A garment for retaining long hair is disclosed and claimed. The garment includes a tubular sleeve formed of a lightweight flexible material. The tubular sleeve includes an open front, an open rear, a body therebetween, and an inside surface. The open front is configured to extend across a wearer's forehead. The body extends from the open front over substantially the entire region of the wearer's head. A pocket is attached to the inside surface of the tubular sleeve and includes an opening. The pocket is arranged for retaining long hair such as braids or dreadlocks.
GARMENT FOR RETAINING LONG HAIR INCLUDING BRAIDS OR DREADLOCKS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS


STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] “Not Applicable”

INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISK

[0003] “Not Applicable”

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0004] The invention relates generally to garments that are arranged to be worn on the head, and more particularly to a garment for retaining long hair that may include portions configured as braids or dreadlocks.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0005] Long hair that has been braided or arranged into dreadlocks or braids can become very unmanageable and can get in the way of daily activities. It can be very difficult for a person with such long or braided hair or dreadlocks to cook, clean, eat, and participate in sports or dancing. Such long hanging hair is very dangerous around stoves and grills. Many people with such long braids or dreadlocks have problems at the dinner table, where hair can get into food. Long hair can get in people’s eyes during windy days. Long hair can become trapped when sitting in an upright position, or can easily become dirty upon contact with surfaces, such as walls or seats back.

[0006] Scarves can come loose and slip off the hair. Rubber bands, barrettes, and scrunchies have a potential to break when holding large amounts of hair, such as dreadlocks and braids. This is even more of a problem when the hair is extremely thick.

[0007] Garments to fasten locks of hair in a ponytail, braids or dreadlocks are generally well known, but suffer from a number of drawbacks. Many hair ties have as their predominate tying feature some sort of elastic band that requires the wearer to loop and twist about a lock of hair. These hair ties are sometimes difficult to apply. In addition, some of the elastic band hair ties on the market have numerous small metal pieces on the elastic loop, which can pull out or damage the hair. Other hair ties require knots that must be tied by the wearer in order to properly secure the hair in a ponytail. Some are difficult to tie to the hair, and sometimes the wearer may need assistance from a second person to help attach the hair tie. In addition, certain hair ties are unreliable in that they fail to remain in place on the braids or dreadlocks. This drawback requires the wearer to adjust the hair tie intermittently. Some hair ties also provide limited flexibility to adjust and allow the wearer to choose different amounts of hair that may be fastened by a single hair tie at any one time. It is accordingly a primary objective of the present invention to provide a hair retaining garment which will avoid the drawbacks stated above.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] A garment for retaining long hair is disclosed and claimed. The garment includes a tubular sleeve formed of a lightweight flexible material. The tubular sleeve includes an open front, an open rear, a body therebetween, and an inside surface. The open front is configured to extend across a wearer’s forehead. The body extends from the open front over substantially the entire region of the wearer's head. A pocket is attached to the inside surface of the tubular sleeve and includes an opening. The pocket is arranged for retaining long hair such as braids or dreadlocks.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the garment of the present invention shown in a final position over the head of a wearer having long hair, long braids or dreadlocks, the garment shown retaining the wearer’s braids.

[0010] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the garment of the present invention being held in the hands of a wearer prior to the inventive garment being placed in position on the wearer’s head;

[0011] FIG. 3 is a perspective view illustrating the wearer beginning the process of placing the garment of the present invention onto the wearer’s head;

[0012] FIG. 4 is a perspective view illustrating the wearer continuing to place the garment of the present invention onto the wearer’s head;

[0013] FIG. 5 is a perspective view illustrating the wearer extending a pocket of the garment of the present invention and tucking his or her braids into the pocket;

[0014] FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 6-6 of FIG. 1; and,

[0015] FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 7-7 of FIG. 6.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0016] Referring now to FIG. 1, wherein like numbers indicate like parts throughout the drawings, there is shown at 10, a garment for retaining long hair 34 having hanging portions configured as braids or dreadlocks. FIG. 1 shows the hair retaining garment 10 placed on the head 14 of the wearer. As best shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the garment includes a sleeve 18 that is generally tubular in shape and hollow and includes a front opening 22 and a rear opening 26, the openings being substantially circular. The tubular shape of the sleeve 18 may be formed by folding a single generally rectangular-shaped piece of a relatively thin, pliant, stretchable, and resilient material such as fabric onto itself and then attaching the fabric to itself at its opposite edges by any suitable means. For example, the fabric may be attached to itself at opposite edges by stitching at 16a and 16b to form a central fold 17 that runs the length of the tubular sleeve 18 from the front opening 22 to the rear opening 26.

