



(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Sayre

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2012/0246811 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Oct. 4, 2012**

(54) **DISPOSABLE TOILET SEAT PROTECTOR & METHODS OF USE THEREOF**

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(21) Appl. No.: **13/078,929**

(22) Filed: **Apr. 2, 2011**

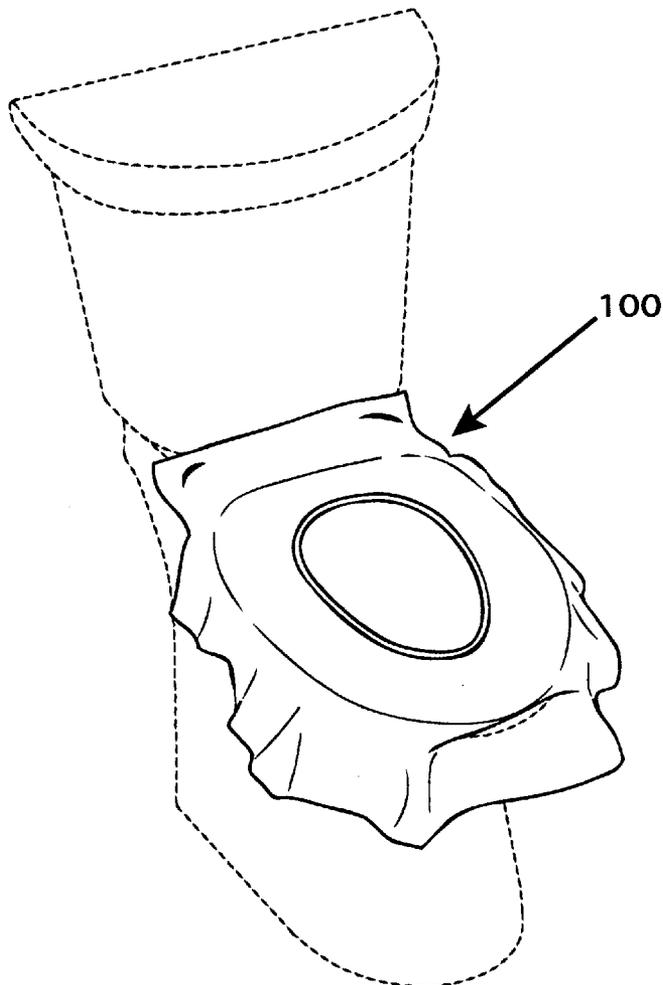
Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47K 13/14 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **4/245.1**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Embodiments of the invention are directed to disposable toilet seat protector. In one embodiment, a toilet seat cover may include a seat portion having an opening approximately center thereto and a skirt portion on an outer periphery thereto. The seat portion may have a polygonal configuration; however, other geometric configurations are within the scope of the invention. The opening may be defined by a collar. Elastic may define a border between the cover and the skirt. A neck or handle portion may be located at a back portion of the cover providing a means for a user to position the cover on a toilet seat. In one embodiment, a toilet seat cover may include a seat portion having an opening approximately center thereto and a skirt portion on an outer periphery thereto. The seat portion may have an oval configuration; however, other geometric configurations are within the scope of the invention. The opening may be defined by a collar. Elastic may define a border between the cover and the skirt. A neck or handle portion may be located at a back portion of the cover providing a means for a user to position the cover on a toilet seat.



