

[54] ATTACHMENT TO HAIR

[76] Inventors: Eugene J. Goldberg, 34 Rockland Dr.; Marvin W. Kramer, 117 Scholarie Dr., both of Jericho, N.Y. 11753; Joseph R. Licci, 215 Malloy St., Copiague, N.Y. 11726

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Primary Examiner—G. E. McNeill
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Benjamin T. Sporn

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[52] U.S. Cl. 132/53

[51] Int. Cl. A41g 3/00

[58] Field of Search 132/53, 54, 5, 9, 105

[57] ABSTRACT

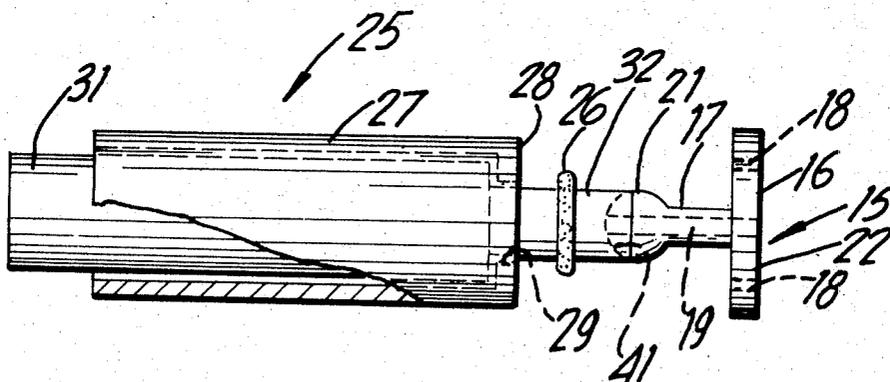
Apparatus and a method are provided for securing, for example, an article to a person's natural hair in a manner which permits the article to be periodically adjusted. This is accomplished by drawing or threading a person's hair through a fastener secured to the article so that the fastener can be moved about the threaded length of the person's hair toward and away from the scalp. Securing is accomplished by a selectively removable retainer which holds the threaded hair against the fastener.

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10 Claims, 14 Drawing Figures