[0017] The garment 10 including the tubular sleeve 18 and pocket 42 are preferably made of a lightweight, flexible material which is fairly wrinkle resistant. A preferable material is nylon, such as Spandex®. The material should be breathable to allow air transfer between a wearer’s head and the sur-
rounding air. By utilizing this type of material, the garment 10 can be folded, rolled up or bunched into a compact package and carried in one’s pocket or purse. Since the material of the garment 10 is wrinkle resistant, the garment 10 can simply be shaken out and worn when needed. The material of the garment 10 is comfortable to wear upon a head and soft when contacting the wearer’s skin. Other suitable fabrics include, but are not limited to, cotton and terrycloth. The material of the garment 10 may be absorbent to soak up water or other liquids to prevent them from wetting or contacting the wearer’s hair 34, for instance, if wearer is washing her face 38. Alternatively, the garment 10 may be made of other fabrics such as leather, rubber such as latex or silicone, polyester, cotton blends, satin, silk, velvet, wool, etc. Alternatively, the sleeve 18 can be manufactured in a tubular shape using a thermal molding process.

[0018] As best shown in FIG. 6, when the garment 10 is positioned over the wearer’s head 14, the front opening 22 is arranged to fit snugly over the wearer’s forehead and extend downwardly and around the back of the wearer’s neck just below the hairstyle. As best shown in FIG. 6, at the front opening 22, the fabric of the garment 10 is folded onto itself and stitched to create a brim 28. The brim 28 serves as a casing for an elastic band 30 disposed therein. The elastic band 30 also enables the garment 10 to be adjustable to heads of various sizes.

[0019] Referring now to FIGS. 2, 3, and 4, to place the garment 10 onto the head, the garment is first held in the wearer’s hands in a gathered condition as shown in FIG. 2 with the front opening 22 facing away from the wearer and the rear opening 26 positioned closer to the wearer. The garment is raised over the head and to the back of the head where long hair 34 or braids may have been collected. The hair 34 is passed through the tubular sleeve 18 so that the hair extends out the rear opening 26. The brim 28 of the front opening 22 of the garment 10 is pulled over and positioned on the wearer’s forehead. Referring again to FIG. 6, at the rear opening 26, the fabric is stitched to create a finished end. Alternatively, the rear opening 26 could be folded in a manner similar to the brim 28 of the front opening 22.

[0020] As shown in FIGS. 3 and 4, with the front opening 22 positioned snugly around the wearer’s face 38, the wearer may pull back on the rear opening 26 to extend the tubular sleeve 18 to its full length over the wearer’s head. Referring now to FIG. 5, a pocket 42 is shown as being integral with or attached, e.g., sewn, to the inside surface of the tubular sleeve 18. Referring now to FIGS. 5, 6 and 7, the pocket 42 is shown as including a folded open end 46 that is elasticized. A portion of the open end of the pocket is attached, e.g., sewn, to the inside surface of the tubular sleeve 18. FIGS. 1 and 5 best illustrate the stitch line 50 attaching the pocket 42 to the inside surface of the sleeve 18. Another portion of the open end of the pocket 42 remains unattached to the inside surface of the sleeve 18.

[0021] As best shown in FIG. 5, once the tubular sleeve 18 has been placed over the wearer’s head with the wearer’s long hair extending through the rear opening 26, the wearer’s long hair 34 may be gathered into a ball or bun at the rear of the head and held in one hand. Again, as shown in FIG. 5, at the same time, the wearer may stretch the unattached portion of the elasticized open end 46 of the pocket 42 to create a large cavity into which the hair may be placed for retention therein. Upon release of the pocket 42 after the hair has been deposited, the elasticized open end 46 contracts around the wearer’s long hair 34 including braids or dreadlocks, so as to encapsulate the hair 34 but not disturb or crush the hair 34 or disturb the braids or dreadlocks. The pocket may then be pulled up to meet or extend within the rear opening 26 so as to completely cover the wearer’s hair 34.

[0022] Because the open end 46 of the pocket is elasticized, varying lengths of hair arranged in braided hair, dreadlocks, or not arranged may be retained within the pocket 42. FIG. 1 shows the wearer’s long hair including braids or dreadlocks contained within the pocket after the wearer has released the elasticized open end 46. A breakaway section in FIG. 1 illustrates the elasticized open end 46 of the pocket 42 retaining the wearer’s long hair 34 and tucked within the open end 26 of the tubular sleeve 18. Once in place on the head with the long hair gathered in the pocket 42, the garment 10 serves to keep long hair 34 off the wearer’s face 38 so that make-up may be applied, the face 38 may be washed, or for other purposes when one would need to keep long hair 34 away from the face 38. The garment also serves to protect long hair 34 including long hair that has been arranged into braids or dreadlocks from becoming soiled or dirty during normal everyday activities.