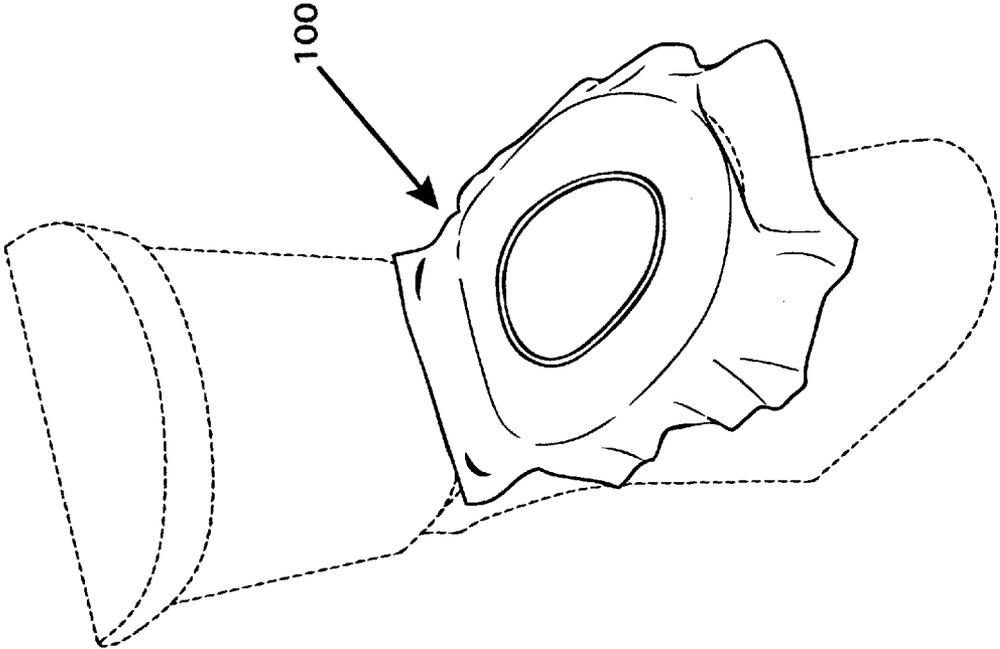


FIG. 1A

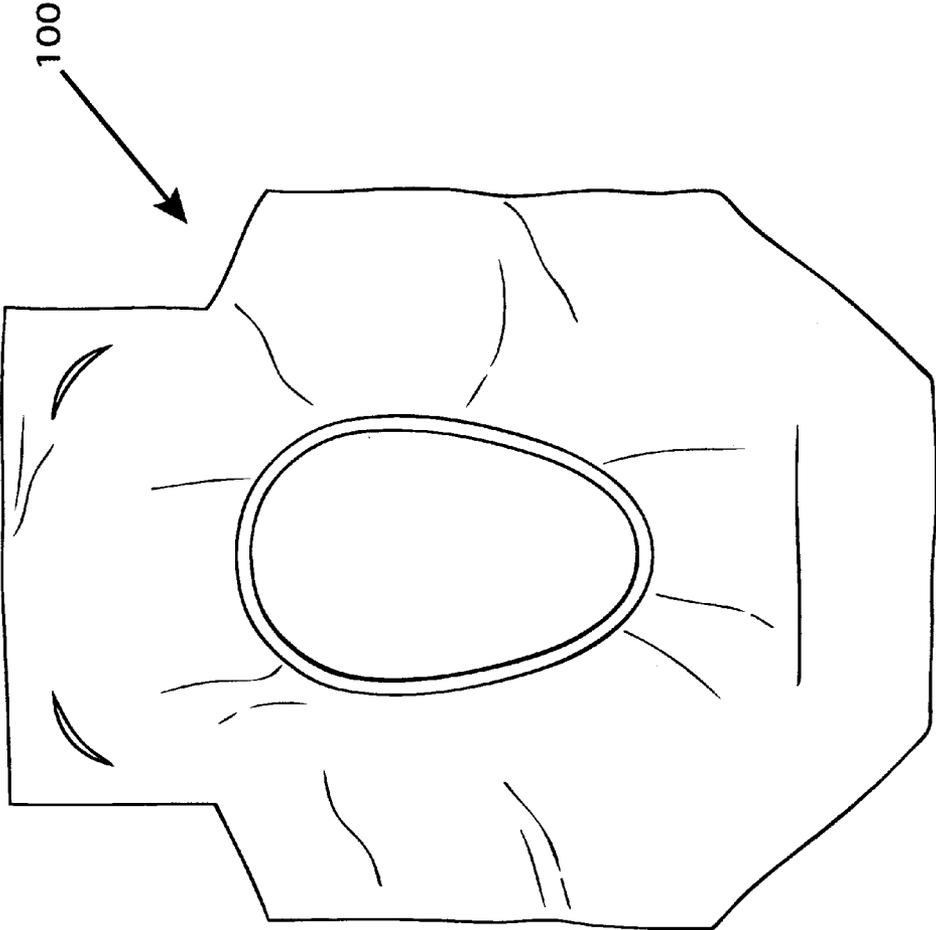


FIG. 1B

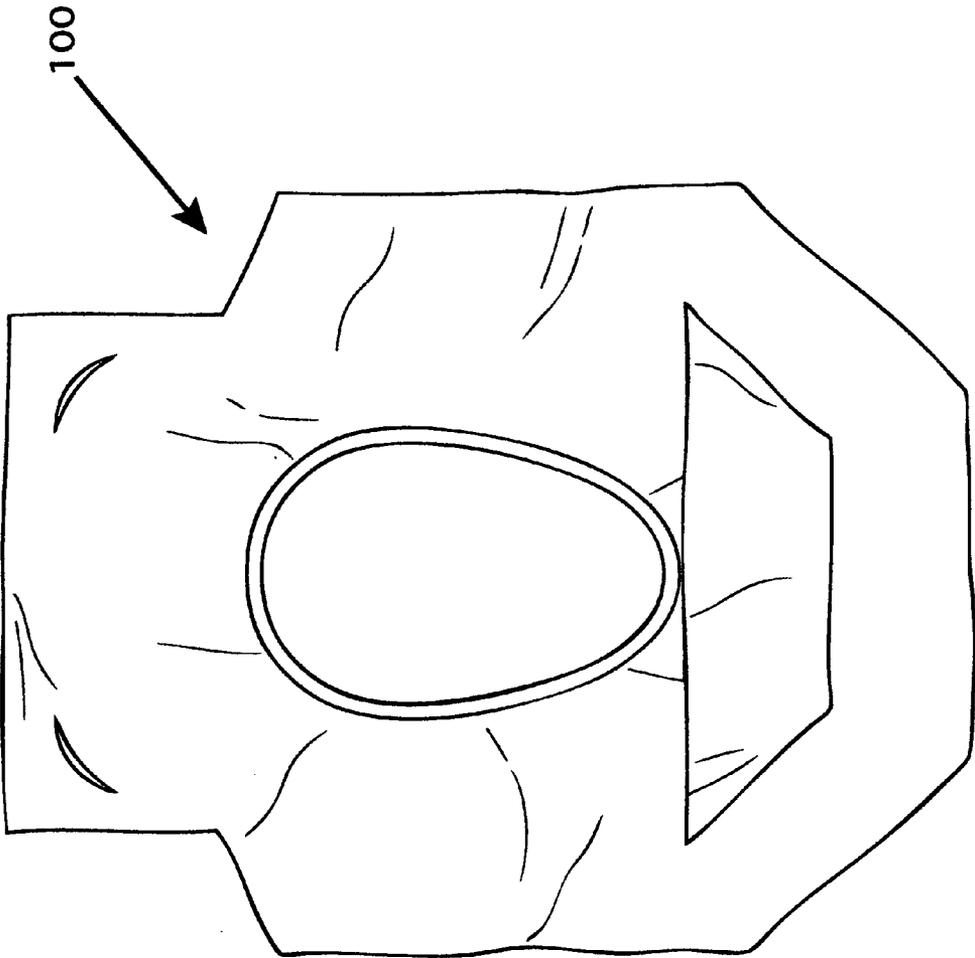


FIG. 1C

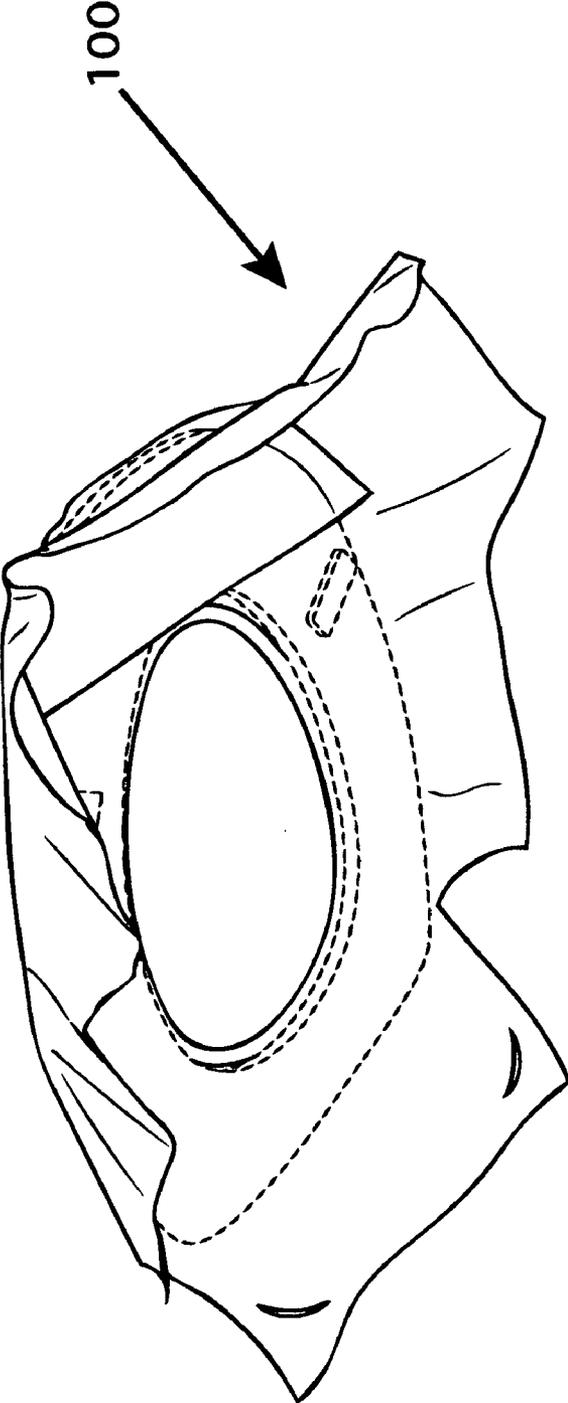


FIG. 1D

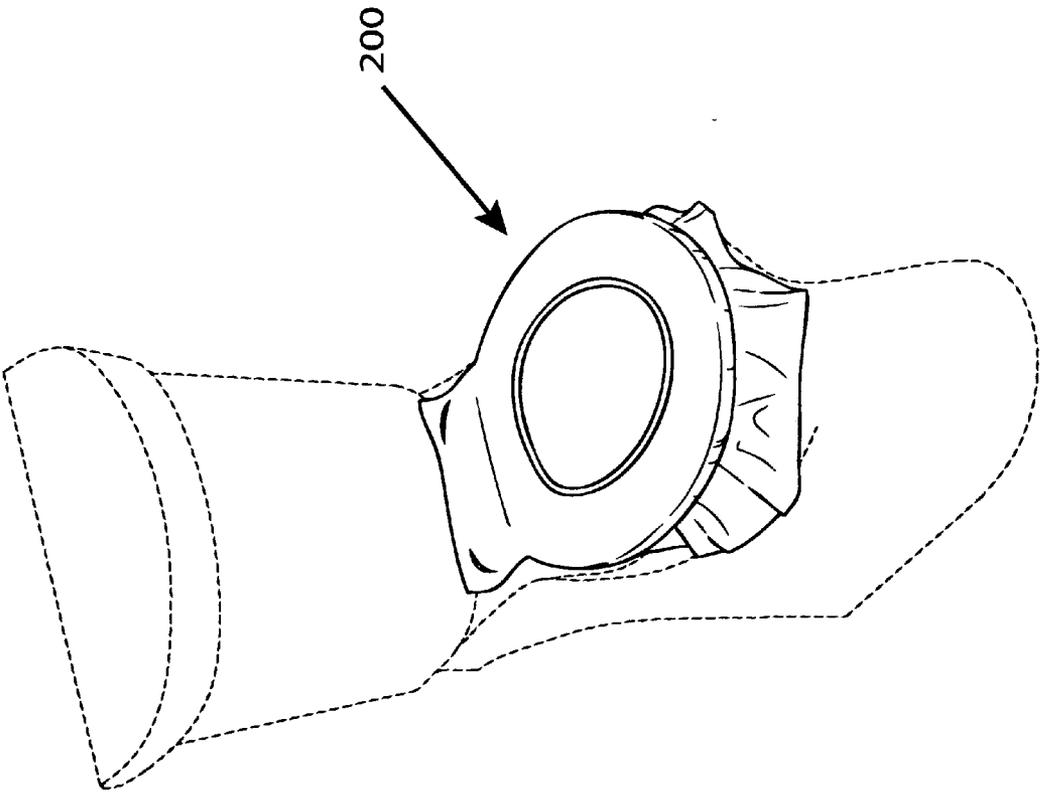


FIG. 2A

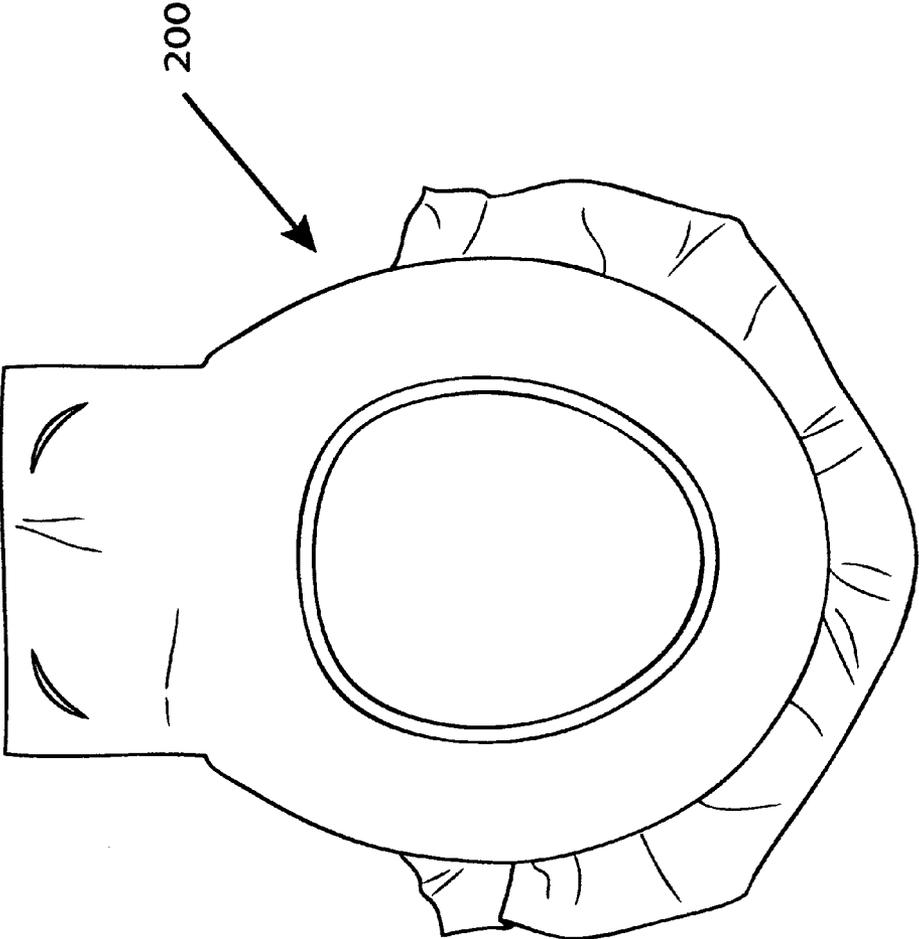


FIG. 2B

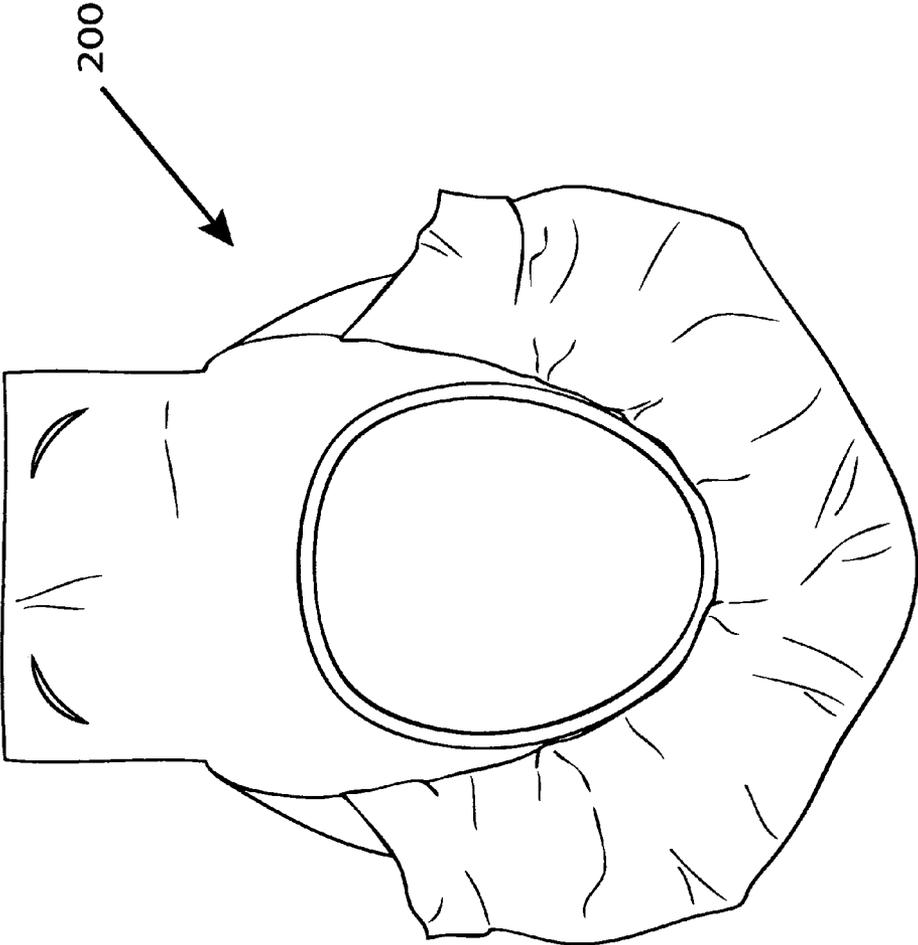


FIG. 2C

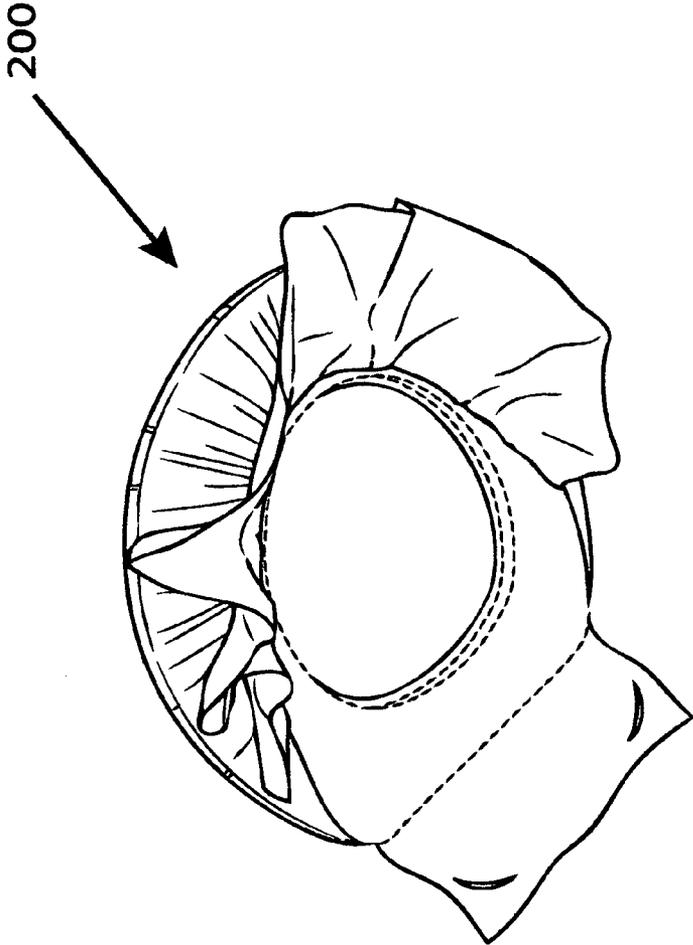


FIG. 2D

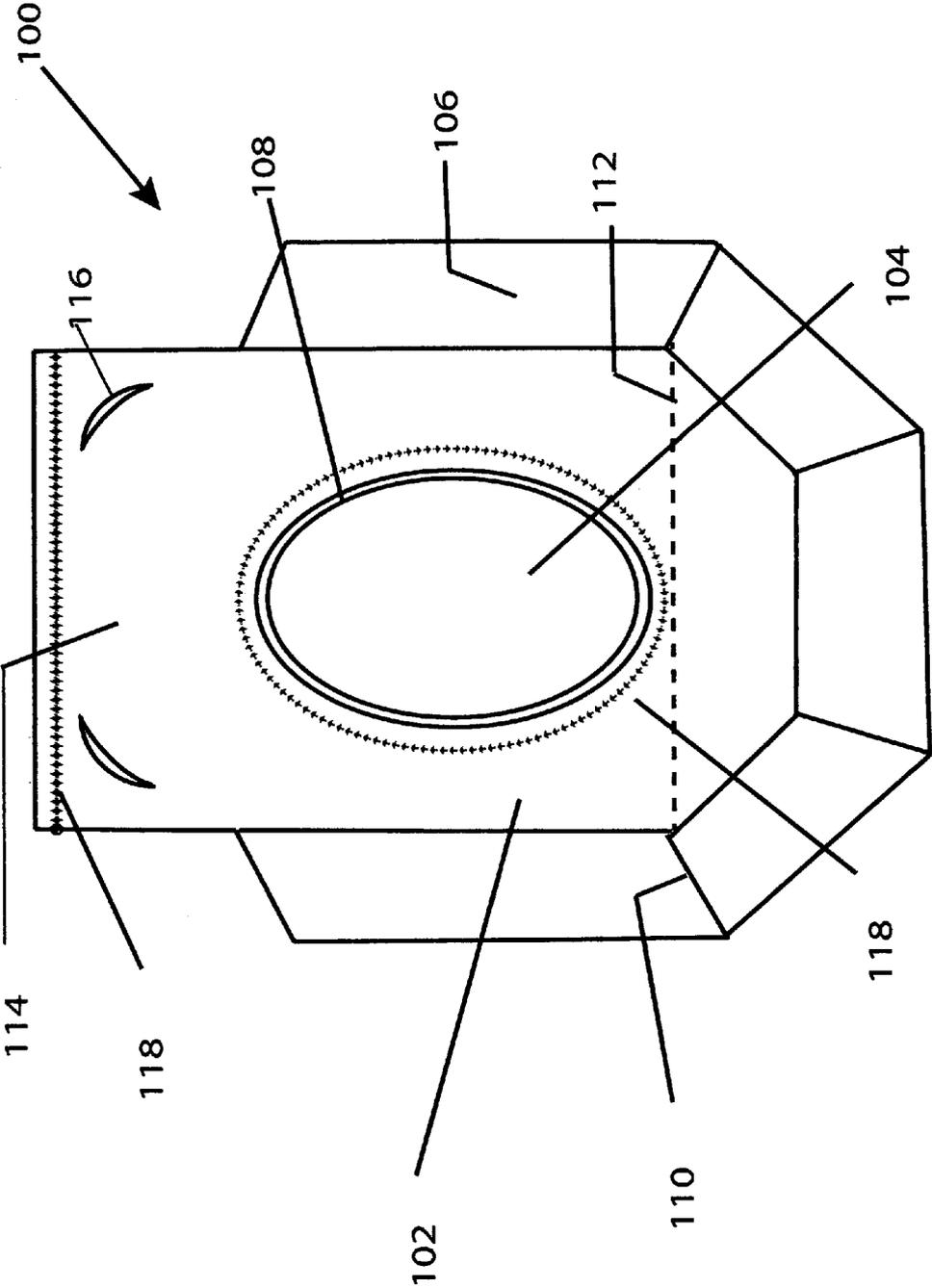


FIG. 3

