ADJUSTABLE GARMENTS, SUCH AS ADJUSTABLE SHIRTS AND PANTS

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ABSTRACT
Adjustable shirts, pants, and other garments are provided that are adapted to adjust in size, to fit the body of an individual as the individual gains or loses large amounts of weight. For example, an adjustable shirt is provided that includes a unique tightening mechanism for selectively adjusting the shirt's girth. In particular embodiments, adjusting the tightening mechanism in a particular way reduces the shirt's girth and creates an attractive, comfortable, substantially symmetrical pattern of folds on the back of the shirt. As another example, a pair of adjustable pants are provided that expand to comfortably conform to the user's unique body shape.
ADJUSTABLE GARMENTS, SUCH AS ADJUSTABLE SHIRTS AND PANTS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED PATENT APPLICATIONS

[0001] This non-provisional patent application claims priority from provisional patent application Ser. No. 61/183,739, which was filed on Jun. 3, 2009, and which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

[0002] In recent years, it has become much more common for individuals to lose large amounts of weight in a fairly short period of time. This is due, for example, to: (1) a recent dramatic increase in the number of morbidly obese individuals in the U.S.; and (2) substantial recent advances in medicine, nutrition, and exercise-related technologies.

[0003] In most cases, in order for an individual to be successful in losing weight and keeping the weight off, the individual must adhere to a strict regimen of diet and exercise. This often requires that the individual spend a substantial amount of time exercising in a public place, such as a gym.

[0004] Unfortunately, there are currently very few clothing designs on the market that are both attractive and suitable for wear by obese individuals while they exercise. As a result, obese individuals are often left with the option of either not exercising, or exercising in painful or unattractive clothing.

[0005] In addition, individuals who lose large amounts of weight over short periods of time (e.g., gastric bypass or lap-band patients) are often forced to buy new exercise clothing every several weeks in order to assure that their gym clothing fits appropriately. This can be prohibitively expensive.

[0006] In light of the above, there is currently a need for clothing that adjusts easily to the body of a wearer as the wearer gains or loses large amounts of weight (such as during or after pregnancy), and that maintains an attractive appearance (and preferably a high level of comfort) in its various adjusted states.

SUMMARY OF VARIOUS EMBODIMENTS

[0007] An adjustable shirt, according to a particular embodiment, comprises: (1) a shirt torso that defines a front portion and a back portion, wherein the shirt torso defines: (a) a first lateral side that defines a right arm opening, (b) a second lateral side that defines a left arm opening, (c) a top portion that defines a neck opening, and (d) a bottom portion that defines a lower opening; (2) a first elongated tightening-member sleeve that is attached adjacent an exterior surface of the back portion on a right side of the back portion; (3) a second elongated tightening-member sleeve that is attached adjacent an exterior surface of the back portion on a left side of the back portion; (4) a first elongated, flexible tightening member that is positioned at least partially within the first tightening-member sleeve; and (5) a second elongated, flexible tightening member that is positioned at least partially within the second tightening-member sleeve. In particular embodiments: (1) a first end of the first tightening member is attached adjacent the back portion of the shirt torso so that moving the first end of the first tightening member laterally with respect to the front portion of the shirt torso causes a first particular portion of the shirt torso's back portion to move laterally with respect to the shirt torso's front portion; (2) a first end of the second tightening member is attached adjacent the back portion of the shirt torso so that moving the first end of the second tightening member laterally with respect to the front portion of the shirt torso causes a second particular portion of the shirt torso's back portion to move laterally with respect to the shirt torso's front portion; and (3) the adjustable shirt is adapted to be converted between: (a) a first orientation, and (b) a second orientation in which the first and second lateral sides of the shirt torso are tapered to a greater extent than when the adjustable shirt is in the first orientation. In various embodiments, the adjustable shirt is adapted to allow a user to convert the shirt from the first orientation to the second orientation by: (1) pulling a portion of the first tightening member so that the first end of the first tightening member moves toward a central axis of the shirt torso's back portion, thereby causing: (a) at least a portion of the first tightening-member sleeve to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes a plurality of pleats to form on the right side of the shirt torso, and the right side of the shirt torso to taper; and (2) pulling a portion of the second tightening member so that the first end of the second tightening member moves toward the central axis of the shirt torso's back portion, thereby causing: (a) at least a portion of the second tightening-member sleeve to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes a plurality of pleats to form on the left side of the shirt torso, and the left side of the shirt torso to taper.

