Nov. 24, 1942. L. C. DORION 2,302,843

MATERNITY GIRDLE

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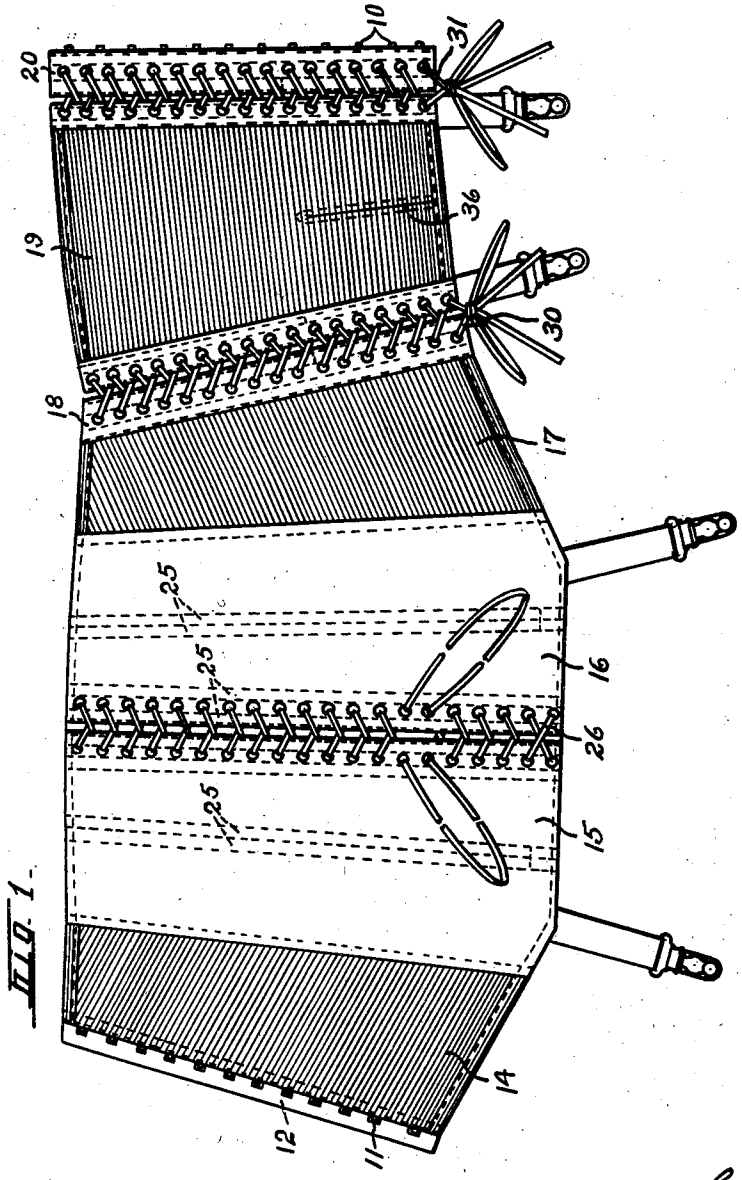


FIG. 1.

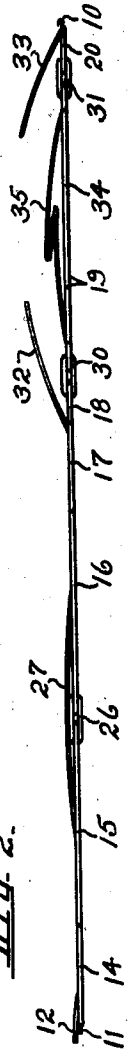


FIG. 2.

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MATERNITY GIRDLE

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7 Claims. (Cl. 2—43)

This invention relates to a girdle for maternity wear.

The principal objects of the invention are to provide a maternity girdle which is of simple and strong construction; which may be fitted during the early stages of pregnancy and adjusted to take care of the patient's changing needs throughout pregnancy and the early weeks of the postpartum period; which meets the requirement of proper support of the abdomen without undue confinement of the region above the abdomen; which provides special support for the spinal area, thereby avoiding lordosis, while at the same time permitting controlled expansion of the sacrum during the final stages of pregnancy; and which gives the wearer a smooth and satisfactory appearance.

Other objects and advantages of my invention will become apparent from the following description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which:

Figure 1 is an exterior view of a girdle according to my invention, shown in completely open position.

Figure 2 is a top plan view thereof.

Referring more particularly to the drawing, the girdle illustrated is constructed for hook-and-eye fastening along the left side of the wearer by means of the hooks 10 and eyes 11, contact of these with the wearer being prevented by the usual protective flap 12. As will be understood by those skilled in this art, other modes and locations of fastening could be employed if desired. Starting from the left of Figure 1, the principal divisions of the corset are left side section 14, left back section 15, right back section 16, right side section 17, and front sections 18, 19 and 20.

The side sections 14 and 17 are preferably made of elastic material having its principal stretch in the direction of the lines ruled thereon in Figure 1, and hence cut on the bias with respect to the girdle as a whole. These bias elastic side sections contribute to the upward support or lift furnished by the front sections to be presently described, and likewise distribute the abdominal load over the sides and toward the back of the wearer, while keeping the patient's hips smooth and dressy in appearance. The side sections 14 and 17 may be joined to the adjacent back sections 15 and 16, respectively, by stitching as illustrated. The side section 17 may be stitched to the front section 18, and the side section 14, in the garment as worn, is joined to the front section 20 by the hooks 10 and eyes 11.

