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INFANT BATHING SUPPORT
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This invention relates to an improvement in an infant bathing support and is particularly concerned with a device in which an infant may be placed and strapped providing positive support and control while manipulating the infant during bathing, the device being particularly adapted to be used while attached to the forearm of the attendant.

Infant bathing supports of many different kinds have been made to provide support for the infant while in a tub. Generally in using such devices the mother or attendant is required to hold the support with one hand while struggling to bathe the infant with the other.

Since an infant is unable to control the movement of his body to any large degree, and because infants have relatively weak neck structure, positive support is required to prevent undesired body movement and to keep the head and neck from being allowed to fall from side to side which could cause injury to the infant.

In the usual method of bathing a baby without a support the infant is supported by the mother's arm while being bathed in a sink or tub. Because of the usual oily condition of the skin of the infant plus the use of soap and water, the infant is difficult to hold with one hand while bathing with the other hand. In addition, in the case of very young infants, the head and neck tend to wobble from side to side which makes bathing the infant even more difficult particularly for the new mother or unskilled attendant. Since the baby after being bathed is still relatively slippery due to the presence of body oils and water on the skin, extreme care must be used in removing the infant from the tub or sink in order to avoid dropping the infant.

For the mother to satisfactorily bathe the infant using some form of support, the support should generally adapt to the body width and length of the infant, provide support for the head, and neck, have means preventing the infant from slipping along the device while raising and lowering the infant from the tub and keeping the infant from rolling from side to side while permitting the mother to turn the infant on the support as needed to complete the bathing and drying operations, have means whereby the infant may be readily fastened in the support and the support attached to the forearm of the mother, be adaptable for use with infants of different ages and sizes, be easy to clean, and usable in such manner so as to enable the mother to perform the bathing operation readily and safely and without unnecessary preparations, fuss and mess. It is an object of the present invention to provide the features mentioned as necessary for the satisfactory bathing of an infant using a bathing support.

A further object of the present device lies in an infant bathing support providing a generally concave surface to which the body of an infant will adjust and in which the infant is strapped providing support and control of the infant's body together with a deeper concave depression adjacent one end in which the head and neck reside to provide support and control for the head and neck.

A further object of the present invention lies in a member providing an abutment at one end of the generally concave surface against which the buttocks of the infant may rest. During the bathing operation as has been mentioned, the body of the infant becomes quite slippery due to the soap and water which would normally cause the body of the infant to slide down an inclined plane such as would be formed by a support attached to the forearm of an attendant when the forearm is lowered. It is an object of the present invention to provide an infant bathing support having a buttocks support and suitable adjustable straps to hold the baby in the desired position while lowering and raising the infant from the tub or sink and while performing the bathing operation.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a bathing support for infants of waterproof material such as plastic and the like together with suitable waterproof adjustable fastenings for holding the infant in the position desired on the bathing support, the support and adjustable fastenings being relatively easy to clean.

A further object of the present invention lies in a drain means such as an aperture adjacent the lower end of the body through which water can quickly drain. When removing the support together with the strap fastened thereto from the bathtub or sink, water is quickly drained through the drain means and off the surface of the support.

A further feature of the present invention lies in adjustable straps for attaching the support to the forearm of the mother or nurse and for retaining the infant in the support. The adjustable strap loop which holds the baby and the strap loop through which the forearm is inserted are in opposed relation with suitable means for holding the straps in adjustment. The strap which holds the upper forearm of the mother against the underside of the infant bathing support also holds the infant in place on the concave support. Suitable paired apertures are provided in reinforcing plates embedded in the support through which the straps are led, thereby preventing the straps from slipping when in use and enabling the mother or attendant to easily adjust the length of the straps to fit her forearm, and to leave the straps in the adjusted position without the necessity of readjusting the straps for each bathing operation.

A further feature of the present device lies in the provision of projections on the under surface of the support adjacent the end having the buttocks' support having flat terminal ends. The projections are angular or sloped in relation to the end of the support providing surfaces on which the infant bathing support may be rested at an angle to the horizontal while attached to the forearm of the attendant, or while leaning against the edge of a tub or sink.