[0008] An adjustable shirt comprising: (A) a shirt torso defining a front portion and a back portion, wherein the shirt torso defines a first lateral side that defines a right arm opening, a second lateral side that defines a left arm opening, a top portion that defines a neck opening, and a bottom portion that defines a lower opening; and (B) a first reinforcing member that is attached adjacent a right side of the shirt torso's back portion; and (C) a second reinforcing member that is attached adjacent a left side of the shirt torso's back portion. The adjustable shirt is adapted to be converted between: (1) a first orientation; and (2) a second orientation in which the first and second lateral sides of the shirt torso are tapered to a greater extent than when the adjustable shirt is in the first orientation. The adjustable shirt is further adapted to allow a user to convert the shirt from the first orientation to the second orientation by causing: (1) at least a portion of the first reinforcing member to bunch into a first compressed orientation, which thereby causes a plurality of pleats to form on the right side of the shirt torso, and the right side of the shirt torso to taper; and (2) at least a portion of the second reinforcing member to bunch into a second compressed orientation, which thereby causes a plurality of pleats to form on the left side of the shirt torso, and the left side of the shirt torso to taper.

[0009] A pair of pants according to various embodiments comprises: (A) a flexible upper portion that is adapted to extend circumferentially around a waist of a wearer of the pants and to at least substantially conform to the waist of the wearer; and (B) a substantially loose lower portion that is adapted to cover at least a portion of the wearer's legs. In particular embodiments, the pair of pants is adapted so that, when the pair of pants is properly worn by a wearer, a boundary between the upper portion and the lower portion is positioned on the wearer so that: a first portion of the boundary is positioned immediately adjacent the wearer's right pelvic
bone; and a second portion of the boundary is positioned immediately adjacent the wearer’s left pelvic bone.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] Having thus described various embodiments of the invention in general terms, reference will now be made to the accompanying drawings, which are not necessarily drawn to scale, and wherein:

[0011] FIG. 1A is a front view of an adjustable shirt according to a particular embodiment of the invention. In this figure, the shirt is shown in a substantially untapered orientation, and the central axis of the shirt is shown in dashed lines.

[0012] FIG. 1B is a rear view of the adjustable shirt of FIG. 1A. In this figure, the shirt is also shown in a substantially untapered orientation.

[0013] FIG. 2A is a front view of the adjustable shirt of FIG. 1A. In this figure, the shirt is shown in a tapered orientation.

[0014] FIG. 2B is a rear view of the adjustable shirt of FIG. 1A. In this figure, the shirt is also shown in a substantially tapered orientation.

[0015] FIG. 3A is a front view of a pair of adjustable pants according to a particular embodiment of the invention. In this figure, the pants are shown in a substantially untapered orientation.

[0016] FIG. 3B is a front view of the pair of adjustable pants of FIG. 3A. In this figure, the pants are shown in a substantially tapered orientation.

[0017] FIG. 4 is a right side view of the pair of adjustable pants of FIG. 3A.

[0018] FIG. 5 is a plan view of a pattern for the pants shown in FIG. 4.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF VARIOUS EMBODIMENTS

[0019] Various embodiments of the present invention will now be described more fully hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which various embodiments of the invention are shown. This invention may, however, be embodied in many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth herein. Rather, these embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough and complete, and will fully convey the scope of the invention to those skilled in the art. Like numbers refer to like elements throughout.

[0020] FIGS. 1-5 depict embodiments of an adjustable shirt and a pair of adjustable pants according to various embodiments of the invention. The structure and function of adjustable shirts and adjustable pants according to various embodiments are discussed below.

Adjustable Shirts

[0021] A. Structure of Exemplary Adjustable Shirts

[0022] An adjustable shirt according to particular embodiments is shown in FIGS. 1A-2B. As may be understood from these figures, the adjustable shirt 100 comprises a shirt torso 105, which comprises: (1) a first lateral side 110 that defines a right arm opening 115; (2) a second lateral side 120 that defines a left arm opening 125; (3) a top portion 130 that defines a neck opening 135; (4) a front portion 140; (5) a back portion 145; and (6) a bottom portion 150 that defines a lower opening 155.

