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MATERNITY SUPPORTER

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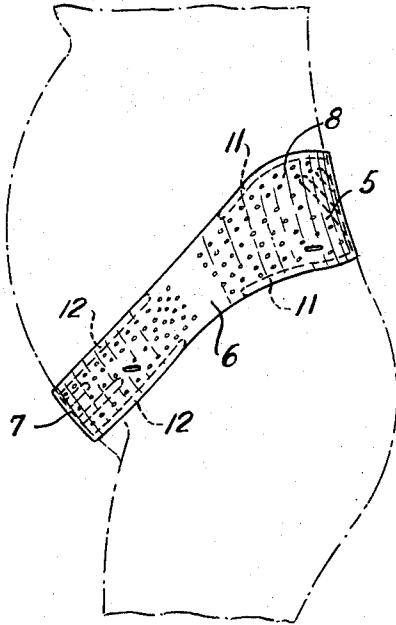


FIG. 1

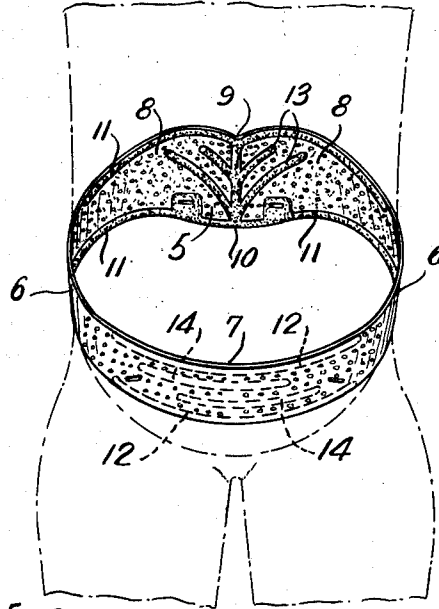


FIG. 2

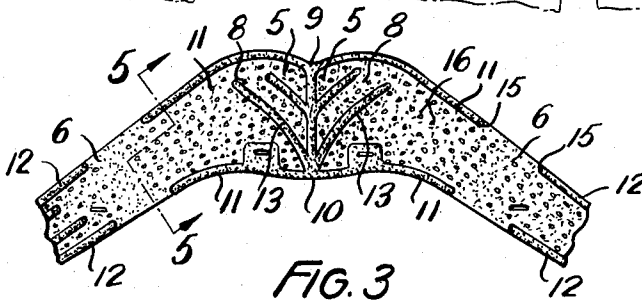


FIG. 3

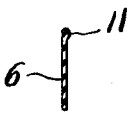


FIG. 5

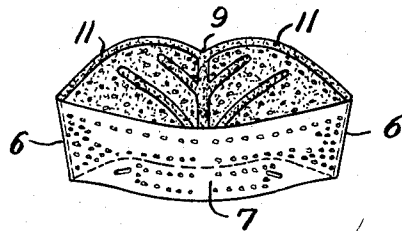


FIG. 4

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3,087,496

## MATERNITY SUPPORTER

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The present invention is an improved abdominal and back supporter which is particularly desirable and useful for maternity wear.

An object of my invention is to construct a maternity supporter which when worn by an individual effectually supports and lifts the abdomen and, at the same time, relieves the strains on muscles and ligaments, thereby helping to prevent torn or unduly strained tissues or even skin break or abrasions.

Another object of the invention is to support the small of the back of the wearer concurrently with the support of the abdomen of the wearer.

A further object of my invention consists in a supporter construction which is preferably made in a single piece of elastic material such as latex either by dipping on a form in a latex solution or by molding the same in a mold.

A still further object of the invention is to construct a supporter of this type which includes side portions extending forwardly and downwardly from the back portion at an angle toward the front portion of the supporter, thus providing in a single unit an elastic supporter which is not only comfortable to the wearer, but which effectively and safely supports the abdomen as well as the small of the back of the wearer in use.

Another object of this invention is to provide a supporter of the type defined which is equally effective in its supporting or lifting ability during pregnancy, as well as at the end of this condition.

Another object of the invention is its simplicity of construction, its adaptation to economical manufacture and its comfort, safety and effectiveness in use.

Other objects and advantages of this invention will become more apparent as the following description of an embodiment thereof progresses, reference being made to the accompanying drawing in which like reference characters are employed to designate like parts throughout the same.

In the drawings:

FIGURE 1 is a side view of a supporter embodying my invention and shown as applied in maternity use;

FIGURE 2 is a front view of the supporter shown in FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 3 is a layout view of the supporter broken or separated transversely of its front medial position to illustrate the layout contour;

FIGURE 4 is a front perspective view of the supporter shown folded along its opposite side portions to illustrate the forwardly and downwardly disposed front portions of the supporter relative to the back portion thereof; and

FIGURE 5 is a section taken on line 5—5 of FIGURE 3.

In carrying out my invention, the body of the supporter preferably consists of a continuous band of elastic sheet material such as latex formed by dipping on a form in a latex solution according to conventional methods, or by molding the same in a mold to provide a rear or back embracing portion 5, opposite side portions 6 and a front portion 7. While the preferred embodiment of the invention shown in the drawing is illustrated as a continuous band, it is understood that the band may be separable transversely at some portion on its circumference. In such instance, however, the separable edges must be provided with means for securing these edges together when the band is to be applied in place on the human body. For the sake of simplicity of construction, greater com-

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fort in use, and to maintain low manufacturing costs, the invention is illustrated in the drawing as being a continuous band in one piece.