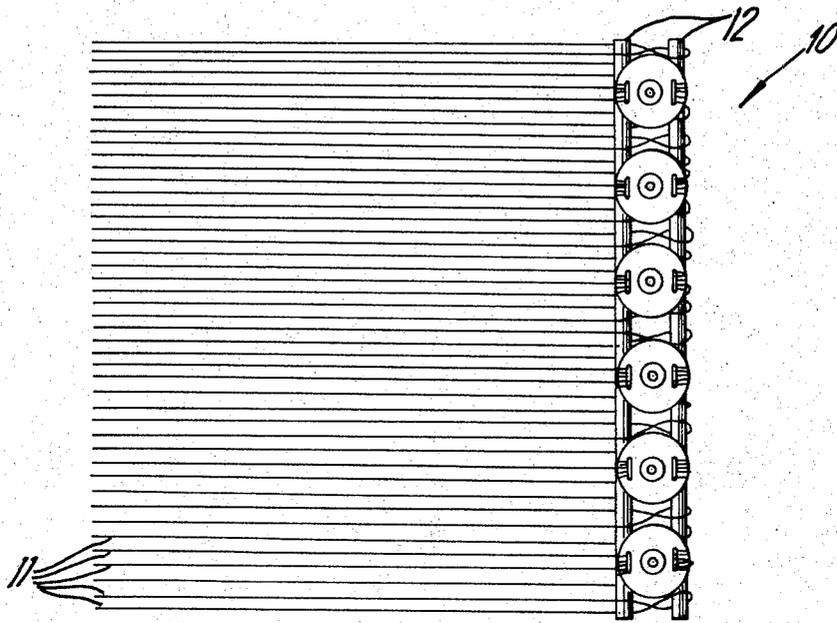


FIG. 1

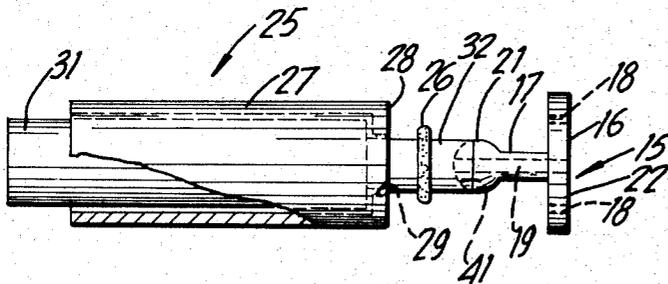


FIG. 2

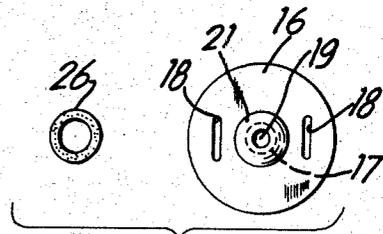


FIG. 3

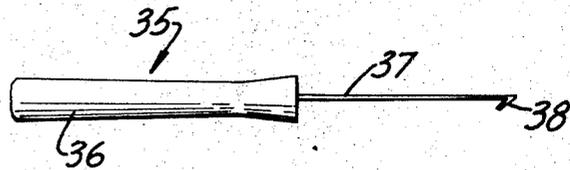


FIG. 4

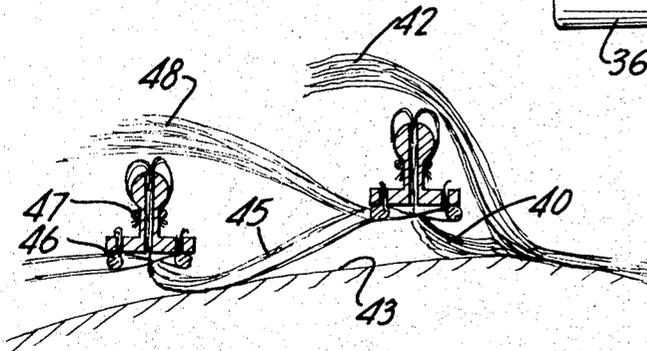


FIG. 5

INVENTORS
EUGENE J. GOLDBERG
MARVIN W. KRAMER
JOSEPH R. LICCI

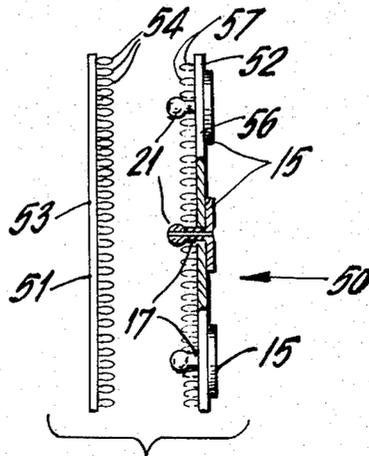


FIG. 6

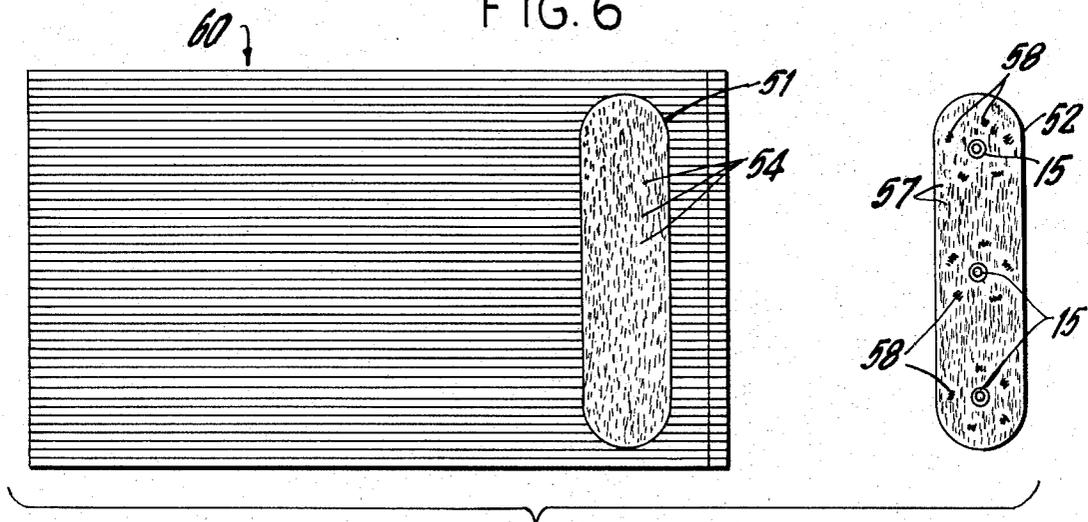


FIG. 7

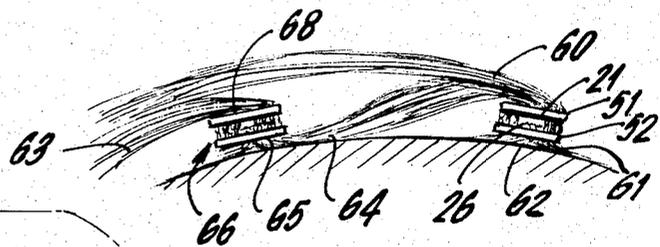


FIG. 8

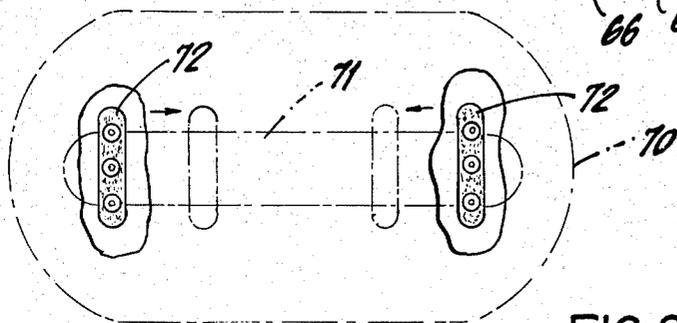
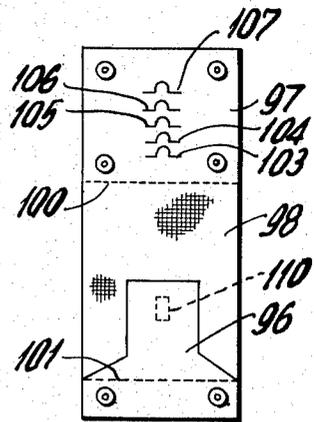
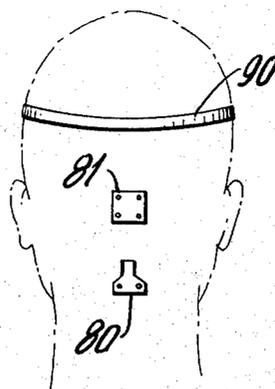
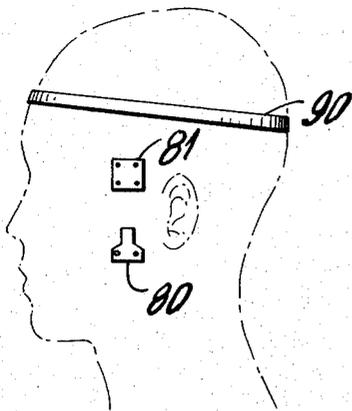
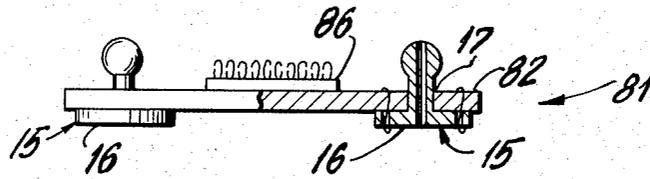
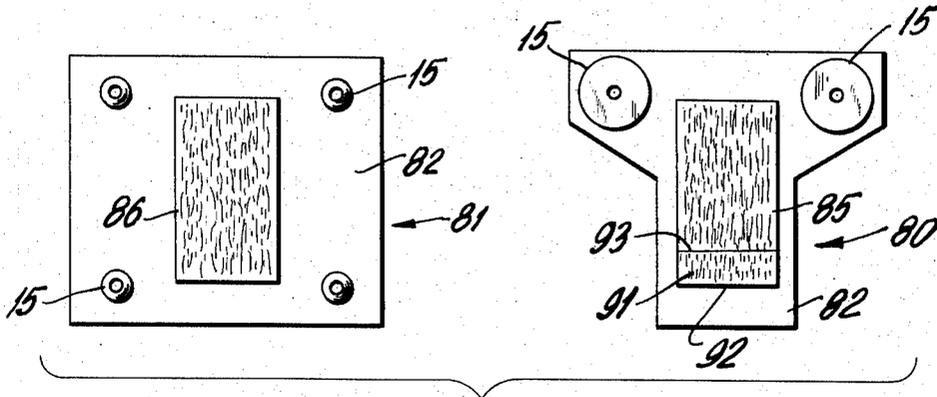


FIG. 9

INVENTORS
EUGENE J. GOLDBERG
MARVIN W. KRAMER
JOSEPH R. LICCI



ATTACHMENT TO HAIR

This is continuation-in-part of application Ser. No. 146,679, filed May 25, 1971 which is a continuation-in-part of application Ser. No. 54,148 now abandoned, filed July 13, 1970.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In the past numerous articles have been fastened to a person's natural hair. These articles have included, for example, hairpieces, beauty aids and jewelry. One problem common to all attaching to a person's natural hair is that the articles only retain their initial positions relative to the person for a short period of time. As the person's natural hair grows, articles attached to the hair move away from their initial position. The articles, of course, must be repositioned from time to time. The repositioning can be time consuming, expensive and bothersome.

