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POST-MASTECTOMY BRASSIERE

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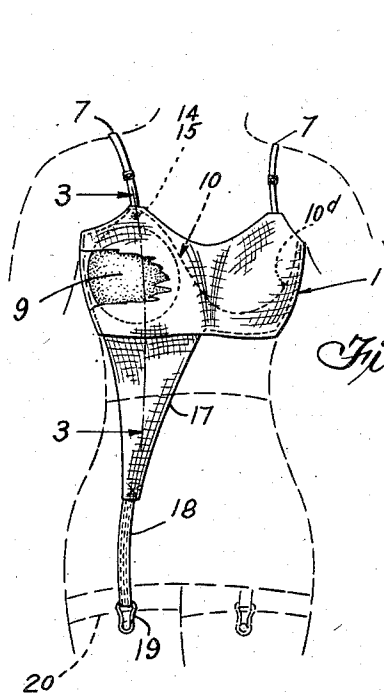


Fig. 1.

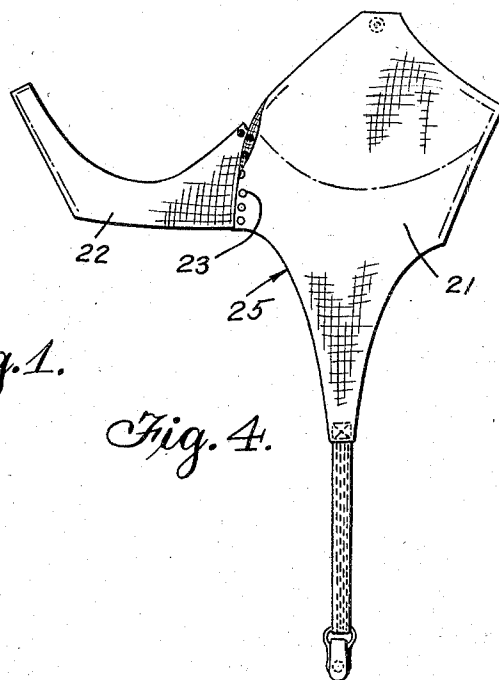


Fig. 4.