[0023] In various embodiments, the shirt’s torso 105 comprises a front panel (which may, for example, be cut from a single piece of cloth), and a rear panel (which may also, for example, be cut from a single piece of cloth). In particular embodiments, the front and rear panels are substantially the same size and shape and are sewn together along their corresponding side and shoulder edges in a manner known to those in the relevant field. In other embodiments, the shirt’s torso 105 comprises a tube of fabric that is sewn together at the shoulders.

[0024] As may be understood from FIG. 1A, the shirt 100 further comprises right and left tubular sleeves 165, 170 that are sewn onto the shirt’s torso in a manner known in the relevant field. In particular embodiments, the interior of the right sleeve 165 is in communication with the shirt torso’s right arm opening 115. Similarly, the interior of the left sleeve 170 is in communication with the shirt torso’s left arm opening 125. In particular embodiments, the shirt further comprises a collar 160 that is sewn adjacent the shirt torso’s neck opening 135.

[0025] In particular embodiments, the adjustable shirt 100 further comprises a tightening mechanism 200 that is adapted for selectively converting the shirt 100 from a first size to a second size (e.g., by selectively tapering the shirt torso 105). In various embodiments, the tightening mechanism 200 is adapted for selectively reducing the girth of the shirt torso’s midsection by at least about 30%, at least about 40%, at least about 50%, and/or at least about 60%. For example, in a particular embodiment, the tightening mechanism 200 is adapted for selectively reducing the girth of the shirt torso’s midsection from at least about 60 inches to less than about 35 inches.

[0026] FIGS. 1B and 2B depict a tightening mechanism 200 according to a particular embodiment of the invention that comprises: (1) a first, elongated tightening-member sleeve 205; (2) a second, elongated tightening-member sleeve 210; (3) a first, elongated flexible tightening member 215; and (4) a second, elongated flexible tightening member 220.

[0027] In various embodiments, the first elongated tightening-member sleeve 205 is formed by sewing an elongated, substantially rectangular piece of material onto the outer surface of the shirt 100 adjacent the right side of the shirt 100 as shown in FIG. 1B. In the embodiment shown in this figure, this piece of material is sewn to the shirt 100 about substantially the entire perimeter of the rectangular piece of material, but the inner vertical side of the piece of material is left open (e.g., not sewn to the shirt 100). As a result, the piece of material and the back 145 of the shirt’s torso 105 cooperate to form an elongated pocket that is adapted to be in a substantially horizontal orientation when the shirt 100 is worn by a user and the user is standing in a substantially even, upright position.

[0028] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1B and 2B, the second elongated tightening-member sleeve 210 has substantially the same shape and form as the first elongated tightening-member sleeve 205, except that the second elongated tightening-member sleeve 210 is disposed on the shirt’s left side, and is essentially a mirror image of the first elongated tightening-member sleeve (e.g., as taken about the shirt’s central axis) 205. In various embodiments, the first and second tightening member sleeves 205, 210 each extend from a side seam of the shirt 100 to a position that is adjacent a central portion of the shirt 100.

[0029] As may be further understood from FIGS. 1B and 2B, in particular embodiments, the tightening mechanism 200 includes a first, elongated flexible tightening member 215.
(e.g., a cord, a length of string, or a length of ribbon) that is positioned at least partially within the elongated tightening-member sleeve 205. In a particular embodiment, a first end 225 of the first tightening member 215 is attached to a first particular portion 230 of the shirt torso’s back portion 145. For example, in the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1B and 2B, the first end 225 of the first tightening member 215 is sewn into the shirt torso’s right side seam. The first tightening member extends through the first tightening-member sleeve 205 and the first tightening member’s second end 235 extends out of the first tightening-member sleeve’s open end.

[0030] Similarly, in particular embodiments, the tightening mechanism 200 includes a second, elongated flexible tightening member 220 (e.g., a cord, an elastic band, a length of string, or a length of ribbon) that is positioned at least partially within the second, elongated tightening-member sleeve 210. In a particular embodiment, a first end 240 of the second tightening member 220 is attached to a second particular portion 245 of the shirt torso’s back portion 145. For example, in the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1B and 2B, the first end 240 of the second tightening member 240 is sewn into the shirt torso’s left side seam. The second tightening member 220 extends through the second tightening-member sleeve 210 and the second tightening member’s second end 250 extends out of the second tightening-member sleeve’s open end. In other embodiments, the second ends 235, 250 of the first and second tightening members 215, 220 are attached to each other to form a single continuous tightening member.