The present invention contemplates a method and apparatus for fastening an article to a person's natural hair which permits easy attachment and repositioning. This is accomplished by providing a fastener having an aperture through which a person's hair may be threaded. The fastener is movable toward and away from the person's scalp along the threaded length of hair. The fastener is positioned at any selected distance from the person's scalp by a retainer which secures the fastener to the threaded length of hair. The fastener is repositioned by removing the retainer, moving the fastener about the threaded length of hair to a desired position and then replacing the retainer.

The fastener of the present invention is useful in any application which requires that an article be attached to a person's natural hair. Although the invention contemplates attaching any article to a person's hair, specific detailed examples of how an attached article may be used will be set forth.

One example of a useful embodiment of the present invention is for the attachment of various types of hairpieces to a person's natural hair. One example of hair attachment is hair weaving which is now accomplished by taking a hair section, commonly called a weft of hair, and securing the weft to a person's natural hair. The person's natural hair is interwoven between the strands of the weft. The weaving is time consuming, tedious and expensive. Moreover as a person's natural hair grows, the artificial hair which is secured to the natural hair moves from its original position away from the scalp. This, of course, requires repositioning of the weft which involves removal and reweaving of the weft to its original close to the scalp position. Similar repositioning problems are encountered with all hairpieces which attach to a person's natural hair. In order to overcome these difficulties, it is necessary to provide a hairpiece which readily attaches to a person's natural hair and is easily repositioned.

The present invention provides a hairpiece which is attached to the fastener of the present invention. The fastener and retainer combination permit the hairpiece to be easily attached to a person's natural hair. The hairpiece is readily repositioned relative to the scalp by removing the retainer and moving the fastener about the threaded length of hair. When the hairpiece is again positioned at a desired distance from the scalp, the retainer is replaced.

Another example of a useful embodiment of the present invention involves "skin lifts," for example, "face lifts" and "neck lifts." In general the term "face lift" refers to any lifting of facial skin so as to remove wrinkles and restore a youthful, smooth surface to the skin. In general the term "neck lift" refers to raising loose wrinkled skin near the back of the neck. Loose skin near the back of the neck is particularly visible when a tight collar is worn. The skin will hang over the collar and appear unsightly.

Today there are various devices on the market which are used for face lifts and neck lifts. One such device in use utilizes approximately a square inch of material which is glued to the skin to be lifted. An elastic string is secured to the material at one end and, in the case of a neck lift, is secured to the hair at the other end by a bobby pin. The distance between the end secured to the hair and the end secured to the material is such that tension of the elastic string lifts the skin. In order to hide the glued material, make up must be carefully applied in a time consuming manner. Also the glue may irritate the person's skin and may stick to the hair making the material difficult to remove. In order to overcome these problems, it is necessary to provide a new and improved skin lift which is readily attachable, adjustable and detachable.

The present invention readily solves the problems of lifting loose skin both on the face and the neck so as to restore a youthful look. The present invention provides at least one gripper which is attached to the fastener of the present invention. The fastener and retainer combination permits the gripper to be readily attached to the hair. In practice a first gripper is attached to hair in the vicinity of the loose skin to be lifted. The hair attached to the first gripper must be hair which lifts the loose skin when the hair is pulled upward. The first gripper is then pulled upward causing the hair to which it is attached to pull and lift the loose skin. The first gripper is held in the upward position by, for example, attaching the gripper to a headband or a second gripper which is attached to other hair. The spacing between the first gripper and the second gripper or headband must be such that when the first gripper is pulled upward, the loose skin will be pulled or lifted causing the skin to once again acquire a smooth youthful look. As the person's hair grows, the gripper or grippers, as the case may be, are easily repositioned by removing the retainer, moving the fastener about the hair and then repositioning the retainer.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a new and improved method and apparatus for attaching a fastener to a person's natural hair and for easily repositioning the fastener.