A further feature of the present device lies in the use of material providing a relatively non-slip surface which is soft in texture such as foam plastic and the like providing a cushioned support for the infant.

In using the infant bathing support the mother places the baby in the support with the buttocks at or near the buttocks' support, the limbs being free to move, and the head of the infant resting in the concave head and neck support.

The head and neck support is an elongated concave depression between the sides of the body support adjacent one end which enables the support to be used during an extended period of growth of the infant. This constitutes a further feature of the infant bathing support.

The infant is strapped in the support with the adjustable strap placed beneath the armpits of the infant and extending across the chest of the infant, the mother or attendant inserting her forearm into the looped adjustable straps on the underside of the support with the hand encircled by a strap loop grasping the bottom of the support. The mother thereby is able to raise or lower the infant in the tub and to turn the infant and the support during bathing simply by rotating her forearm. The infant may be turned from side to side which is needed on the support because of the positioning of the straps which hold the infant to the support, and which permit the infant to be turned from side to side during the bathing and drying operation.
These and other objects and novel features of the present invention will be more clearly and fully set forth in the following specifications and drawings.

In the drawings forming a part of the specification;

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the infant bathing support.

FIGURE 2 is a plan view of the bottom of the support.

FIGURE 3 is a longitudinal section view of the support, the position of the section being indicated by the line 3—3 of FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 4 is a cross sectional view through the support showing the strap supporting structure, the position of the section being indicated by the line 4—4 of FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 5 is a cross section view through the device along the line 5—5 of FIGURE 2.

The drawings disclose an infant bathing support 10 made of relatively soft waterproof material such as plastic, molded rubber, and the like which permits the device to be used in water and easily cleaned using soap and water. Being of relatively soft material, the support cushions the infant reclining upon it. The adjustable strap 16 which engages the infant and the forearm of the attendant as well as the strap hand loop 19 is made of plastic nylon, or similar materials which are not readily damaged by repeated immersion in water. The fastening means such as 17 for holding the strap loops in adjustable engagement are similarly composed of waterproof non-corrosive material.

The infant bathing support is best illustrated in the drawings of FIGURE 1 showing the bathing support generally numbered 10, in the form of a concave support for use in bathing a baby. The bathing support 10 is of sufficient length to accommodate infants of different sizes until they have grown to a size and weight where the use of a bathing support is no longer practical or advantageous. As a feature in controlling the infant's body and head, the basic structure comprises a generally elongated concave upper surface 12 to support the body of the infant, the concave surface 12 being of sufficient width to enable the device to be used for the infant who is large in girth as well as for the very tiny infant. The under-surface 28 is generally as is clearly evident in FIGURES 4 and 5. The concave surface 12 of the support 10 provides support for the body of the infant and helps to retain the infant in the position in which he is placed on the concave support surface 12, the curvature of the support to some extent preventing the infant from rolling to one side, the ribs being unstrapped, and allowing controlled movement when held by the adjustable strap 16 which will be described later.

As is apparent from the drawings of FIGURES 1, 2, and 3 one end 20 of the infant support 10 has a concave intermediate portion 22 adjacent the end along a longitudinal centerline intermediate the sides of the concave support surface 12 of sufficient length and width to accommodate portions of the head and neck of the infant. The concave intermediate portion 22 helps control the head and neck of the infant to prevent undesirable head wobble or side to side movement which would occur if the area 22 occupied by the head and neck were a mere extension of the concave surface which provides the body support. The head and neck support generally numbered 22 is a depression within the concave body support 12 but depressed therefrom as is evident from examination of FIGURES 1 and 2.

At the other end 24 of the infant bathing support 10 the end 24 is angularly turned forwardly as is indicated in FIGURE 1 to form a buttocks supporting end wall member 26. The upper surface of the member 26 projects sufficiently above the concave surface 12 to provide a support on which the infant's buttocks may extend or rest, the member 26 extending between and beyond the sides of the concave body support 12.