[0031] As may be understood from FIGS. 1B and 2B, in particular embodiments, the first and second tightening member sleeves 205, 210 are substantially co-linear when the shirt is worn by a user who is standing in a substantially upright position. In various embodiments, the open ends of the first and second tightening member sleeves 205, 210 are co-facing and are spaced apart from each other by between about 0.5 and about 4 inches.

[0032] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, the adjustable shirt 100 includes an enclosure 265 (e.g., a pocket) that is positioned between the open ends of the first and second tightening member sleeves 205, 210. This enclosure 265 may, for example, be sewn (or otherwise attached) directly to the back portion 145 of the shirt torso 105.

[0033] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, the enclosure 265 is a substantially rectangular, enclosed cloth pocket that includes a substantially rectangular back surface (not shown), and a substantially rectangular front surface that is positioned so that it overlaps the pocket’s back surface and so that the corresponding edges of the front and back surfaces align. The front and back surfaces are sewn together around their respective perimeters. However, as discussed in greater detail below, a respective gap may be left in the stitching at each of the opposite sides of the pocket to define a respective opening through which the respective flexible tightening members 215, 220 may pass.

[0034] In particular embodiments, the front and back surfaces of the enclosure 265 are substantially the same size and shape. However, in other embodiments, the front and back surfaces may be of different sizes and/or shapes.

[0035] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, two gaps (not shown) are located in the enclosure’s stitching. The gaps may be defined, for example, at opposite lateral sides of the enclosure 265. In particular embodiments, the second end 235 of the first tightening member 215 and the second end 250 of the second tightening member 220 each pass through one of these respective gaps and are disposed in the enclosure 265.

[0036] In other embodiments, the enclosure 265 defines a single gap in its stitching. In such embodiments, the second end 235 of the first tightening member 215 and the second end 250 of the second tightening member 220 may both pass through the single gap and may be disposed in the enclosure 265.

[0037] In other embodiments, a hole is formed in the enclosure 265. In such embodiments, the second end 235 of the first tightening member 215 and the second end 250 of the second tightening member 220 may each pass through a respective hole in the enclosure 265 and may be disposed in the enclosure 265.

[0038] In another embodiment, two holes are cut in opposite sides of the enclosure 265. In such an embodiment, the second end 235 of the first tightening member 215 and the second end 250 of the second tightening member 220 may each pass through a respective hole in the enclosure 265 and may be disposed in the enclosure 265.

[0039] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, the enclosure’s front surface defines a slit 275 or other opening through which users may selectively access items stored within the enclosure 265. The adjustable shirt 100 includes at least one fastener 270 (e.g., a zipper, a button, or a snap) that is located within or adjacent to the enclosure 265 for selectively controlling access to the enclosure’s interior through the enclosure’s opening 275. This fastener 270 may, for example, be sewn (or otherwise attached) directly to the enclosure 265 or the back portion 145 of the shirt torso 105.

[0040] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 2A and 2B, the fastener 270 is a zipper having edges that are attached to the interior edges of the enclosure’s opening 275. In other embodiments, the zipper may be attached to the exterior edges of the enclosure’s opening 275.

[0041] B. Operation of Exemplary Shirts

[0042] As may be understood from FIGS. 1B and 2B, in various embodiments, the adjustable shirt 100 is adapted to be converted between a first orientation, and a second orientation in which the first and second lateral sides 110, 120 of the shirt’s torso 105 are tapered to a greater extent than when the adjustable shirt 100 is in the first orientation. The adjustable shirt 100 is adapted to allow a user to convert the shirt 100 from the first orientation to the second orientation by: (1) pulling a portion of the first tightening member 215 so that the first end 225 of the first tightening member 215 moves toward a central axis of the shirt torso’s back portion 145, thereby causing: (1) at least a portion of the first tightening-member sleeve 205 to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes: (A) a first plurality of pleats 255 to form on the right side of the shirt torso 105, and (B) the right side 110 of the shirt torso 105 to taper, and (2) pulling a portion of the second tightening member 220 so that the first end 240 of the second tightening member 220 moves toward the central axis of the shirt torso’s back portion 145, thereby causing: (1) at least a portion of the second tightening-member sleeve 210 to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes: (A) a second plurality of pleats 260 to form on the left side of the shirt torso 105, and (B) the left side 110 of the shirt torso 105 to taper.
be selectively moved by the wearer between: (A) a closed position, in which the enclosure 265 prevents access (e.g., physical or visual access) to the respective second ends 235, 250 of the first and second tightening members 215, 220; and (B) an open position, in which the enclosure 265 does not substantially prevent access (e.g., physical or visual access) to the respective second ends 235, 250 of the first and second tightening members 215, 220. In a further embodiment, a fastener 270 is used by the wearer to selectively maintain the enclosure 265 in the closed position.