It is another object of the present invention to provide apparatus for and a method of attaching a hairpiece to a person's natural hair so that the hairpiece is releasably held by a retainer to the person's natural hair and can be moved about the natural hair.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide apparatus for and a method of lifting loose skin by attaching a gripper to a person's hair, which gripper then imparts a lifting force to the loose skin via the natural hair.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

With the above mentioned objects in view, there is provided a fastener which cooperates with a retainer to

secure, for example, an article to a person's natural hair. The retainer secures the article to the natural hair by, for example, holding the natural hair against the fastener. The fastener is provided with an aperture through which the person's natural hair extends and about which the fastener can be moved. Also, a tool is provided which cooperates with the fastener to place a retainer into holding engagement with the hair.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a view of a hairpiece having fasteners secured to one end;

FIG. 2 is a view of one of the fasteners and a tool for placing a resilient retainer over the tongue of the fastener;

FIG. 3 is a view of the fastener and a grommet;

FIG. 4 is a view of a pick for drawing hair through the fastener;

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary sectional view of a hairpiece in use;

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary sectional view of a preferred intermediate fastening element;

FIG. 7 is a view of the fastening element shown in FIG. 6 in conjunction with a hairpiece;

FIG. 8 is a side view of two hairpieces in use;

FIG. 9 is another view of a hairpiece in use;

FIG. 10 is a view of grippers used to perform skin lifts;

FIG. 11 is a fragmentary sectional view of one gripper showing the fastener of the present invention;

FIG. 12 is a schematic view depicting an arrangement for performing a face lift;

FIG. 13 is a schematic view depicting an arrangement for performing a neck lift; and

FIG. 14 is another embodiment of the grippers.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Although the basic invention involves the attaching of any article to a person's hair in such a manner that the article may be repositioned, the invention will first be described in terms of attaching a hairpiece to a person's natural hair.

Referring to FIG. 1, a weft of hair generally designated as 10 is shown. The weft comprises strands of hair 11 woven at one end about fibers 12. As can be appreciated, weft 10 is shown enlarged for clarity. Actually, strands of hair 11 are of the same thickness as average human hair and are closely spaced so as to accurately simulate the look of natural hair. It is understood that the following description is in terms of a weft of hair merely as an example of an application of the principles of the present invention. The principles apply equally in all situations where hairpieces are secured to a person's natural hair.

Referring now to FIGS. 2, 3, and 4, a fastener generally designated 15 is shown comprising a base 16 and a tongue portion 17. The base has slits 18 and tongue 17 is provided with an aperture 19 which extends from the end 21 of the tongue to the under surface 22 of the base. The fastener depicted here is similar to the male half of a snap fastener. In use the fastener is secured to the weft by for example sewing through slits 18. Of course, the fasteners could be cemented to the weft or secured in any other convenient manner. As shown in FIG. 1, the fasteners are secured to the weft at one end adjacent fibers 12.

Referring to FIG. 2, a tool 25 is shown for placing a retainer on to tongue 17. The tool comprises an outer sleeve 27 having one end surface 28 with an aperture 29. The other end of the outer sleeve is open. An inner sleeve 31 is slidably positioned within sleeve 27 and has a projection 32 at one end.

In order to secure the weft 10 to a person's natural hair, a hair drawing pick 35 as shown in FIG. 4 is utilized. The pick includes a handle 36 with a thin wire 37 secured at one end of the handle. The diameter of the wire 37 is such that the hooked end 38 of the wire can be passed through aperture 19 in order to draw natural hair up through the tongue and out the end 21. Wire 37 can be constructed out of any material which is sufficiently rigid enough to draw or thread air through the aperture in the fastener.

As shown in FIG. 5, natural hair 40 is drawn up through the tongue 17 of the fastener 15. In other words, natural hair is drawn through the tongue portions of the fasteners shown in FIG. 1. Then a retainer, which for our purposes may be any resilient annular member such as a rubber grommet 26 (FIG. 3), is placed on projection 32 of tool 25. Preferably the diameters of the grommet and the projection are such that the grommet is held elastically on the projection.

Tool 25 is now brought into engagement with the fastener 15 so that end 41 of the projection 32 mates with end 21 on tongue 17. The shapes or contours of the ends 21 and 41 are not critical, but should merely permit close engagement. Outer sleeve 27 is advanced toward fastener 15 into engagement with grommet 26. The grommet is pushed off projections 32 and onto tongue 17. As grommet 26 goes over end 21 of the tongue, the hair 40 is secured between the grommet and the tongue thereby securing weft 10 to a person's natural hair. The grommet should elastically hold hair 40 against the tongue. Also the diameters of the tongue 17 and projection 32 should be similar to permit easy transfer of the grommet 26 from the projection to the tongue. Preferably the diameter of aperture 29 in end surface 28 should be greater than the diameter of end of tongue 17 so that end surface 28 can pass over the tongue and thereby facilitate placing of the grommet.