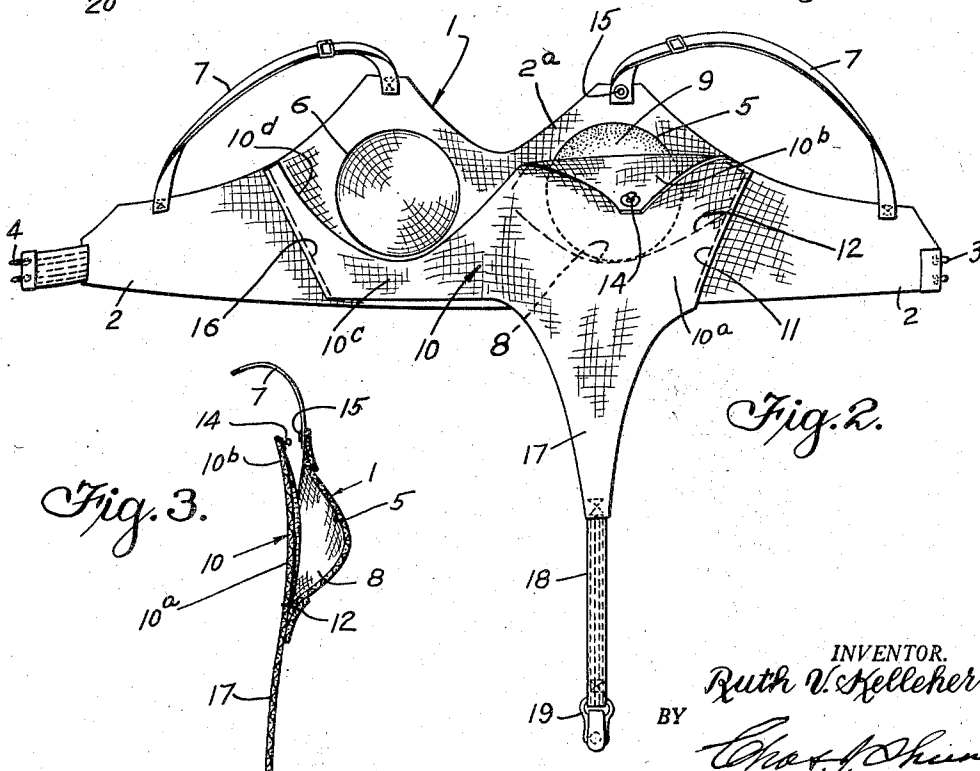


Fig. 2.

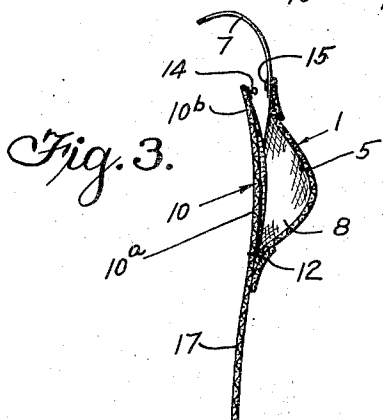


Fig. 3.

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POST-MASTECTOMY BRASSIERE

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4 Claims. (Cl. 2—42)

My invention relates to brassieres for post-mastectomy patients.

It is an object of my invention to provide a brassiere of this character which will support an artificial breast form so that it will simulate the movements and assume the positions of a natural breast of the wearer in all postures and according to all movements of the wearer.

Another object of my invention is to provide a novel and simply constructed brassiere attachment which when combined with an ordinary brassiere, will convert the latter into a post-mastectomy brassiere having the advantages herein noted.

In mastectomy cases where one artificial breast is employed in a brassiere, it is desirable to hold the false breast in balance with the natural breast in all stretching and reaching movements as well as in all postures of the wearer. This is accomplished in my brassiere by providing an up-lift on the cup for the natural breast and a gentle yieldable down-pull on the cup for the artificial breast. This down-pull is effected by use of an extension depending from the false side of the brassiere and adapted to be connected with a garment of the wearer below the waist, for example to the top of a stocking of the wearer.

It is also desirable that the brassiere provide a smooth, soft and non-irritating surface over the scar area of the post-mastectomy patient. Accordingly, such a surface is provided in my brassiere.

In further consideration of the advantages of my invention, it is an additional object thereof to provide a brassiere attachment such as described which is reversible whereby an ordinary brassiere readily may be converted to use of an artificial breast for the right or left side of the patient.

I will describe only two forms of post-mastectomy brassieres each embodying my invention, and will then point out the novel features thereof in claims.

In the accompanying drawings:

Fig. 1 is a front elevation of a brassiere embodying my invention as it would appear when in use, the cup for the false breast being broken away for clarity of illustration.

Fig. 2 is a rear elevation of the brassiere shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is a plan view of a modified form of the attachment embodying my invention, as removed from the brassiere.

Referring more specifically to the drawings, 1 designates a brassiere comprising a body-encircling band 2 having clasp means 3 and 4 at opposite ends and provided with the usual cups 5 and 6 for reception of the breasts of the wearer. The usual shoulder straps 7 are also provided for this brassiere.

In accordance with my invention, I provide means for forming with one of the cups of the brassiere a pocket 8 for supporting an artificial breast form 9, this

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form being usually made of sponge or foam rubber although it may be any suitable material such as customarily used for this purpose. This pocket-forming means includes provision for effecting a gentle yieldable downward pull on the pocket to maintain the false breast in balance with the natural breast.

As here shown this pocket-forming means is in the form of an attachment adapted to be stitched to a ready-made brassiere. However, such means may be originally embodied in the brassiere when manufacturing the latter, or it may be detachably secured in place to a finished brassiere by suitable fastenings.