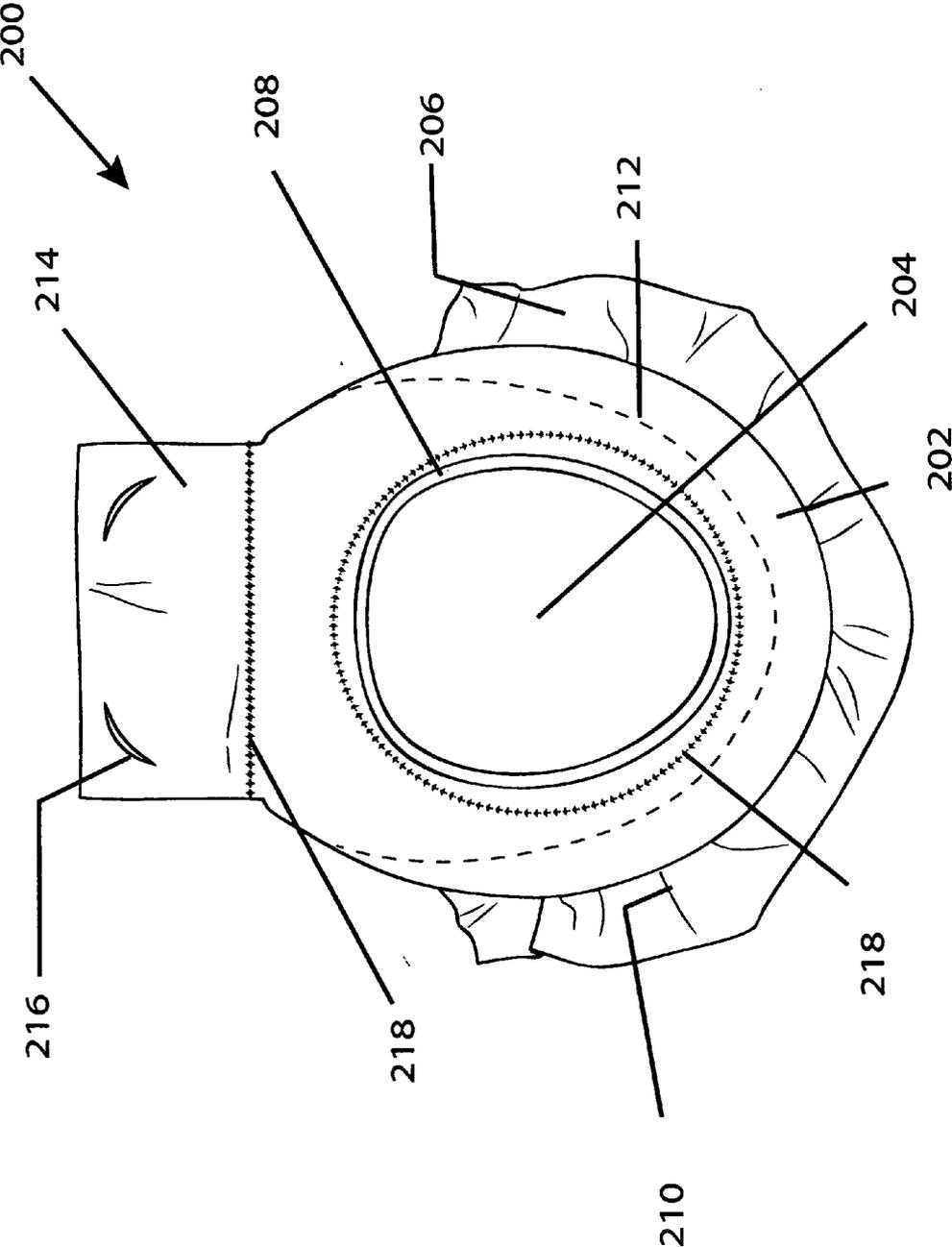


FIG. 4

DISPOSABLE TOILET SEAT PROTECTOR & METHODS OF USE THEREOF

CLAIM OF PRIORITY UNDER U.S.C. §119

[0001] The present Utility Application for Patent claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/320,252 entitled "Disposable Toilet Seat Protectors & Methods of Use Thereof" filed Apr. 3, 2009, and hereby expressly incorporated by reference herein.

FIELD OF INVENTION

[0002] At least one feature pertains to hygiene devices.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

[0003] Many people are reluctant to have contact with a toilet seat outside their own home, especially one located in a public restroom, out of concern for the risk of disease transmission. Consequently, disposable toilet seat covers are often provided in public restrooms, such as those in public parks or public community centers, or restrooms in private businesses, such as those in restaurants and other business establishments. By utilizing toilet seat covers, users have the comfort of knowing that they are not in contact with a surface previously used by a stranger and any diseases which may have been transferred to the toilet seat from strangers.

[0004] Conventional toilet seat covers used today are made of a thin, tissue-paper like material and are disposable and/or flushable. The toilet seat covers are often provided in a folded configuration, and, when unfolded, approximate the shape of a toilet seat. Such toilet seat covers usually have a region in the center of the cover which is partially perforated. When the partially perforated region is separated from the toilet seat cover by a user, an opening forms which approximately aligns with the opening in the toilet seat. This partially perforated region generally remains attached to the toilet seat cover at a back region and hangs within the toilet bowl itself.