Other natural hair is combed over the fasteners in order to cover them and this hair blends into the weft. As shown schematically in FIG. 5, natural hair 42 extending from scalp 43 is combed over fastener 15. Additionally one weft of hair can be secured to another weft of hair in the same manner as a weft is secured to natural hair. As shown in FIG. 5, strands of hair 45 from a first weft are secured to a fastener 46 of a second weft by a grommet 47. Also hair 48 of the first weft is combed over fastener 46 to cover it.

As a person's natural hair grows, the wefts must be repositioned. In accordance with the invention it is merely necessary to remove the grommets and reposition the wefts by moving the fasteners about the threaded lengths of hair which have been drawn through the apertures in the tongues. After the natural hair has been trimmed, the grommets are again placed on the tongues of the fasteners to secure the wefts in place.

The basic invention which has been described in terms of attaching a weft of hair to a person's natural hair resides in using a fastener having an aperture

through which hair can be threaded. The fastener is secured to the threaded hair by a retainer which holds the threaded hair against the fastener. Fastener 15 could, for example, be in the shape of a cylinder or a washer. The important element of the fastener is a hole or aperture through which hair can be drawn or threaded. The retainer could, for example, be a plug which fits into the aperture. The important element of the retainer is that it cooperate with the fastener so as to hold the threaded hair against the fastener thereby securing the fastener at a desired position along the threaded length of hair. With the retainer removed, the fastener can be moved about the threaded length of hair toward and away from a person's scalp.

In another embodiment of the invention, an intermediate fastening element is used. As shown in FIG. 6, one such element that may be used is sold commercially under the trademark "VELCRO." The intermediate fastener generally designated as 50 consists of two mating halves 51 and 52. One half 51 includes a base 52 made of, for example, fabric with loops 54 extending from the fabric in a conventional manner. The other half 52 also includes a base 56 made of, for example, fabric with split loops or hooks 57 extending from the fabric in a conventional manner.

Referring also to FIG. 7, half 52 of intermediate fastener 50 includes several fasteners 15. The tongue portions 17 of the fasteners 15 extend through base 56. The fasteners 15 are secured to base 56 of fastener 50 by, for example, sewing 58 through slits 18 (FIG. 3) or in any other convenient manner. Half 51 of intermediate fastener 50 is attached to the underside of weft 60 by, for example, sewing or in any other convenient manner.

In use, the half of the intermediate fastener including fasteners 15 is secured to a person's natural hair in the manner shown in FIG. 5. The natural hair is drawn by pick 35 up through the fasteners 15 and out the ends 21 of the tongues 17. The fasteners 15 are then moved about the natural hair toward the head thereby positioning the intermediate fastener close to the head. Grommets 26 are then placed on the tongues of the fasteners 15. The grommets hold the natural hair in engagement with the tongues and accordingly secure half 52 of the intermediate fastener in place.

As shown in FIG. 8, half 52 of fastener 50 is secured to natural hair 61 extending from scalp 62. Weft 60 is now attached to the person's natural hair by mating half 51 of fastener 50 with half 52. The loops 54 engage in a conventional manner with hooks 57 and hold weft 60 in place.

A second weft may be secured to weft 60 in a manner similar to the securing of weft 60 to the natural hair 61. For example, strands of hair 64 of weft 60 may be secured to half 65 of an intermediate fastener 66 in the same manner as fastener half 52 is secured to hair 61. The second weft 63 is then secured to weft 60 by mating half 68 of fastener 66 which is attached to the underside of weft 63 with half 65.

As can readily be appreciated, as the person's natural hair 61 grows, fastener half 52 moves away from its close to the scalp position thereby moving the wefts. In order to reposition the wefts, grommets 26 are removed from fasteners 15. Fasteners 15 are then moved about the natural hair 61 to a position close to the person's scalp 62 and the grommets are repositioned on

the tongues 17 of the fasteners to hold fastener half 52 in place.

Referring to FIG. 9, a wig 70 is shown in dotted outline form. On the under side of wig 70 a VELCRO fastener half 71 is attached to the wig and extends laterally. The wig is attached to a person's head by mating fastener half 71 with VELCRO fastener halves 72. Fastener halves 72 are attached in accordance with the invention to a person's natural hair and are positioned in spaced apart relationship on the person's head. As the person's hair grows, the arrangement with two fastener halves 72 permits longer periods between fastener adjustments. This is accomplished since as the person's natural hair grows, the fastener halves 72 can be pulled tightly toward each other as shown by the arrows in FIG. 9 and the wig 70 secured in place. Periodically, fastener halves 72 are returned to their original positions and the person's hair is trimmed.