As here shown, the pocket-forming means includes an elongated piece or strip 10 of cotton or some other suitable soft cloth or fabric having a wide end portion 10a for forming with a cup of the brassiere, the pocket 8. This wide end portion 10a generally follows the marginal contour of the brassiere portion 2a in which is formed the cup to be associated with such wide end portion. It is stitched as at 11 along one of the outer end edges thereof to the portion 2a of the brassiere on the outer side of the cup and also stitched as at 12 to the portion 2a on a curved line across the lower side of the brassiere cup associated therewith, the stitching 12 being intermediate the upper and lower edges of the wider end 10a and above the lower margin of the portion 2a, thereby closing the sides and lower end of the pocket 8.

Above the stitching 11 and 12, the wider end portion 10a is tapered upwardly to form a closure flap 10b. Snap fastening elements 14 and 15 are provided on the flap 10a and the portion 2a of the brassiere respectively whereby the flap may be releasably held in closed position maintaining the breast form 9 in the pocket 8.

The narrower end portion 10c of the attachment piece 10 extends beneath the breast cup for the natural breast, this being, as here shown, the cup 6, and is stitched as at 16 to the brassiere band 2 on the outer side of this cup. The upper edge 10d of the end portion 10c is curved around the lower side of the cup 6 and is free from connection with the brassiere band 2 and cup 6. The lower edge of the end portion 10c is also free from connection with the band 2. Likewise the portion of the wider end 10a below the curved stitch line 11 is free from connection with the band 2, thus along its lower edge, the strip or piece, 10, is free from connection with the brassiere band. The purpose of this arrangement will be apparent with reference to the following description.

As a means for exerting a downward pull, particularly on the pocket 8 for the artificial breast form 9, the attachment piece 10 at the wider end 10a, is provided with a depending extension 17, to the lower end of which an elastic strip 18 is secured. On the lower end of this elastic strip is a clasp 19 for connecting the strip with some part of the wearer's apparel below the waist. As here shown, this clasp is engageable with the upper end of a stocking 20 of the wearer. Thus the extension 17 is disposed along a thigh of the wearer and connected with the adjacent stocking, as a hose supporter, as well as a means for exerting a downward pull on the cup for the false breast.

It should be noted that the shoulder straps of the brassiere exert the usual upward pull on the brassiere while the extension 17 and strip 18 exert a downward pull primarily on the pocket 8 of the breast form 9. However, due to the manner in which the narrower part 10c of the piece 10 is attached beyond the outer side and below the cup 6 for the natural breast, and in view of this part 10c being free from connection along its upper and lower edges with the brassiere, a slight downward pull is also exerted on the cup 6 for the natural breast. Thus the natural breast and the artificial breast keep in balance

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such that the latter will simulate natural breast positions and appearance in all postures and movements of the wearer.

It is important to note that the attachment as shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3 provide a smooth unbroken and soft surface next to the scar area of the wearer thus assuring comfort and preventing irritation of this area.

Another feature of advantage is that the strip or piece 10 need be stitched to the brassiere but at the three points, along the stitch lines 11, 12 and 16, it being obvious that means other than stitching could be resorted to as desired for securing the piece 10 in place. Preferably the piece 10 is made of double thickness so as to provide a soft and comfortable surface over the scar area. Moreover this piece is reversible, being adapted to form a pocket for a false breast on the right or left side of a brassiere.

In having the lower edges of the piece 10 and the upper edges thereof free from connection with the brassiere proper, the piece 10 will conform more effectively to the body for assured comfort of the wearer. Moreover, these free edge portions of the strip 10 assure that the downward balancing pull will be directly applied to the cup for the false breast rather than to the entire brassiere, thereby keeping the false breast in balance with the natural breast.

