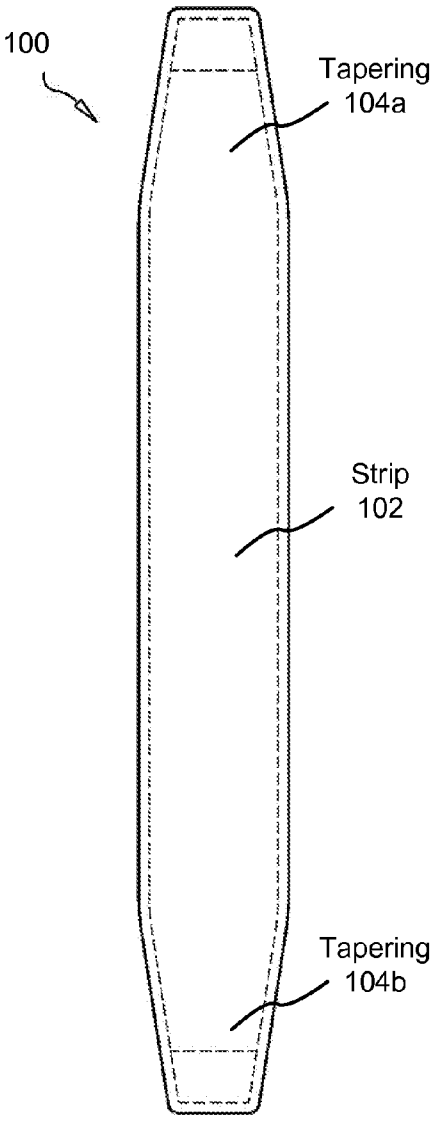

100
Tapering
104a
Strip
102
Tapering
104b

FIG. 1A

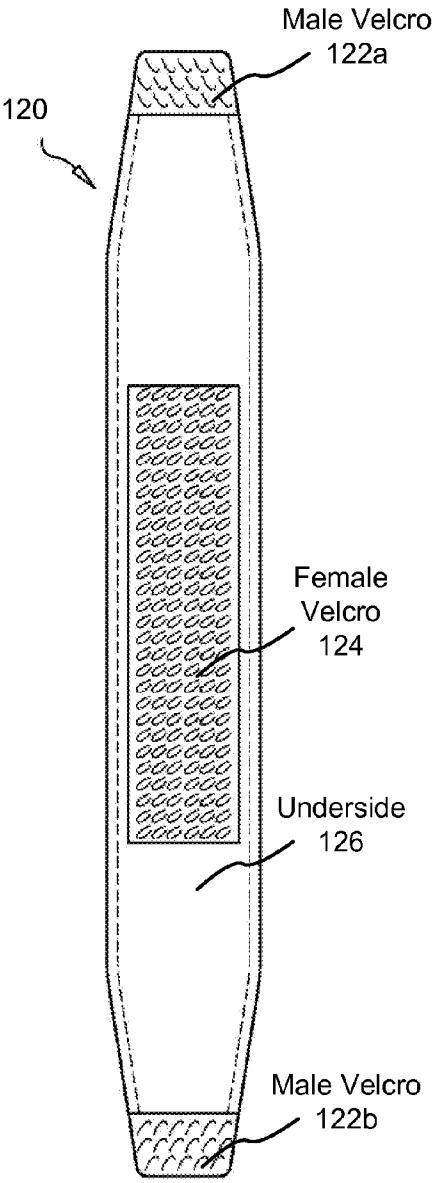

Male Velcro
122a
120
Female
Velcro
124
Underside
126
Male Velcro
122b

FIG. 1B

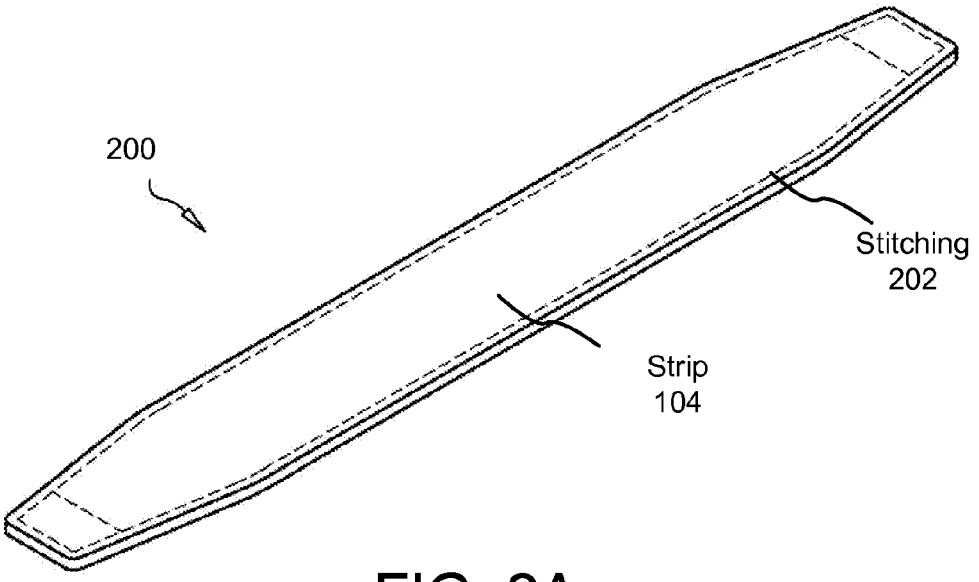

200
Stitching
202
Strip
104

FIG. 2A

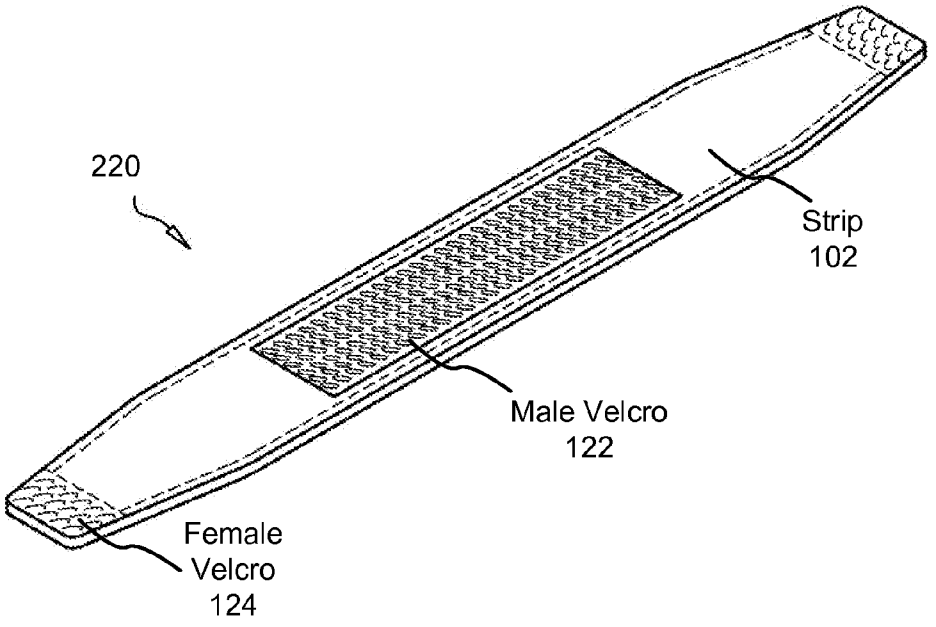

220
Strip
102
Male Velcro
122
Female
Velcro
124

FIG. 2B

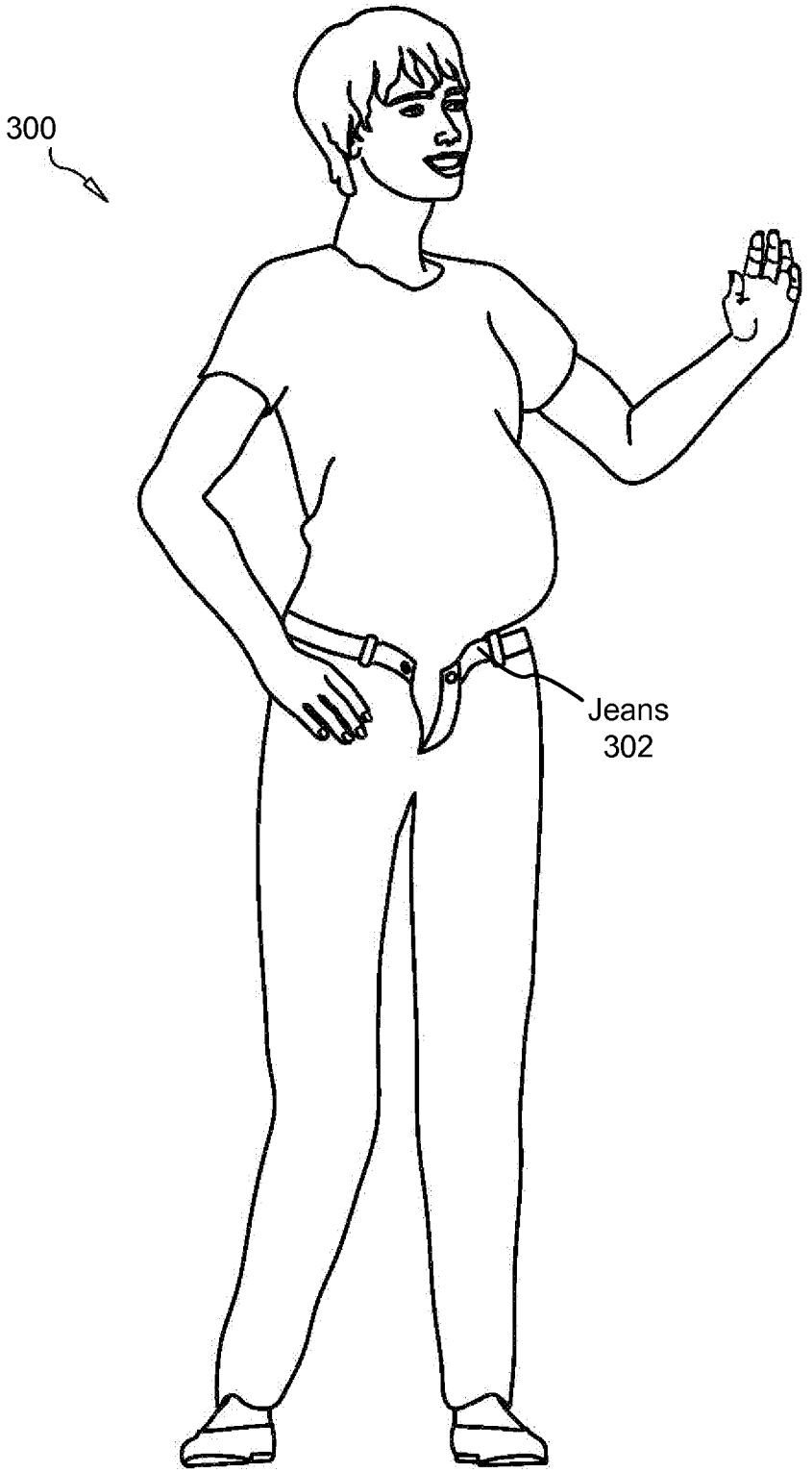


FIG. 3

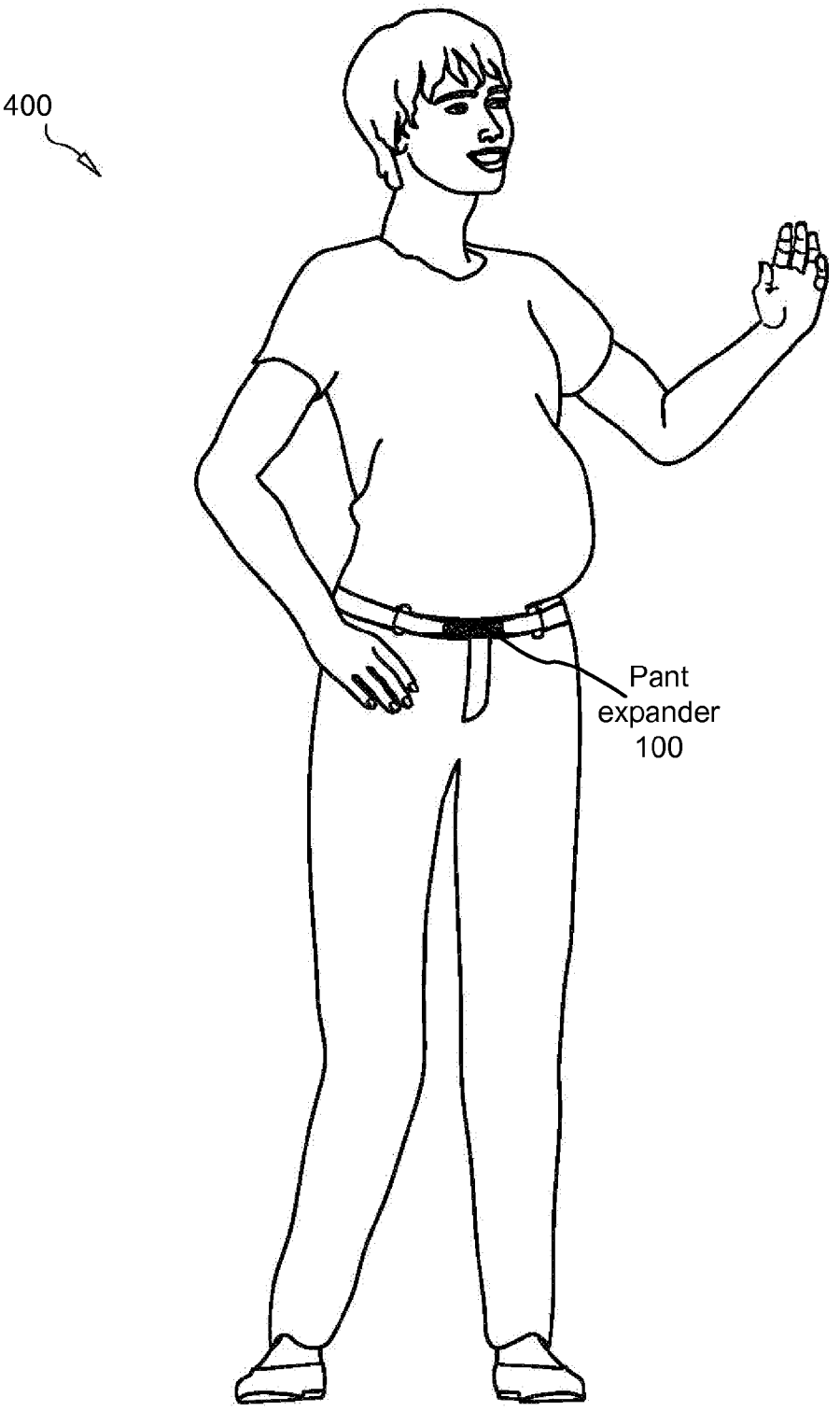


FIG. 4

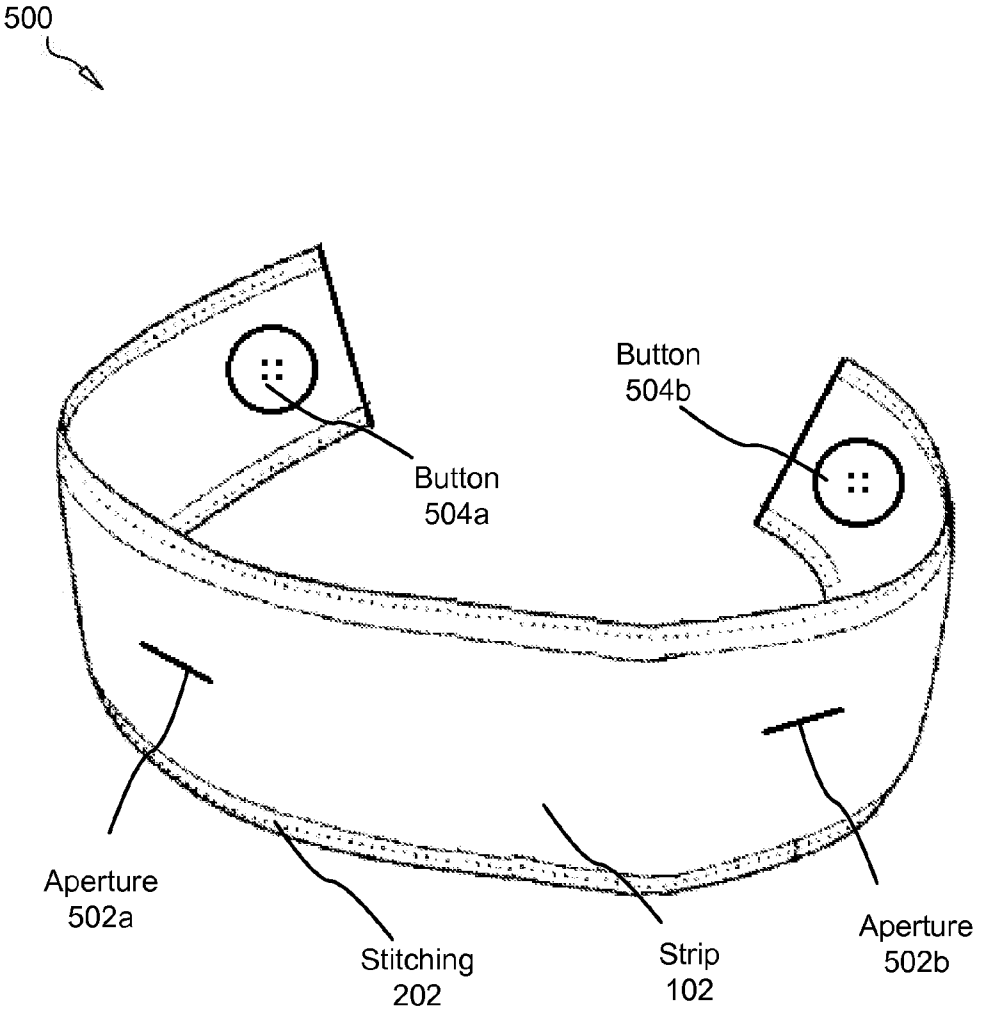

500
Button
504b
Button
504a
Aperture
502a