When bathing the infant, the support 10 is held in place on the attendant's forearm by adjustable straps one of which encircles the forearm of the attendant, the other encircling the infant's ribs. The forearm of the attendant, together with the attached support 10 may be lifted or lowered, turned or inclined at an angle in relation to the tub and rested on the tub bottom with the under surface of the member 26 resting on the tub bottom. In preferred construction, the buttocks supporting end wall member 26 extends across the entire body support 12 and merges smoothly into the sides and concave surface 12 eliminating undesirable corners. For purposes of clarification, the surface of the member 26 adjacent the concave surface 12 will be called an upper surface. The opposed one under surface 28 generally parallels the upper surface. The member 26 slopes at an obtuse angle to the concave surface 12. The under surface 28 of the member 26 is formed of two angularly related surfaces 30 and 32. Either of the surfaces 30 or 32 may be rested upon a support to hold the support in a rearwardly inclined position thereby placing the infant in a somewhat reclined position enabling the attendant to more easily bath the infant, and making the bathing experience more restful for the infant. For providing an effective control of the support 10, however, the fingers of the hand extending through the hand loop 19 usually extend beyond the member 26.

To enable the infant to be more easily dried, the skin oiled and so forth, the infant is held on the support by a loop of the adjustable strap 16, the upper strap loop enclosing the infant, and the loop on the underside of the support disengaged from the forearm of the attendant, or while the infant is merely reclining on the support 10 without being strapped in place, the support is generally placed in a horizontal position on a flat surface such as would be provided by a table, bed, drainboard, and the like. The support 10 is prevented from rocking to and fro on the generally convex underside of the support 10 by terminal coplanar surfaces of spaced base projections 38 and 40 and the convex underside of the head and neck support 42.

The base projections 38 and 40 extend in a generally normal direction from the underside of the body support 12 adjacent the end 24 in order to obtain maximum stability when the infant is reclining within the support, the projections 38 and 40, and the convex undersurface 42 of the head and neck support 22 have coplanar surfaces on which the support 10 may rest when on a flat surface. The reinforcing ribs 37 which extend transversely between the ribs 36 may be altered without changing the stabilizing function of the projections 38 and 40 and ribs 36 on the underside 14 of the support member 10, so long as the outermost ends are coplanar with the terminal convex side 42 of the head and neck support.

In the preferred construction, the base projections 38 and 40 have generally rectangular terminal flat end surfaces, the sides of the projections being flared from the terminal flat end surfaces into the underside of the concave support 12 and into the surfaces 30, on the underside 28 of the buttocks support member 26. As will be understood the outer configuration of the base projections 38 and 40 and reinforcing ribs 36 may be altered without changing the stabilizing function of the projections 38 and 40 and ribs 36 on the underside 14 of the support member 10, so long as the outermost ends are coplanar with the terminal convex side 42 of the head and neck support.

Adjacent to the juncture of the concave surface 12 with the support 26 at least one drain aperture 44 is provided intermediate the sides of the concave surface 12 to permit the water and soap to drain off the infant and support 10 when raising the support 10 from the tub or basin.

The strap 36 provides a loop used to fasten the infant in place on the concave body support 12 in which the infant's buttocks may extend or rest, the member 26 extending between and beyond the sides of the concave body support 12.
The strap 16 is connected to the support 10 near the transverse and longitudinal centers of the support, as will be described. A reinforcing plate 48 is embedded in the central portion of the support 10, two laterally spaced portions of the plate being exposed by laterally spaced apertures 52 through the plastic body. As is perhaps best illustrated in FIGURE 4, the plate 48 is provided with three parallel strap receiving slots in each exposed portion of the plate. These apertures are elongated in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis of the support body 10. The slots comprise outermost slots 56, intermediate slots 58 and innermost slots 60.

In attaching the strap 16 to the body 10, the tapered strap end 50 is threaded from the concave or forward side of the support through an innermost slot 60, forwardly through the adjacent intermediate slot 58 and rearwardly through the adjacent outermost slot 56. The end of the strap 16 including the buckle 17 is left long enough to partially encircle the body of the infant. Leaving a sufficient length of strap to form the arm loop 54 the belt is then threaded forwardly through the opposite outermost slot 56, rearwardly through the adjacent intermediate slot 58, and forwardly through the adjacent innermost slot 60.