A modified form of my invention is shown in Fig. 4, wherein the piece or attachment generally designated 25, is the same as to shape and purpose as the piece 10 but made in two parts 21 and 22, joined by detachable fastenings 23. In some instances this form may be desirable. In all other respects this form serves the same purpose as the form shown in Figs. 1-3 and is applied in the same manner.

I claim:

1. An attachment for a brassiere having a body-encircling band, shoulder straps and a pair of breast-receiving cups, to adapt the brassiere for use by a post-mastectomy patient; said attachment comprising a body of soft fabric having a first portion attachable to the inner side of said band so as to span one of said cups and retain therein an artificial breast form; said body having a second portion joined to one side of said first portion and extended laterally therefrom for attachment at its free end to said band at a point between the other cup and the end of the band adjacent the other cup; said second portion being shaped to extend beneath the lower edge of said other cup; said body having a third portion joined to the lower part of said first portion and extending downwardly therefrom below said band; an elastic strap on the lower end of said third portion; and means on the lower end of said strap for attaching said strap to a garment of the wearer.

2. An attachment for adapting a brassiere for use by post-mastectomy patient; said brassiere having a body-encircling band, a pair of breast-receiving cups and shoulder straps; said attachment comprising an elongated body of soft fabric dimensioned so that its free ends are attachable to the inner side of said band between the cups and the ends of the band; said body having a first portion dimensioned to span one of said cups to retain therein an artificial breast form; fasteners on the band above said one cup and on the upper part of said first portion, cooperable for holding said first portion in position retaining said breast form in place; said body having a second portion extending laterally from said first portion so as to lie along the inner side of the band beneath the lower edge of the other cup; said second portion having a curved upper edge clearing said other cup; said body having a third portion joined to the lower part of said first portion and extended downwardly therefrom below said band; said

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third portion decreasing in width toward its free end; an elastic strap attached to said free end of said third portion; and means on said strap for attaching said strap to a garment of the wearer.

3. A brassiere for a post-mastectomy patient comprising: a body-encircling band; shoulder straps on said band; a pair of breast-receiving cups on said band; an elongated, soft fabric body having each end fastened to the inner side of said band between one of the cups and an end of the band; said body having a lower edge extending along and adjacent the lower edge of said band and free from connection with the lower edge of the band; said body having adjacent one end thereof a first portion spanning one of said cups for retaining an artificial breast form therein; said first portion being secured to the band beneath said one cup; fasteners on the upper part of said band above said cup and on the upper part of said first portion, respectively, cooperable for holding said first portion in position retaining said form in said one cup; said body having a second portion extending laterally from said first portion beneath the other cup to the other end of said body; said body having a third portion joined to and extending downwardly from the lower part of said first portion and free from connection with said band; an elastic strap extending downwardly from the lower end of said third portion; and a fastener on the lower end of said elastic strap for securing said strap to a garment of the wearer.

4. A brassiere for a post-mastectomy patient comprising: a body-encircling band; shoulder straps on said band; a pair of breast-receiving cups on said band; an elongated, soft fabric body having each end fastened to the inner side of said band between one of the cups and an end of the band; said body having a lower edge extending along and adjacent the lower edge of said band and free from connection with the lower edge of the band; said body having adjacent one end thereof a first portion spanning one of said cups for retaining an artificial breast form therein; said first portion being secured to the band beneath said one cup and above the lower edge of said band; means on the upper part of said first portion and the upper part of said band above said one cup respectively, cooperable for holding said first portion in position to retain said form in said one cup; said body having a second portion extending laterally from one side of said first portion beneath the other cup to the other end of said body; said second portion having a curved upper edge spaced from the edges of said other cup; said body having a third portion joined to the lower part of said first portion and depending therefrom past the lower edge of said band; said third portion hanging free of the band from the point where said first portion is secured to said band beneath said one cup; said third portion decreasing in width toward its lower end; an elastic strap secured to and depending from the lower part of said third portion; and a fastener on the lower part of said elastic strap for securing said strap to a garment of the wearer.

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