Stitching
202
Strip
102
Aperture
502b

FIG. 5

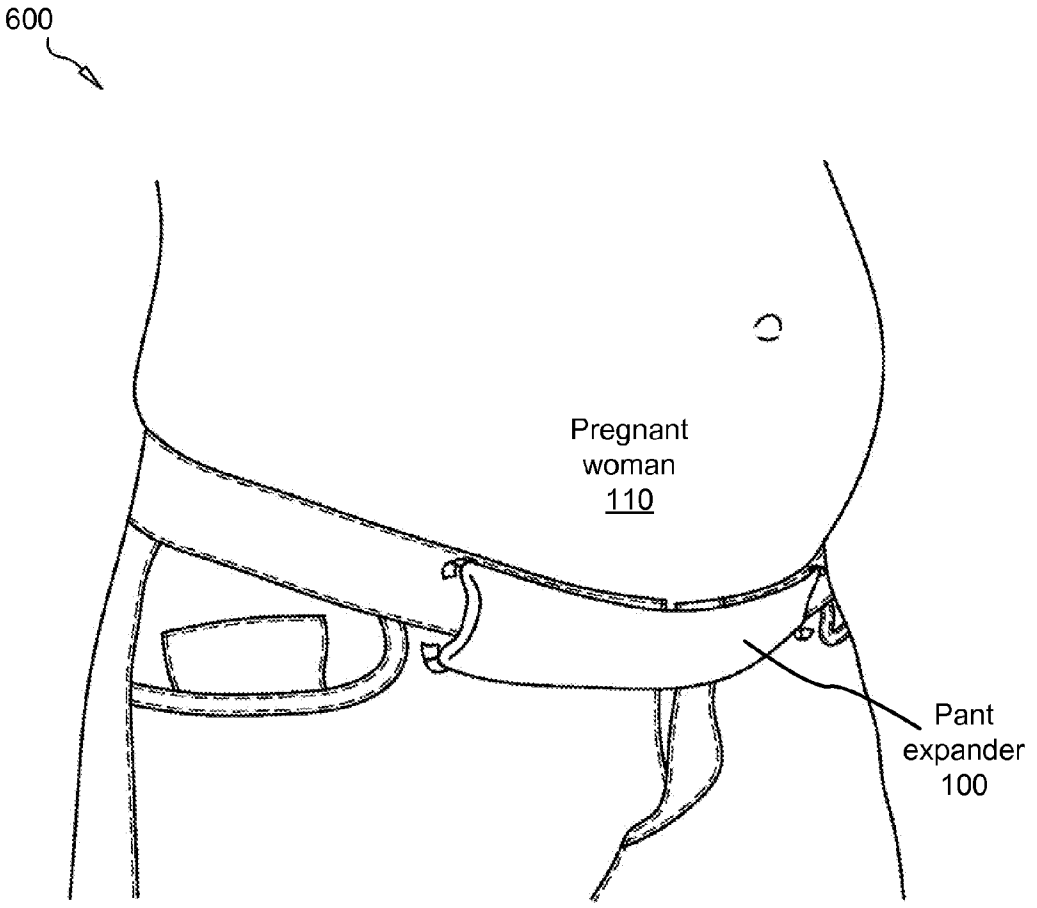


FIG. 6

ADJUSTABLE MATERNITY PANT EXPANDER

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates to maternity clothing, and more particularly relates to waistband expanders for women's pants.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATED ART

[0002] As a pregnant woman matures, her protruding belly makes it more and more difficult to fit into regular clothing. Although maternity clothing is well-known in the art, this maternity clothing can be expensive and can usually