[0005] Users of conventional toilet seat covers often find that they do not adequately serve their intended purpose. For example, conventional toilet seat covers often slide around when placed on a toilet seat. Moreover, conventional toilet seat covers often do not fully, or even substantially, cover the toilet seat to adequately prevent contact between the user and the toilet seat. Moreover, the partially perforated region (which generally remains attached to the toilet seat cover) often becomes wet from the water within the toilet bowl because it generally hangs within the toilet bowl itself. This can result in the toilet seat cover being pulled down within the toilet bowl before the user realizes that this has happened causing the user to sit on the unprotected toilet seat. Moreover, conventional toilet seat covers often do not adequately protect liquid from seeping through the cover when placed on a toilet seat due to the conventional material comprising such toilet seat covers.

[0006] Consequently, a toilet seat cover which alleviates the problems inherent in conventional toilet seat covers as described previously is needed.

SUMMARY

[0007] One feature provides a disposable toilet seat protector. The disposable seat cover may include a seat portion having an opening approximately center thereto and a skirt portion on an outer periphery thereto. The seat portion may have a polygonal configuration; however, other geometric

configurations are within the scope of the invention. The opening may be defined by a collar. Elastic may define a border between the cover and the skirt. A neck or handle portion may be located at a back portion of the cover providing a means for a user to position the cover on a toilet seat.

[0008] In yet another feature, the toilet seat cover may include a seat portion having an opening approximately center thereto and a skirt portion on an outer periphery thereto. The seat portion may have an oval configuration; however, other geometric configurations are within the scope of the invention. The opening may be defined by a collar. Elastic may define a border between the cover and the skirt. A neck or handle portion may be located at a back portion of the cover providing a means for a user to position the cover on a toilet seat.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1A is a top perspective view of a toilet seat protector according to one embodiment of the present invention;

[0010] FIG. 1B is a top plan view of the toilet seat protector of FIG. 1A;

[0011] FIG. 1C is a bottom plan view of the toilet seat protector of FIG. 1A;

[0012] FIG. 1D is a bottom perspective view of the toilet seat protector of FIG. 1A;

[0013] FIG. 2A is a top perspective view of a toilet seat protector according to another embodiment of the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 2B is a top plan view of the toilet seat protector of FIG. 2A,

[0015] FIG. 2C is a bottom plan view of the toilet seat protector of FIG. 2A; and

[0016] FIG. 2D is a bottom perspective view of the toilet seat protector of FIG. 2A.

[0017] The broken lines showing a toilet in FIGS. 1A and 2A are for illustrative purposes only and form no part of the claimed design.

[0018] The broken lines showing a toilet seat in FIGS. 1D and 2D are for illustrative purposes only and form no part of the claimed design.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0019] The following detailed description is of the best currently contemplated modes of carrying out the invention. The description is not to be taken in a limiting sense, but is made merely for the purpose of illustrating the general principles of the invention.

[0020] Embodiments of the invention are directed to toilet seat covers and methods of use thereof. In one embodiment, a toilet seat cover may include a seat portion having an opening approximately center thereto and a skirt portion on an outer periphery thereto. The opening may be defined by a collar. Elastic may define a border between the cover and the skirt. A neck or handle portion may be located at a back portion of the cover providing a means for a user to position the cover on a toilet seat.

[0021] FIG. 3 illustrates a plan view of a toilet seat cover according to an embodiment of the invention. As shown, toilet seat cover 100 includes a seat portion 102 having an opening 104 and a skirt portion 106 on an outer periphery of seat portion 102. Seat portion 102 may have a polygonal configuration; however, other geometric configurations are within

the scope of the invention. The outer periphery of toilet seat cover **100** may be defined by elastic or an elastic strip (explained in more detail below). Opening **104** may be defined by a collar **108**. Seat portion **102** is configured to rest on a substantially planar surface, e.g., a toilet seat. Meanwhile, skirt portion **106** is configured to hang below a plane defined by the planar surface, e.g., below the toilet seat. Since conventional toilet bowls are approximately oval in configuration, skirt **106** may include one or more creases **110** and/or angles which prevent skirt **106** from bunching when hanging below the toilet seat.

[0022] A front portion of seat portion **102** may terminate into a pocket **112**. Pocket **112** may be configured to fit over a front portion of a toilet seat, such that pocket **112** completely covers or surrounds both the top and bottom portions of the front portion of the toilet seat, to secure toilet seat cover **100** thereon. A back portion of seat portion **102** may terminate in a neck portion **114** designed for a user to grasp and position toilet seat cover **100** on a toilet seat. Optional handles **116** may be provided on neck portion **114** as additional means for positioning toilet seat cover **100** on the toilet seat. In one embodiment, handles **116** may be perforated tabs in toilet seat cover **100** or may be pull tabs in toilet seat cover **100**. However alternative embodiments are within the scope of the present invention.

[0023] In one embodiment, toilet seat cover **100** may include one or more adhesive strips **118** on a backside thereof for temporarily securing toilet seat cover **100** to a toilet seat. For example, one or more adhesive strips **118** may be located on the backside of toilet seat cover **100**, e.g., about collar **108**, on seat portion **102** near the neckline of collar **108** and/or on neck portion **114**. According to embodiments of the invention, toilet seat cover **100** may be made of a combination of a water permeable material and a water impermeable material, for example, including but not limited to paper, cotton, plastic or a combination thereof as known by those of ordinary skill in the art. For example, a backside of toilet seat cover **100** may be made of a paper material while a front side may be made of a plastic (liquid impermeable) material. In any embodiment, toilet seat cover **100** should be disposable and/or flushable.