[0023] A method of wearing or using the garment of the present invention is described. First, the garment of the present invention is provided. The garment 10 includes the tubular sleeve 18 for fitting over the wearer’s head 14 and an attached or integral pocket 42 to accommodate the hanging portions of the wearer’s hair 34, which may be in the form of a pony tail, braids, extension braids, hair extensions, or dreadlocks. The garment 10 is held in the user’s hands in a condition as best shown in FIG. 2 with the front opening 22 facing away from the user. At the next step, the tubular sleeve 18 is placed over the wearer’s head 14 with the brim 28 positioned over the wearer’s forehead. At the next step, the wearer pulls the rear opening 26 of the tubular sleeve 18 back to cover the remaining portion of the wearer’s head 14. Next, the wearer gathers the hanging portions of the hair 34 and forms the hanging portions into a bun at the rear portion of the head 14. At the next step, the wearer pulls the elastic opening 46 of the pocket 42 out from within the tubular sleeve 18 to create a cavity and then deposits the bun or rolled up hair 34 into the pocket 42. Once the hair 34 has been deposited, the elasticized open end 46 of the pocket 42 contracts around the wearer’s hair 34 to encapsulate the hair 34. The pocket 42 may then be pulled up over the hair 34 to enable the garment 10 to completely cover the hair 34.

[0024] In the foregoing specification, specific embodiments of the present invention have been described. However, one of ordinary skill in the art appreciates that various modifications and changes can be made without departing from the scope of the present invention. Thus, while preferred embodiments of the invention have been illustrated and described, it is clear that the invention is not so limited. Numerous modifications, changes, variations, substitutions, and equivalents will occur to those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. Accordingly, the specification and figures are to be regarded in an illustrative rather than a restrictive sense, and all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of present invention.

1. A garment for retaining long hair comprising:
   a. a tubular sleeve formed of a lightweight flexible material, said tubular sleeve having a front panel, a rear panel, a body therebetween, and an inside surface, said open
front configured to extend across a wearer’s forehead, said body extending from said open front over substantially the entire region of the wearer’s head; and,
b. a pocket attached to the inside surface of said tubular sleeve and including an opening, said pocket arranged for retaining long hair such as braids or dreadlocks.

2. The garment of claim 1, wherein said pocket includes an elastic opening end.

3. The garment of claim 1, wherein the open front is elasticized.

4. The garment of claim 1, wherein said tubular sleeve and said pocket are formed of a material selected from the group consisting of cotton, terry cloth, nylon, Spandex, an absorbent material, leather, satin, rubber, polyester, silk, wool and velvet.

5. The garment of claim 1, wherein said tubular sleeve and said pocket are formed of a wrinkle-resistant, breathable material.

6. The garment of claim 1, wherein said garment may be rolled or bunched into a compact package for storage in a wearer’s pocket.

7. The garment of claim 1, wherein said tubular sleeve is manufactured in a tubular shape from a molding process.

8. The garment of claim 1, wherein said tubular sleeve is formed of a fabric attached to itself at opposite ends by stitching to form a tubular shape.

9. The garment of claim 1, wherein said pocket is attached to the tubular sleeve inside surface by stitching.

10. The garment of claim 1, wherein said pocket is arranged for retaining dreadlocks or braids.

11. The garment of claim 1, additionally comprising a brim located at the front opening, said brim containing an elastic band disposed therein.

12. The garment of claim 11, wherein said front opening is folded upon itself to create said brim.

13. A method for retaining long and hanging hair such as braids and dreadlocks within a garment, the method comprising:
   a. providing a garment including a tubular sleeve having a front opening on which a brim is located, a rear opening, and a pocket having an elastic opening attached to the inside surface of the sleeve;
   b. holding the garment in a wearer’s hands with the front opening facing away from the user;
   c. placing the sleeve over the wearer’s head with the brim positioned over the wearer’s forehead;
   d. pulling the rear opening of tubular sleeve back to cover the remaining portion of the wearer’s head;
   e. gathering hanging portions of the hair into a bun at the rear portion of the head;
   f. pulling the elastic opening of the pocket 42 out from within the tubular sleeve to create a cavity;
   g. depositing the bun into the pocket to encapsulate the hair; and,
   h. pulling the pocket up over the hair so that the garment completely covers the hair.

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