only be worn for a few weeks or months. It is desirable that a pregnant woman's existing clothing be adjustable as her waist and midsection expand, but efficient apparati and methods for adjusting existing clothing are lacking in the art.

[0003] Stretchable garments are available to pregnant women, as are sweatpants, lose fitting cotton or polyester materials, and rob-like vestments. These existing clothing options have very little aesthetic appeal for pregnant women who find them largely unsuitable for public appearance.

[0004] Stretchable maternity undergarments can be used under pants in place of the waistband, but these maternity garments require the woman to wrap the bottom half of her belly in this stretchable material and then purchase suitable maternity tops that not only cover the top portion of the belly, but also the stretchable material on her pants.

[0005] None of these options are entirely desirable or feasible for pregnant women. It is therefore desirable that means be provided for making existing clothing adjustable and usable by a pregnant woman.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] From the foregoing discussion, it should be apparent that a need exists for an adjustable maternity pant expander. Beneficially, such an apparatus would overcome many of the difficulties with prior art by providing a means for expanding the waistband of existing pants.

[0007] The present invention has been developed in response to the present state of the art, and in particular, in response to the problems and needs in the art that have not yet been fully solved by currently available information management systems. Accordingly, the present invention has been developed to provide an adjustable maternity pant expander for bridging a gap in a waistband of a pair of pants, the pant expander comprising: a flexible elastomeric strip between two inches and thirty inches long, the strip having an upper side and an underside; two first Velcro pads, each pad affixed to the underside of the strip at one end of the strip; one or more second Velcro pad(s) affixed to the underside of the strip between the two first Velcro pads; wherein each end of the pant expander is folded under a belt loop on a pair of pants worn by a user such the first Velcro pads each engage a second Velcro pad.