The back sections 15 and 16 preferably are made of non-elastic fabric and are fairly heavily boned or stayed, each back section in the embodiment illustrated being provided with four stays located in pockets 25 formed by stitching in the usual manner. The back sections are joined together by lacing 26 and also by an elastic panel 27. The elastic panel 27 has its stretch circumferentially of the wearer, and may be joined to the inside of the back sections 15 and 16 by the same stitching that forms the outer pockets 25. As shown in Figure 2, the elastic panel 27 is of such circumferential dimension as to lie substantially flat against the inside of the girdle when the back sections 15 and 16 are closely laced together, and preferably is under no tension when the back sections are in this position. If fitted to the patient during the early stages of pregnancy, the girdle should be of such size as to fit snugly when the back sections are closely laced, thereby permitting later expansion of the back by releasing the lacing 26 to adjust to the development of the patient. Such release of the lacing 26 will then place the elastic panel 27 under tension, providing additional support to the patient's back and facilitating a gradual and controlled expansion of the back of the girdle. It will be observed that the size of the back of the girdle, that is to say, the spacing of the back sections 15 and 16, is definitely limited and controlled by the lacing 26, the elastic panel 27 serving to provide additional tension and support in the neighborhood of the spinal column as the lacing 26 is let out to accommodate the spreading of the sacrum commencing with about the seventh month of pregnancy. Increased back support is therefore furnished just at the most necessary time. The elastic panel 27 also serves to protect the wearer from discomfort that might otherwise be caused by the lacing 26 pressing on the backbone.

The front sections 18 and 20 are joined to the central front section 19 by lacings 30 and 31, respectively. Cloth flaps 32 and 33 are provided to protect the wearer from these lacings, and may be sewn to the sections 18 and 20, respectively. The front sections 18 and 20 and the adjacent edges of the section 19 are preferably made of non-elastic material. The main part of the central front section 19, however, is made of an elastic panel 34 backed by a loose non-elastic fabric panel 35, as best shown in Figure 2. The fabric panel 35 serves to limit the stretch of the elastic panel 34 and thus prevents an excessive

stretching of the latter and limits the pressure which may be thus exerted on the patient's abdomen. The abdominal growth of the patient from about the fifth month of pregnancy on, is intended to be taken care of by letting out the front lacings **30** and **31** just enough to keep the patient comfortable while maintaining abdominal support by having the elastic panel **34** under tension. The preferred direction of principal stretch of the panel **34** is circumferentially of the wearer as indicated by the rulings thereon in Figure 1. A dart **36** may be formed in the panel **34** to improve the fit at the lower portion of the abdomen. By proper regulation of the lacings **30** and **31**, the tension of the elastic front panel **34** may be increased towards the end of the gestation period, so as to give maximum abdominal support during the last weeks when most needed. The described construction of the three front sections also permits adjustment of the girdle on the patient's body to follow the evolution of growth of the fetus in each of the three usual positions, high, medium and low, thus giving proper support at each stage of development.

By intelligent fitting and adjustment of the girdle of my invention, it is possible to assure a natural position of the fetus throughout the entire period of gestation, with effective and ample support at all times, particularly during the difficult final stages, thus enhancing the probability of a safe and normal delivery. If the garment is fitted during the early stages of pregnancy, it is likewise possible to use the same garment for the first five or six weeks after delivery.

While I have described and illustrated my invention in connection with a girdle, it will be apparent that the same principles are applicable to a corset, and I desire the term "girdle" as used in the appended claims, therefore, to include either a girdle strictly so called or a corset. Other changes may suggest themselves to those skilled in this art without departing from the spirit of my invention, and I desire to be limited, therefore, only by the prior art and the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A maternity girdle comprising two back sections joined together by lacing and by an elastic panel, said elastic panel being extensible circumferentially of the girdle and being of such circumferential dimension as normally to hold the laced meeting edges of said back sections adjacent one another, side sections joined to said respective back sections, right and left front sections joined to the respective side sections, and a central front section joined by lacings to said right and left front sections and comprising an elastic panel extensible circumferentially of the girdle and adapted to extend over the wearer's abdomen.

2. A maternity girdle as claimed in claim 1 in which the said back lacing extends substantially the full length of the girdle.

3. A maternity girdle as claimed in claim 1 in which the said side panels are elastic and are extensible in a direction biased to the circumference of the girdle and upward from the back toward the front.

4. A maternity girdle as claimed in claim 1 in which a non-elastic panel is secured to said front section elastic panel and is adapted to limit the stretch thereof.

5. A maternity girdle comprising two back sections joined together by lacing and by an elastic panel, said elastic panel being extensible circumferentially of the girdle and being of such circumferential dimension as normally to hold the laced meeting edges of said back sections adjacent one another, elastic side sections joined to said respective back sections and extensible in a direction biased to the circumference of the girdle and upward from the back to the front, and a front section comprising an elastic panel extensible circumferentially of the girdle and lacings at each side of said elastic panel, said front section elastic panel being adapted to extend over the wearer's abdomen.

6. A maternity girdle as claimed in claim 5 in which a non-elastic panel is secured to said front section elastic panel and is adapted to limit the stretch thereof.

7. A maternity girdle comprising two back sections joined together by lacing extending substantially the full length of the girdle and by an elastic panel, said elastic panel being extensible circumferentially of the girdle and being of such circumferential dimension as normally to hold the laced meeting edges of said back sections adjacent one another, elastic side sections joined to said respective back sections and extensible in a direction biased to the circumference of the girdle and upward from the back to the front, right and left front sections joined to the respective side sections, and a central front section joined by lacings to said right and left front sections and comprising an elastic panel extensible circumferentially of the girdle and a non-elastic panel secured to said elastic panel and adapted to limit the stretch thereof, and said front section elastic panel being adapted to extend over the wearer's abdomen.

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