While the concepts above are described in regard to adjustable shirts, it should be understood that the same, or similar, concepts may be embodied in other types of clothing items—especially clothing tops having a torso portion that would benefit from selective adjustment in size. Such clothing tops may include, for example, sweatshirts, jackets, coats, and pajama tops.

C. Structure of Exemplary Pants

A pair of pants according to particular embodiments is shown in FIG. 3A-FIG. 5. As may be understood from these figures, the pair of pants 300 comprises: (1) a flexible upper portion 305 that is adapted to (A) extend circumferentially around a waist of a wearer of the pants, and (B) substantially conform to the waist of the wearer; and, (2) a lower portion 310 that is substantially loose and is adapted to cover at least a portion of the wearer’s legs (e.g., substantially all of the wearer’s legs). In particular embodiments, the upper portion is an elastic knit material (e.g., Lycra, Lyrcosoft, Supplex, Tactel, Spandex, or any combination of these fabrics) and the lower portion is a woven fabric (e.g., a flexible woven fabric, such as Tencel).

One purpose of various embodiments of such pants is to help accommodate the growing or shrinking belly of an individual (e.g., a pregnant or overweight individual). Another aspect of particular embodiments of such pants is that waist and hip sizing for the pants may be independent of each other. For example, in various embodiments, the wearer’s hip size determines the fit of the pants because the pants’ flexible upper portion is adapted to stretch or contract to accommodate larger or smaller sizes of waists relative to the wearer’s hips.

As may be understood from FIGS. 3A and 3B, in particular embodiments, the pair of pants 300 further comprises at least one tightening mechanism (e.g., an internal or external tightening mechanism) that is adapted for selectively adjusting the diameter of at least one of the pants’ lower leg openings. In particular embodiments, the pants include: (A) a first tightening-member sleeve 320 that is attached adjacent an exterior surface of the right pant leg and positioned adjacent and substantially parallel to the right pant leg hem; (B) a second tightening-member sleeve 320 that is attached adjacent an exterior surface of the left pant leg and positioned adjacent and substantially parallel to the left pant leg hem; (C) a first flexible tightening member (e.g., a cord, a length of string, or a length of ribbon) that is positioned at least partially within the first tightening-member sleeve; and (D) a second flexible tightening member that is positioned at least partially within the second tightening-member sleeve. In various embodiments, the pants may further include: (E) a third tightening-member sleeve that is attached adjacent an exterior surface of the right pant leg and positioned adjacent the first tightening-member sleeve and substantially parallel to the right pant leg hem; (F) a fourth tightening-member sleeve that is attached adjacent an exterior surface of the left pant leg and positioned adjacent the second tightening-member sleeve and substantially parallel to the left pant leg hem; (G) a third flexible tightening member (e.g., a cord, a length of string, or a length of ribbon) that is positioned at least partially within the third tightening-member sleeve; and (H) a fourth flexible tightening member that is positioned at least partially within the fourth tightening-member sleeve.

In various embodiments, the tightening-member sleeves are formed by sewing substantially rectangular pieces of material onto the outer surface of the pants as shown in FIGS. 3A and 3B. In the embodiment shown in this figure, the pieces of material are sewn to the pants 300 about substantially the entire perimeter of the rectangular pieces of material, but the inner vertical side of the pieces of material is left open (e.g., not sewn to the pants). As a result, the pieces of material and the back of the pants cooperate to form an elongated pocket that is adapted to be in a substantially horizontal orientation when the pants 300 are worn by a user and the user is standing in an even, upright position.

As shown in FIG. 5, the pair of pants may be constructed from a left and right panel. In particular embodiments, the left and right panels are substantially the same size and shape and are sewn together along their corresponding side edges in a manner known to those in the relevant field. In other embodiments, the pants’ upper portion 305 comprises a tube of fabric, and the upper portion 305 and the two panels of the lower portion 310 are sewn together in a manner known to those in the relevant field. In a further embodiment, the flexible upper portion 305 is constructed from an elastic material (e.g., Spandex).