More specifically, as illustrated, the supporter band or body of elastic material has a front relatively narrow band portion 7 which extends across and in contact with the lower abdomen of the wearer, and thence upwardly, as defined by the sides 6, along the abdomen sides and over the hips, and finally rearwardly from the sides toward the center of the back portion defining an area which is progressively increased from the rear side portions of the band to the center back portion thereof, as indicated generally at 8. The larger areas 8 which engage the back of the wearer have a top edge which is curved from each of the sides upwardly of the body and thence downwardly to the central notch-like portion indicated at 9 which, when the band is in use, would lie directly over and embrace the adjacent portion of the spine of the wearer. The lower edge of the back portion 5 is curved downwardly from the side portions 6 to provide a convex edge 10 which has a tendency normally to lie against the small of the back. Thus it will be seen that the enlarged area of the back portion 5 of the band will have a tendency to lie naturally against the back of the wearer and in a close and effective supporting position for the small of the back.

I provide reinforcement areas along the top and bottom marginal edges of the band at the back portion 5, as indicated at 11. Similar marginal reinforcement areas are also formed at 12 along the top and bottom marginal edges of the front section 7.

Also similar reinforcement means, such as ribs 13, are provided in the back section and are arranged to diverge upwardly from the bottom marginal edge 11 transversely of the band at the rear, while additional ribs 14 may be formed in the front band portion to lie longitudinally thereof.

It will be noted that the marginal front and rear upper and lower ribs or reinforced areas 11 and 12 are not continuous but are spaced at their respective adjacent ends, as illustrated in FIGURE 3 at 15, to provide the side sections 6 which, not being so reinforced, are capable of greater stretch or expansion, thus localizing the stress areas at these points and permitting the weight or load to be carried over the hips of the wearer. Furthermore, by such construction, the supporter is more easily put on the body and more comfortably worn.

The side portions 6 of the band extend downwardly and forwardly of the back portion 5 and merge into the forward portion 7 which, as clearly shown in FIGURES 1 and 2, extends under the lower abdomen and provides an effective lift therefor, thus relieving strains on ligaments and muscles and aiding in the prevention of skin and tissue breakage or pulled ligaments. The position of the supporter, as shown in FIGURES 1 and 2, is the normal and most natural position thereof in use and it will be observed that the front and side portions of the band curve forwardly and downwardly at a natural supporting and lifting angle to the rear portion of the band and I have found that it is because of this relationship between the back and the side and front portions of the supporter that the article will effectively support the abdomen and back and permit the weight which is supported to be carried over the hips.

The side portions 6 of the band between the reinforcement marginal ribs 11 and 12 having greater expansion or stretch at these areas, localizes the main stresses at the side portions and over the hips.

I have found that another advantage of this construction is that the edges will not have a tendency to roll, such as in the type of supporters which are not formed

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in the manner according to my invention but which comprise almost essentially a horizontally disposed encircling element as distinguished from the present invention in which the back supporting area and the front supporting area are disposed at an angle to the horizontal which approaches substantially 45°, as illustrated clearly in FIGURE 1, and elsewhere.

As indicated at 16 in FIGURE 3, the band may be perforated to provide ventilation and may be lined with a coating of soft fiber throughout sprayed or otherwise applied to the band inner surface.

From the above, it will be seen that this invention provides an effective and simple means for comfortably and safely supporting the abdomen and back simultaneously during pregnancy while insuring freedom of movement to the wearer.

Various changes may be made in the details of construction and arrangement of parts of the invention without departing from the spirit thereof or the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. An elastic maternity support, comprising:

a continuous band of latex having:

a front portion having an upper edge and a lower edge,

a back portion having an upper edge and a lower edge, and

side portions connecting said front portion and said back portion,

the upper edge of said back portion extending substantially above the upper edge of said front portion, and said side portions extending at an angle downwardly from said back portion to said front portion.

2. An elastic maternity support, comprising:

a continuous band of latex having:

a front portion having an upper edge and a lower edge,

a back portion having an upper edge and a lower edge, and

side portions connecting said front portion and said back portion,

said front portion being relatively narrow and adapted to extend across the abdomen of a user, and said side portions being inclined upwardly from said front portion so as to extend over the sides and hips of a user and thence rearwardly to define an area at said back portion which is increased in width as compared to said front portion and said side portions.

3. An elastic maternity support, comprising:

a continuous band of latex having:

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a front portion having an upper edge and a lower edge,

a back portion having an upper edge and a lower edge, and

side portions connecting said front portion and said back portion,

said front portion being relatively narrow and adapted to extend across the abdomen of a user,

said side portions being inclined upwardly from said front portion so as to extend over the sides and hips of a user and thence rearwardly to define an area at said back portion which is increased in width as compared to said front portion and said side portions, and reinforcing ribs extending at an angle upwardly and outwardly from the mid-section of said back portion.

4. An elastic maternity support, comprising:

a continuous band of latex having:

a front portion,

a back portion, and

side portions connecting said front portion and said back portion,

said side portions extending downwardly at an angle from said back portion to said front portion,

reinforcing strips extending along the upper and lower edges of said back portion and said front portion, and

said side portions having at least a portion of their upper and lower edges of a lesser thickness than said reinforcing strips to render said side portions more elastic than said front and back portions.

5. An elastic maternity support, comprising:

a continuous band of latex having:

a front portion,

a back portion, and

side portions connecting said front portion and said back portion,

said side portions extending downwardly at an angle from said back portion to said front portion, and said front portion being curved so as to bow outwardly from its upper edge to its lower edge.

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