The intermediate fastener embodiment of the invention has been described in terms of a VELCRO fastener. However, other types of two halved fasteners may be used including those which utilize adhesive surfaces or surfaces to which adhesives are applied. In a VELCRO fastener maximum holding power is achieved when the loops pull the looks in a direction away from the openings. Accordingly, the wigs may be secured more tightly in place by using a fastener with the closed side of hooks toward the side of the wig which experiences the greatest stress in use.

The fastener of the present invention is useful in attaching articles to a person's natural hair. The object of attaching may be merely to attach the article (e.g., the weft) or as a step toward a use of the article (e.g., skin lift described below). In either case, the fastener and method of attaching the fastener is generic to the specific use.

Another useful embodiment of the fastener and retainer of the present invention is in performing "skin lifts." The term "skin lift" is used to mean any lifting of loose, wrinkled facial skin to restore a smooth youthful appearance, commonly called a "face lift." Another example is the lifting of loose skin near the back of the neck, commonly called a "neck lift." The skin lifts that the present invention is concerned with are those which involve attachment to a person's hair to accomplish the lift.

Referring to FIG. 10, there are shown grippers generally designated as 80 and 81. Grippers 80 and 81 each comprise a base 82 of, for example, cloth fabric with fasteners 15 attached in a manner similar to that described with respect to half 52 of intermediate fastener 50. As will be appreciated, the material that the bases 81 and 82 are made from do not affect the application of the principles of the present invention, but can affect a person's comfort. Fasteners 15 can be attached to grippers 80 and 81 in any convenient manner such as sewing or gluing. As seen in FIG. 11, tongue 17 extends through material 82 and fastener base 16 is sewn to the material.

In performing a face lift (FIG. 12), gripper 80 is generally secured to a person's hair which is near to the facial skin to be lifted. The distance of the hair to which gripper 80 is attached to the skin to be lifted is not critical. The important point is that an upward pull on the hair cause the desired skin to be lifted. Gripper 80 is secured by fasteners 15 to the person's hair in accordance with the principles of the present invention. This,

of course, involves threading the hair through the fasteners and applying the retainers. Gripper 80 is then pulled upward applying an upward pull to the hair to which it is attached thereby lifting the skin. The amount the skin will be lifted is a function of the relationship of the hair to which gripper 80 is attached to the skin, and the upward force applied to the gripper. The gripper may be held in an upward position by, for example, attaching the gripper to a hat, a headband, a second gripper or any other convenient attachment point.

As shown in FIG. 12, one attachment point may be a headband 90 which encircles the head. The headband may be a rigid member such as a plastic ring which is of a diameter which permits it to sit on the head, or the headband may be an elastic member. The important quality of the headband is that it sit on the head without slipping down beyond a predetermined point. Gripper 80 can be pulled upward and attached to the headband in any convenient manner such as by a hook and eye. Gripper 80 can also be held in an upward position by securing it to another attachment point such as a second gripper 81. Gripper 81 could also be attached to the person's hair by fasteners 15 in accordance with the principles of the present invention. Gripper 80 would then be pulled upward and attached to gripper 81 in any convenient manner such as by a hook and eye.

The tension or upward pull on gripper 80 causes the hair to which gripper 80 is attached to pull the facial skin up and remove looseness from the skin. The spacing between gripper 80 and the attachment point should be such that sufficient tension is applied to gripper 80 to adequately lift the facial skin. Spacing the gripper 80 too close to the attachment point might cause inadequate lifting and spacing gripper 80 too far from the attachment point may produce too much tension and discomfort.

In FIG. 10, grippers 80 and 81 are shown with VELCRO strips 85 and 86 respectively. The VELCRO strips are adhered to bases 82 in any convenient manner such as by sewing. In this instance, the grippers are secured to one another by putting the VELCRO strips in contact.

There is no need to remove the skin lifts at night. Gripper 80 is merely detached from the attachment point at night to remove the tension on the hair, and gripper 80 is reattached in the morning. As the natural hair grows, gripper 80 will move from its initial position and less tension will be applied to the hair. Of course, where the attachment point is gripper 81, the attachment point will also move from its initial position. Periodically the grippers will have to be repositioned to insure adequate tension. In accordance with the principles of the present invention, repositioning of the grippers is readily accomplished by removing the retainers, moving the fasteners about the threaded lengths of hair and replacing the retainers. Where VELCRO is used on gripper 80 and VELCRO is used on the attachment point, repositioning can be minimized. This is accomplished by spacing gripper 80 from the attachment point so that initially adequate tension is accomplished by using only a small VELCRO portion 91 extending from end 92 to strip 85 to dotted line 93. As the person's hair grows, a larger VELCRO portion would be used. A similar result can be obtained using hooks and eyes by attaching a spaced series of hooks or eyes to gripper 80.