In various embodiments, as shown in FIGS. 3A and 3B, the pair of pants further comprises a pair of elastic shorts disposed within the interior of the pair of pants. The elastic short are adapted so that, when the pants 300 are worn by a user, the shorts are worn simultaneously by the user.

As may be understood from FIGS. 3A and 3B, in a particular embodiment, the pants 300 are adapted to be converted between a first orientation, and a second orientation in which the pant’s legs are tapered to a greater extent than when the pants 300 are in the first orientation. The pants 300 are adapted to allow a user to convert the pants 300 from the first orientation to the second orientation by: (1) pulling a portion of the first tightening member so that a first end of the first tightening member moves away from the pants’ right pant leg, thereby causing at least a portion of the first tightening-member sleeve to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes the right pant leg to taper, and (2) pulling a portion of the second tightening member so that a first end of the second tightening member moves away from the pants’ left pant leg, thereby causing at least a portion of the second tightening-member sleeve to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes the left pant leg to taper.

In further embodiments, the pants 300 are adapted to allow a user to further adapt the pants 300 from the first orientation to the second orientation by: (1) pulling a portion of the third tightening member so that a first end of the third tightening member moves away from the pants’ right pant leg, thereby causing at least a portion of the third tightening-member sleeve to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes the right pant leg to further taper, and (2) pulling a portion of the fourth tightening member so that a first end of the fourth tightening member moves away from the pants’ left pant leg, thereby causing at least a portion of the
fourth tightening-member sleeve to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes the left pant leg to further taper.

[0054] D. Operation of Exemplary Pants

[0055] As may be understood from FIGS. 3A and 4, in a particular embodiment, when the pants are in normal use by a wearer, the boundary 315 between the pants’ upper portion 305 and lower portion 310 is positioned on the wearer so that:

(1) a first portion of the boundary 315 is positioned substantially immediately adjacent the wearer’s right pelvic bone; and
(2) a second portion of the boundary 315 is positioned substantially immediately adjacent the wearer’s left pelvic bone.

[0056] In an additional embodiment, as may be understood from FIGS. 3A and 4, a third portion of the boundary is be positioned adjacent a right side of the user’s back, at least 3 inches higher than the first portion of the boundary 315, and a fourth portion of the boundary 315 is positioned adjacent a left side of the user’s back, at least 3 inches higher than the second portion of the boundary.

CONCLUSION

[0057] Many modifications and other embodiments of the invention will come to mind to one skilled in the art to which this invention pertains having the benefit of the teachings presented in the foregoing descriptions and the associated drawings. For example, as will be understood by one skilled in the relevant field in light of this disclosure, the invention may take form in a variety of different mechanical and operational configurations. As a particular example, although various embodiments above describe using one or more flexible tightening members for moving the shirt’s tightening-member sleeves into a compressed orientation, any other suitable mechanism may be used for this purpose. Similarly, although the shirt’s tightening member sleeves are described above as being defined by a layer of material and the back 145 of the shirt torso 105, in other embodiments, the shirt’s tightening member sleeves may comprise a pocket that is physically discrete from the rest of the shirt 100.

[0058] Also, in particular embodiments, the shirt’s tightening member sleeves are internal (e.g., positioned on an interior surface of the shirt’s torso). In such embodiments, the shirt’s tightening members may be, for example, elastic bands or other suitable structures. Such embodiments (and other embodiments described herein) may or may not include an enclosure, as described above, for containing portions of the shirt’s tightening members.

[0059] Therefore, it is to be understood that the invention is not to be limited to the specific embodiments disclosed and that modifications and other embodiments are intended to be included within the scope of the appended exemplary concepts. Although specific terms are employed herein, they are used in a generic and descriptive sense only and not for purposes of limitation.