By attaching the infant encircling loop 62 to the support 10 near the transverse center of the concave surface 12, the body of the infant may be rolled to either side to the extent necessary to wash the body. At the same time, the widely spaced ends of the arm loop 54 stabilize the mounting of the support on the arm, and tend to prevent rolling of the support relative to the arm.

A second bridging plate 46 is transversely embedded in the body support 10 in proximity to the buttocks end of the support and has ends 47 and 49 which project from the underside of the body support at approximately right angles to the intermediate portion of the plate 46. The ends 47 and 49 have apertures therethrough through which a strap 19 is threaded, the strap having a fastening means 21 at one end to engage the other end thereof. The strap loop 19 is wide enough to accommodate the palm of the hand, the four fingers curving about the underside 28 of the member 26. The support is thus stabilized by the palm of the hands and fingers. The thumb is normally extended forwardly and laterally outside of the loop 19, the end of the thumb manually engaging against one of the projections 38 or 40 to further stabilize the support. The embedded portion of the plate 46 (as well as the embedded portions of the plate 48) may be provided with apertures 64 therethrough through which the plastic may extend to prevent the plates from separating from the plastic.

In accordance with the patent statutes, I have described the principles of construction and operation of my improvement in infant bathing support, and while I have endeavored to set forth the best embodiment thereof, I desire to have it understood that changes may be made within the scope of the following claims without departing from the spirit of my invention.

I claim:

1. An infant bathing support having an elongated body portion adapted to accommodate in a generally reclining position the body of an infant, strap means secured to the body portion intermediate the ends of said body portion, said strap means including individually adjustable loops extending upwardly and downwardly therefrom to adjustably encircle the body of a baby and the forearm of the attendant, said elongated body portion including an aperture therethrough intermediate the ends thereof, reinforcing means secured to said body and bridging said aperture, said last named means having spaced apertures therein, said strap means threaded through said spaced apertures.

2. The structure of claim 1 and in which portions of said strap means form loops transversely to the longitudinal axis of said elongated body portion above and below said body portion.

3. An infant bathing support having an elongated concave body portion, a projection at one end extending across said body from the concave surface thereof, said bathing support being adapted to accommodate an infant in a generally reclining position, an aperture through said support intermediate the sides and ends thereof, means bridging said aperture having spaced apertures in the bridging portion thereof, a first strap means threaded through said spaced apertures, means on said strap designed to adjustably connect the ends thereof, said first strap means extending upwardly and downwardly through said spaced apertures having upper and lower loops transverse to the longitudinal axis of said body support, said lower loop being adjustable to encircle the forearm of an attendant, said upper loop being adjustable to encircle the body of an infant, a second strap means including a loop extending downwardly from a securing means embedded in said body and having portions thereof extending through the undersurface of said body, said second strap means having means thereon to adjustably connect the ends thereof, said loop being adjustable to encircle the hand of an attendant.

4. The structure of claim 3 and in which said body is composed of relatively soft material providing a cushioned infant support in which said bridging means and strap securing means may be embedded.

5. The structure of claim 4 and in which portions of said body extend across said bridging means intermediate the central apertures.

6. The structure of claim 3 and in which said strap securing means has terminal end portions angularly projecting from the intermediate portions of said strap securing means through the underside of said body portion, said terminal end portions having apertures therethrough, through which said second strap means may be threaded.

7. A bathing support having an elongated concave body portion adapted to support the head and body of an infant during bathing, the body having a series of six laterally spaced apertures therethrough intermediate the ends thereof and equally spaced from the longitudinal center thereof, a strap having an intermediate loop extending downwardly from said body the ends of the loop extending upwardly through the outermost pair of apertures, downwardly through the next adjacent apertures, and upwardly through the innermost pair of apertures, the upwardly projecting ends of the strap being provided with an adjustable fastener by means of which these strap ends may be connected to provide an infant body encircling loop.

8. The structure of claim 7 and in which the central portion of said body portion includes an embedded reinforcing member through which said laterally spaced apertures extend.

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