[0008] The strip may be tapered at both ends. The strip may be formed from one of polymeric materials, leather, and nylon.

[0009] An adjustable maternity pant expander for bridging a gap in a waistband of a pair of pants is also provided, the pant expander comprising: a flexible elastomeric strip between two inches and thirty inches long, the strip having an upper side and an underside; two buttons, each button affixed to the underside of the strip at one end of the strip; two or more apertures on the underside of the strip between the two buttons; wherein each end of the pant expander is folded under a belt loop on a pair of pants worn by a user and the buttons buttoned through the apertures.

[0010] In some embodiments, the strip may be tapered at both ends. The strip may be formed from one of polymeric materials, leather, and nylon.

[0011] These features and advantages of the present invention will become more fully apparent from the following description and appended claims, or may be learned by the practice of the invention as set forth hereinafter.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] In order that the advantages of the invention will be readily understood, a more particular description of the invention briefly described above will be rendered by reference to specific embodiments that are illustrated in the appended drawings. Understanding that these drawings depict only typical embodiments of the invention and are not therefore to be considered to be limiting of its scope, the invention will be described and explained with additional specificity and detail through the use of the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0013] FIG. **1**A is a top perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander in accordance with the present invention;

[0014] FIG. **1**B is a bottom perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander in accordance with the present invention;

[0015] FIG. **2**A is a side elevational perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander in accordance with the present invention;

[0016] FIG. **2**B is a lower elevational perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander in accordance with the present invention;

[0017] FIG. **3** is an environmental perspective view of pants for use with an adjustable maternity expander in accordance with the present invention;

[0018] FIG. **4** is an environmental perspective view of an adjustable maternity expander in accordance with the present invention;

[0019] FIG. **5** is an elevational perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander in accordance with the present invention; and

[0020] FIG. **6** is a side perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander detachably affixed to pants in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0021] Reference throughout this specification to "one embodiment," "an embodiment," or similar language means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment of the present invention. Thus, appearances of the phrases "in one embodiment," "in an embodiment," and similar language throughout this specification may, but do not necessarily, all refer to the same embodiment.

[0022] Furthermore, the described features, structures, or characteristics of the invention may be combined in any suitable manner in one or more embodiments. In the following description, numerous specific details are provided to provide a thorough understanding of embodiments of the invention. One skilled in the relevant art will recognize, however, that

the invention may be practiced without one or more of the specific details, or with other methods, components, materials, and so forth. In other instances, well-known structures, materials, or operations are not shown or described in detail to avoid obscuring aspects of the invention.

[0023] FIG. **1**A is a top perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander **100** in accordance with the present invention. The pant expander **100** comprises a strip **102**, a tapered portion **104***a*, and a tapered portion **104***b*.

[0024] The strip **102** may be fabricated from any flexible materials of any color, including leather, stretchable elastomeric cloth, polymeric materials, cotton, denim, polyester, wool, and the like In some embodiments, the strip **102** comprises rope, cable, chain, or knitted materials.

[0025] In the shown embodiment, the strip **102** forms a rectangular strip with two tapered ends **104***a-b*. In other embodiments, the ends may be curved, square or rounded. The strips **102** may be untapered, or not have tapered ends.

[0026] The upper side of the strip **102** is shown. This is also the top side.

[0027] FIG. **1**B is a bottom perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander **120** in accordance with the present invention. The pant expander **120** comprises a male Velcro pad **122***a*, a male Velcro pad **122***b*, a female Velcro pad **124**, and an underside portion **126**.

[0028] The underside portion **126** of the strip **102** is shown. This underside portion comprises three Velcro pads, which are affixed to the underside portion **126** of the strip **102**. The tapered ends **104***a-b* of the strip **102** each are affixed to male Velcro pads **122***a-b* on the underside of the strip **102**.