What I claim is:

1. An adjustable shirt comprising:
   (A) a shirt torso comprising:
      a front portion; and
      a back portion, wherein:
      said shirt torso defines:
      a first lateral side that defines a right arm opening,
      a second lateral side that defines a left arm opening,
      a top portion that defines a neck opening, and
      a bottom portion that defines a lower opening;
   (B) a first elongated tightening-member sleeve that is attached adjacent an exterior surface of said back portion on a right side of said back portion;
   (C) a second elongated tightening-member sleeve that is attached adjacent an exterior surface of said back portion on a left side of said back portion;
   (D) a first elongated, flexible tightening member that is positioned at least partially within said first tightening-member sleeve;
   (E) a second elongated, flexible tightening member that is positioned at least partially within said second tightening-member sleeve, wherein:
      a first end of said first tightening member is attached adjacent said back portion of said shirt torso so that moving said first end of said first tightening member laterally with respect to said front portion of said shirt torso causes a first particular portion of said shirt torso’s back portion to move laterally with respect to said shirt torso’s front portion;
      a first end of said second tightening member is attached adjacent said back portion of said shirt torso so that moving said first end of said second tightening member laterally with respect to said front portion of said shirt torso causes a second particular portion of said shirt torso’s back portion to move laterally with respect to said shirt torso’s front portion;
   said adjustable shirt is adapted to be converted between:
   (1) a first orientation, and
   (2) a second orientation in which said first and second lateral sides of said shirt torso portion are tapered to a greater extent than when said adjustable shirt is in said first orientation, and
   said adjustable shirt is adapted to allow a user to convert said shirt from said first orientation to said second orientation by:
   (1) pulling a portion of said first tightening member so that said first end of said first tightening member moves toward a central axis of said shirt torso’s back portion, thereby causing:
      at least a portion of said first tightening-member sleeve to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes:
      a first plurality of pleats to form on said right side of said shirt torso, and
      said right side of said shirt torso to taper, and
   (2) pulling a portion of said second tightening member so that said first end of said second tightening member moves toward said central axis of said shirt torso’s back portion, thereby causing:
      at least a portion of said second tightening-member sleeve to bunch into a compressed orientation, which thereby causes:
      a second plurality of pleats to form on said left side of said shirt torso, and
      said left side of said shirt torso to taper.

2. The adjustable shirt of claim 1, wherein:
   said first end of said first tightening member is attached to said first particular portion of said back portion of said shirt torso so that said first end of said first tightening member is maintained in a substantially fixed position relative to said first particular portion of said back portion of said shirt torso; and
   said first end of said second tightening member is attached to said second particular portion of said back portion of
said shirt torso so that said first end of said second tightening member is maintained in a substantially fixed position relative to said second particular portion of said back portion of said shirt torso.

3. The adjustable shirt of claim 1, wherein:
said first and second tightening-member sleeves are disposed in a substantially co-linear arrangement.

4. The adjustable shirt of claim 1, wherein:
a second end of said first tightening member is disposed outside of said first tightening-member sleeve adjacent a central portion of said shirt torso; and
a second end of said second tightening member is disposed outside of said second tightening-member sleeve adjacent a central portion of said shirt torso.

5. The adjustable shirt of claim 4, wherein:
said adjustable shirt further comprises an enclosure adjacent a central portion of said shirt torso; and
said second end of said first tightening member and said second end of said second tightening member are disposed within said enclosure.

6. The adjustable shirt of claim 5, wherein:
said first tightening member sleeve, said second tightening member sleeve, and said enclosure are disposed in a substantially co-linear arrangement.

7. The adjustable shirt of claim 6, wherein:
said first tightening member sleeve, said second tightening member sleeve, and said enclosure are adapted so that when said shirt is properly worn by an upright wearer of said shirt said first tightening member sleeve, said second tightening member sleeve, and said enclosure are disposed in a substantially horizontal arrangement.

8. The adjustable shirt of claim 5, wherein:
said enclosure is adapted so that when said shirt is properly worn by a wearer, said enclosure is disposed immediately adjacent said wearer’s lower back.

9. The adjustable shirt of claim 5, wherein:
said enclosure is adapted to be selectively moved between:
(A) a closed position, in which said enclosure prevents access to said respective second ends of said first and second tightening members; and
(B) an open position, in which said enclosure does not substantially prevent access to said respective second ends of said first and second tightening members.

10. The adjustable shirt of claim 9, wherein:
said adjustable shirt further comprises a fastener for selectively maintaining said enclosure in said closed position.

11. The adjustable shirt of claim 1, wherein:
said adjustable shirt further comprises a first sleeve having a first shirt sleeve interior that is in communication with an interior of said shirt torso at said right arm opening; and
a second shirt sleeve having a second shirt sleeve interior that is in communication with said interior of said shirt torso at said left arm opening.