In FIG. 14, a pair of grippers 96 and 97 are shown connected by a strip of cloth 98. The strip of cloth is sewn to the grippers along lines 100 and 101. Instead of VELCRO, gripper 97 includes a series of spaced eyes 103 through 107, and gripper 96 includes a hook 110. This hook and eye combination permits variable lift which minimizes the need for accurate spacing and repositioning. Generally, hook 110 would initially be attached to eye 103. As the hair grows, hook 110 would successively be attached to eyes 104 through 107. When eye 107 provides inadequate lifting, the gripper would be repositioned. Cloth 98, among other things, keeps the grippers from tangling in the hair when detached at night. All of the grippers, the headband and any other devices that may be used are hidden from view by combing natural hair over them.

Referring to FIG. 13, a neck lift is performed in the same fashion as a face lift. Gripper 80 is secured by fasteners 15 to hair in the vicinity of the skin to be lifted and is attached to headband 90 or gripper 81. The spacing between gripper 80 and headband 90 or gripper 81 is such that when gripper 80 is attached to headband 90, or any other convenient attachment point, gripper 80 is pulled up sufficiently to lift the skin on the neck.

It should be understood that numerous modifications to the present invention may be made which fall within the spirit and scope of the present invention and that the described embodiments merely clarify the principles of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An article which may be secured to a person's natural hair and readily repositioned, comprising at least one fastener attached to the article for securing the article to the natural hair, said fastener including a base portion and a tongue portion extending from said base portion, said tongue portion having a reduced diameter portion, said fastener having an aperture extending through said base portion and said tongue portion through which a person's hair may be threaded so that the fastener may be moved toward and away from a person's scalp about the person's natural hair, and a resilient member which cooperates with the fastener to hold the natural hair against the reduced diameter portion for securing the fastener at any desired position along the threaded length of natural hair.

2. An article in accordance with claim 1, wherein an intermediate fastener is provided consisting of at least two parts which may be joined to each other, one part of said intermediate fastener being attached to said article and another part of said intermediate fastener being attached to said apertured fastener.

3. An article according to claim 1, wherein said article is a hairpiece.

4. A skin lift according to claim 1, wherein said article is a first gripper for lifting desired skin, and means are provided for holding the first gripper in a selected position to apply tension to the hair to which the first gripper is secured to lift the desired skin.

5. An article according to claim 2, wherein said article is a hairpiece.

6. Apparatus for securing an article to a person's hair, comprising at least one fastener capable of being secured to said article, said fastener including a base portion and a tongue portion extending from said base portion, said tongue portion having a predetermined diameter and a reduced diameter portion, a grommet

for resiliently holding the person's hair in contact with the fastener, and means for placing the grommet in resilient engagement with the reduced diameter portion of the fastener so that the person's hair is firmly held between the grommet and the fastener.

7. Apparatus for securing an article according to claim 6, wherein said tongue of said fastener includes an aperture through which the person's hair is drawn for placement between the grommet and the tongue.

8. Apparatus for securing an article according to claim 7, wherein said placing means comprises a tool having a projection of a diameter substantially the same as the diameter of the tongue for engagement therewith, said diameter of the projection resiliently retaining the grommet for placement on the tongue.

9. Apparatus for securing an article according to claim 8, wherein said tool comprises an outer sleeve having an end including an aperture, an inner member supporting the projection and being adapted to fit slidably within the sleeve, said projection being positioned to be moved through the aperture in the end of the sleeve, whereby said outer sleeve can be advanced toward the fastener into engagement with the grommet to place the grommet on the tongue with the person's

hair held therebetween.

10. An article which may be secured to a person's natural hair and readily repositioned, comprising at least one unitary fastener having a base portion and an elongated tongue portion extending from said base portion, said base portion and said tongue portion having an aperture extending therethrough along the longitudinal dimension of the tongue portion for receiving hair threaded into said base portion, through said tongue portion and out the end of said tongue portion, an intermediate fastener consisting of at least two parts which may be joined to one another, said base portion of said fastener being secured to one part of said intermediate fastener so that one part may be secured to the person's natural hair and moved toward and away from the person's scalp, retaining means cooperable with the exterior surface of said tongue portion for bending the hair extending longitudinally out of said tongue portion toward the base portion for holding the hair against the exterior surface of said tongue portion, and the other part of said intermediate fastener being attached to said article.

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