[0029] The tapered ends **104** are intended to wrap around a belt loop on a user's pair of pants. Once wrapped, the male Velcro pads **122** engage one or more female Velcro pads **124** affixed to the underside portion **126** of the strip **102**. The pant expander **120** thus bridged the gap between two belt loops on the pants, and the length of the pant expander between belt loops is adjustable by the position in which the female Velcro pad **124** is engaged.

[0030] FIG. **2**A is a side elevational perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander **200** in accordance with the present invention. The pant expander **200** comprises a strip **104** and a stitching **202**.

[0031] In various embodiments of the present invention, the strip **102** may comprise layers of flexible materials stitched together with stitching **202**. The stitching **202** may follow the outside edge of the strip **102**, or intersect or weave in and out of, its mid portion. The strip may comprise a portion of belt.

[0032] FIG. **2**B is a lower elevational perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander **220** in accordance with the present invention. The pant expander **220** comprises a strip **102**, a female Velcro pad **124**, and a male Velcro pad **122**.

[0033] As shown.

[0034] FIG. **3** is an environmental perspective view of pants **300** for use with an adjustable maternity expander in accordance with the present invention. The pants **300** comprises a pair of jeans **302**.

[0035] The jeans **302** are worn by a pregnant woman who needs the present invention to bridge the gap in her jeans.

[0036] FIG. **4** is an environmental perspective view of an adjustable maternity expander **400** in accordance with the present invention.

[0037] The pant expander **100** is shown affixed to the jeans **302**. The ends **104** of the pant expander **100** are wrapped around belt loops of the jeans **302**.

[0038] FIG. **5** is an elevational perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander **500** in accordance with the present invention. The pant expander **500** comprises a strip **102**, stitching **202**, an aperture **502***a*, an aperture **502***b*, a button **504***a*, and a button **504***b*.

[0039] Various embodiments of the present invention include buttons **504***a-b* in place of Velcro pads. These buttons, like the Velcro pads, wrap around a belt loop and through an aperture **502** in the strip **102**. Various embodiments of the strip **102** include, or define, more than two apertures **502** such that a user may select which aperture **502** through which to button the button **504**.

[0040] FIG. **6** is a side perspective view of an adjustable maternity pant expander **600** detachably affixed to pants in accordance with the present invention.

[0041] The pant expander **100** is shown affixed to a pair of pants **300** in the shown embodiment. This perspective view provides a closer, more detailed view, than that of FIG. **4** above.

[0042] The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

What is claimed is:

1. An adjustable maternity pant expander for bridging a gap in a waistband of a pair of pants, the pant expander comprising:

a flexible elastomeric strip between two inches and thirty inches long, the strip having an upper side and an underside;

two first Velcro pads, each pad affixed to the underside of the strip at one end of the strip;

one or more second Velcro pad(s) affixed to the underside of the strip between the two first Velcro pads;

wherein each end of the pant expander is folded under a belt loop on a pair of pants worn by a user such the first Velcro pads each engage a second Velcro pad.

2. The adjustable maternity pant expander of claim **1**, wherein the strip is tapered at both ends.

3. The adjustable maternity pant expander of claim **1**, wherein the strip is formed from one of polymeric materials, leather, and nylon.

4. An adjustable maternity pant expander for bridging a gap in a waistband of a pair of pants, the pant expander comprising:

a flexible elastomeric strip between two inches and thirty inches long, the strip having an upper side and an underside;

two buttons, each button affixed to the underside of the strip at one end of the strip;

two or more apertures on the underside of the strip between the two buttons;

wherein each end of the pant expander is folded under a belt loop on a pair of pants worn by a user and the buttons buttoned through the apertures.

5. The adjustable maternity pant expander of claim **4**, wherein the strip is tapered at both ends.

6. The adjustable maternity pant expander of claim **4**, wherein the strip is formed from one of polymeric materials, leather, and nylon.

* * * * *