12. The adjustable shirt of claim 1, wherein:
said first end of said first tightening member is disposed immediately adjacent said first lateral side when said shirt is in said first orientation; and
said first end of said second tightening member is disposed immediately adjacent said second lateral side when said shirt is in said first orientation.

13. The adjustable shirt of claim 12, wherein:
said first end of said first tightening member is disposed between said first lateral side and said central axis of said shirt torso’s back portion when said shirt is in said second orientation; and
said first end of said second tightening member is disposed between said second lateral side and said central axis of said shirt torso’s back portion when said shirt is in said second orientation.

14. The adjustable shirt of claim 1, wherein:
said first plurality of pleats on said right side of said shirt torso and said second plurality of pleats on said left side of said shirt torso are configured and positioned so that said first plurality of pleats on said right side of said shirt torso is substantially symmetrical with said second plurality of pleats on said left side of said shirt torso about said central axis of said shirt torso’s back portion when said shirt is properly worn by a wearer.

15. The adjustable shirt of claim 1, wherein:
said first end of said first tightening member is attached to said shirt torso at a first seam between said front portion and said back portion adjacent said first lateral side; and
said first end of said second tightening member is attached to said shirt torso at a second seam between said front portion and said back portion adjacent said second lateral side, wherein:
moving said first end of said first tightening member laterally with respect to said front portion of said shirt torso causes said first seam to move laterally with respect to said shirt torso’s front portion; and
moving said first end of said second tightening member laterally with respect to said front portion of said shirt torso causes said second seam to move laterally with respect to said shirt torso’s front portion.

16. An adjustable shirt comprising:
(A) a shirt torso comprising:
a front portion; and
a back portion, wherein:
said shirt torso defines:
a first lateral side that defines a right arm opening,
a second lateral side that defines a left arm opening,
a top portion that defines a neck opening, and
a bottom portion that defines a lower opening; and
(B) a first reinforcing member that is attached adjacent a right side of said shirt torso’s back portion; and
(C) a second reinforcing member that is attached adjacent a left side of said shirt torso’s back portion, wherein:
said adjustable shirt is adapted to be converted between:
(1) a first orientation, and
(2) a second orientation in which said first and second lateral sides of said shirt torso portion are tapered to a greater extent than when the adjustable shirt is in said first orientation, and
said adjustable shirt is adapted to allow a user to convert said shirt from said first orientation to said second orientation by causing:
(1) at least a portion of said first reinforcing member to bunch into a first compressed orientation, which thereby causes:
a plurality of pleats to form on said right side of said shirt torso, and
said right side of said shirt torso to taper,
(2) at least a portion of said second reinforcing member to bunch into a second compressed orientation, which thereby causes:
a plurality of pleats to form on said left side of said shirt torso, and
said left side of said shirt torso to taper.

17. The adjustable shirt of claim 16, wherein said adjustable shirt comprises:
a first flexible, elongated tightening member that is adapted for moving said first reinforcing member into said first compressed orientation; and
a second flexible, elongated tightening member that is adapted for moving said first reinforcing member into said first compressed orientation.

18. The adjustable shirt of claim 17, wherein:
at least a portion of said first tightening member is disposed between a portion of said first reinforcing member and said back portion of said shirt torso; and
at least a portion of said second tightening member is disposed between a portion of said second reinforcing member and said back portion of said shirt torso.

19. A pair of pants comprising:
a flexible upper portion that is adapted to extend circumferentially around a waist of a wearer of said pants and to at least substantially conform to said waist of said wearer; and
a substantially loose lower portion that is adapted to cover at least a portion of said wearer’s legs, wherein:
said pair of pants is adapted so that, when the pair of pants is properly worn by a wearer, a boundary between said upper portion and said lower portion is positioned on said wearer so that:
a first portion of said boundary is positioned immediately adjacent said wearer’s right pelvic bone; and
a second portion of said boundary is positioned immediately adjacent said wearer’s left pelvic bone.

20. The pair of pants of claim 19, wherein:
said pair of pants is adapted so that, when the pair of pants is properly worn by said wearer, said boundary between said upper portion and said lower portion is positioned on said wearer so that:
a third portion of said boundary is positioned adjacent a right side of said user’s back, at least three inches higher than said first portion of said boundary; and
a fourth portion of said boundary is positioned adjacent a left side of said user’s back, at least three inches higher than said second portion of said boundary.

21. The pair of pants of claim 20, wherein said boundary is a seam between said upper portion and said lower portion.