[0024] FIG. 4 illustrates a plan view of a toilet seat cover according to an alternative embodiment of the invention. As shown, toilet seat cover **200** includes a seat portion **202** having an opening **204** and a skirt portion **206** on an outer periphery of seat portion **202**. Seat portion **202** may have an oval configuration; however, other geometric configurations are within the scope of the invention. The outer periphery of toilet seat cover **200** may be defined by elastic (explained in more detail below). Opening **204** may be defined by a collar **208**. Seat portion **202** is configured to rest on a substantially planar surface, e.g., a toilet seat. Meanwhile, skirt portion **206** is configured to hang below a plane defined by the planar surface, e.g., below the toilet seat. Since conventional toilet bowls are approximately oval in configuration, skirt **206** may include one or more creases **210** which prevent skirt **206** from bunching when hanging about the toilet bowl.

[0025] The outer periphery of toilet seat cover **200** defined by elastic, stitching or any other means known in the art such that a portion of toilet seat cover **200** may be gathered and may form a pocket **212** when fitted on a toilet seat. This feature provides a snug fit on the toilet seat and substantially or completely prevents slippage of toilet seat cover **200** when positioned on the toilet seat. A back portion of seat portion **202** may terminate in a neck portion **214** designed for a user

to grasp and position toilet seat cover **200** on a toilet seat. Optional handles **216** may be provided on neck portion **214** as additional means for positioning toilet seat cover **200** on the toilet seat. In one embodiment, handles **216** may be perforated tabs or may be pull tabs in toilet seat cover **200**. However alternative embodiments are within the scope of the present invention.

[0026] In one embodiment, toilet seat cover **200** may include one or more adhesive strips **218** on a backside thereof. For example, one or more adhesive strips **218** may be located on the backside of toilet seat cover **200**, e.g., about collar **208** and/or on neck portion **214**. According to embodiments of the invention, toilet seat cover **200** may be made of a combination of a water permeable material and a water impermeable material, for example, including but not limited to paper, cotton, plastic or a combination thereof as known by those of ordinary skill in the art. For example, a backside of toilet seat cover **200** may be made of a paper material while a front side may be made of a plastic (liquid impermeable) material. In any embodiment, toilet seat cover **200** should be disposable and/or flushable.

[0027] According to one method, a user may position a toilet seat cover according to embodiments of the invention over a toilet seat to protect the user from contact with the toilet seat. The user may grab the neck portion (or the handles on the neck portion) and unfold the toilet seat cover (in the case in which the toilet seat cover is folded and/or wrapped in packaging). The user may position the seat portion of the toilet seat cover on the toilet seat while allowing the skirt portion to drape over the toilet seat about the toilet bowl. The outer periphery of the seat portion defined by elastic may cinch about the toilet seat thereby providing a snug fit thereto. Advantageously, this feature may substantially or completely reduce the toilet seat cover from slipping off of the toilet seat.

[0028] Other advantages include, but are not limited to, substantial or complete reduction of contact with the outer surfaces of the toilet bowl provided by the skirt portion; substantial or complete prevention of the toilet seat cover from coming into contact with the floor provided by the skirt portion; substantial or complete prevention of the toilet seat cover from coming into contact with the underside surfaces of the toilet seat or toilet bowl provided by the pocket formed by the elastic and/or the pocket at the front portion of the toilet seat cover. Additional benefits include: (i) the handles and/or enlarged neck provide easy application and completely or substantially prevent the hands of the user from coming into contact with the toilet; (ii) the adhesive strips substantially or completely prevent slippage of the toilet seat cover; (iii) the collar aligns the toilet seat cover on the toilet seat creating a snug fit; and (iv) a dual material plastic/paper toilet seat cover provides an absorbing effect for residual liquid on the toilet seat (paper) and a barrier effect for preventing user-contact of residual liquid on the toilet seat (plastic).

[0029] FIG. 3 and FIG. 4 illustrate toilet seat covers according to embodiments of the invention as described previously. The toilet seat covers according to embodiments of the invention may be used in public or private restrooms and may be particularly suitable for use at schools, parties or whenever a user's own bathroom is not available. The toilet seat covers according to some embodiments of the invention may be sealed in individual travel packages or may be packaged in bulk for use in a toilet seat cover dispenser such as a dispenser found in public restrooms.

[0030] While certain exemplary embodiments have been described and shown in the accompanying drawings, it is to be understood that such embodiments are merely illustrative of and not restrictive on the broad invention, and that this invention is not be limited to the specific constructions and arrangements shown and described, since various other modifications may occur to those ordinarily skilled in the art.

What is claimed is:

1. A toilet seat cover, comprising:
a seat portion;
a skirt portion attached to an outer periphery of the seat portion, the outer periphery defined by a securing member; and
an opening within the seat portion substantially centered thereto and defined by a collar.
2. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein a front portion of the seat portion terminates in a pocket.
3. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein a back portion of the seat portion terminates in a neck portion.

4. The toilet seat cover of claim 3, further comprising, an adhesive strip on a backside of the neck portion.

5. The toilet seat cover of claim 1, further comprising, an adhesive strip on a backside of the seat portion about the collar.

6. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein materials comprising the toilet seat cover include a combination of a water permeable material and a water impermeable material.

7. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein the skirt portion includes a plurality of creases.

8. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein the securing member is adapted to cinch about an outer periphery of a toilet seat.

9. The toilet seat cover as shown in FIGS. 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D and FIGS. 3 through 4.

10. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein the securing member is an elastic strip.

11. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein the securing member includes stitching causing the skirt portion to gather.

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