A nursing apron (10) for a breastfeeding mother is disclosed. The apron (10) comprises a blanket (12) of sufficiently large size to wrap around an upper portion of the mother's torso, and fixing means (14, 16) arranged so as to retain the blanket (12) around the mother's torso. The fixing means includes first fixing means (14) attached to the blanket (12) at a first end portion (20) of the blanket, and second fixing means (16) attached to the blanket (12) at a second end portion (22) of the blanket. The locations of the first and second fixing means (14, 16) is such that the first and second ends (20, 22) overlap to a sufficient degree during use that the mother's breasts are not exposed whilst the mother is breastfeeding a baby.
A NURSING APRON

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a nursing apron for a breastfeeding mother.

Background of the Invention

It is known to provide a nursing apron of the type which includes a blanket and fixing means arranged to fix ends of the blanket to each other when the blanket is wrapped around a mother's upper torso. However, such a nursing apron often results in breasts of the mother being at least partially exposed.

Summary of the Invention

In accordance with a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a nursing apron for a breastfeeding mother, said apron comprising:

- a blanket of sufficiently large size to wrap around an upper portion of the mother's torso whilst the mother is breastfeeding a baby; and
- fixing means arranged so as to retain the blanket around the mother's torso,

the fixing means including first fixing means attached to the blanket at a first end portion of the blanket, and complementary second fixing means attached to the blanket at second end portion of the blanket and engageable with the first fixing means, the locations of the first and second fixing means being such that when the first and second fixing means are engaged with each other, the first and second end portions overlap to a sufficient degree during use that a substantial portion of the mother's upper torso including the mother's breasts are not exposed whilst the mother is breastfeeding a baby.
In one arrangement, the first fixing means is disposed immediately adjacent a first inner edge of the blanket, and the second fixing means is spaced from a second inner edge of the blanket by a sufficient distance so that the first and second end portions overlap when the first fixing means is engaged with the second fixing means.

In one embodiment, the blanket includes a neck portion disposable adjacent a neck of a mother during use, and the fixing means are remotely disposed relative to the neck portion such that during use when the first fixing means is engaged with the second fixing means, the blanket is loosely disposed relative to a neck of the mother so that the mother is able to see the baby whilst the baby is breastfeeding. The fixing means may be disposed substantially centrally relative to the first and second end portions.

The blanket may be of generally U-shaped configuration and may include a cut out portion defined by the neck portion and the first and second edges, the cut out portion being of sufficient size to receive a neck of a mother during use.

In one arrangement, the fixing means comprises first and second complimentary press stud portions, a hook/eye fixing device, or any other suitable fixing device capable of securely fixing ends of the blanket together in a releasable way.

The blanket may be formed of polycotton material, cotton material, or any other suitable opaque or translucent material.

The blanket may also include a bias binding which may be in the form of piping, the bias binding serving to assist
in maintaining the shape of the blanket during use and
during washing.

Brief Description of the Drawings

The present invention will now be described, by way of
example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings,
in which:

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic plan view of a nursing
apron in accordance with an embodiment of the present
invention; and

Figure 2 is a diagrammatic view of the nursing apron
shown during use wrapped around an upper torso of a
mother.

Description of an Embodiment of the Present Invention

Referring to the drawings, there is shown a nursing apron
which includes a blanket 12, in this example of
generally U-shaped configuration, and fixing means for
fixing the blanket 12 in position around an upper torso of
a breastfeeding mother during use.

In the present example, the blanket is formed of
polycotton or cotton material, although it will be understood that any suitable opaque or translucent
material is envisaged.

The fixing means is in the form of first fixing means 14
attached to the blanket 12 at a first end portion 20 of
the blanket, and second complementary fixing means 16
attached to the blanket 12 at a second end portion 22 of
the blanket. The first and second fixing means are
attached to the blanket at locations such that during use,
when the blanket is wrapped around a breastfeeding mother
and the first and second fixing means are engaged with
each other, the first and second end portions 20, 22 of
the blanket overlap by a sufficient distance so that during use the mother's breasts are not exposed. For this purpose, the first fixing means 14 is disposed immediately adjacent an inner edge 24 of the blanket 12, and the second fixing means 16 is disposed at a location spaced from a second inner edge 26 of the blanket.

In this example, the fixing means comprises a hook portion 14 and an eye portion 16, although it will be understood that other suitable fixing means are envisaged, such as complimentary press stud portions.

The first and second fixing means 14, 16 are disposed generally centrally relative to first and second end portions 20, 22. By disposing the first and second fixing means 14, 16 remotely relative to a neck region 28 of the blanket in this way, it will be understood that, during use, when the first and second fixing means are engaged with each other the blanket 12 is loosely disposed relative to a neck of a breastfeeding mother so that the mother is able to see her baby whilst the baby is breastfeeding.

In this example, the blanket is provided with a bias binding in the form of piping (not shown) which extends around a periphery of the blanket 12. The piping serves to assist in maintaining the shape of the blanket during use and during washing.

During use, prior to commencing breastfeeding, a mother first wraps the blanket around her upper torso such that the neck region 28 is adjacent a rearwardly facing part of the mother's neck and the first and second end portions 20, 22 are at the front. The mother then uses the fixing means to fix the blanket together. Since the first and second end portions 20, 22 overlap to a significant degree, no gaps are present between the first and second
end portions 20, 22 at a region adjacent the mother's breasts and the mother's breasts are not exposed whilst breastfeeding.

5 It will also be understood that although the mother's breasts are not exposed during breastfeeding, the mother is nevertheless able to see her baby because the blanket 12 is relatively loosely held around the mother's neck.

10 Modifications and variations as would be apparent to a skilled addressee are deemed to be within the scope of the present invention.
CLAIMS:

1. A nursing apron for a breastfeeding mother, said apron comprising:
   a blanket of sufficiently large size to wrap around an upper portion of the mother's torso, and fixing means arranged so as to retain the blanket around the mother's torso;
   the fixing means including first fixing means attached to the blanket at a first end portion of the blanket, and complementary second fixing means attached to the blanket at a second end portion of the blanket and engageable with the first fixing means, the locations of the first and second fixing means being such that when the first and second fixing means are engaged with each other the first and second ends overlap to a sufficient degree during use that the mother's breasts are not exposed whilst the mother is breastfeeding a baby.

2. The nursing apron as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first fixing means is disposed immediately adjacent a first inner edge of the blanket, and the second fixing means is spaced from a second inner edge of the blanket by a sufficient distance so that the first and second end portions overlap when the first fixing means is engaged with the second fixing means.

3. The nursing apron as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the blanket includes a neck portion disposable adjacent a neck of a mother during use, and the fixing means is remotely disposed relative to the neck portion such that during use when the first fixing means is engaged with the second fixing means, the blanket is loosely disposed relative to a neck of a breastfeeding mother so that the mother is able to see the baby whilst the baby is breastfeeding.
4. The nursing apron as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the blanket is substantially U-shaped.

5. The nursing apron as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the fixing means comprises first and second complimentary press stud portions.

6. The nursing apron as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the first fixing means comprises a hook portion and the second fixing means comprises an eye portion.

7. The nursing apron as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the blanket is formed of opaque material.

8. The nursing apron as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, further comprising a bias binding which serves to assist in maintaining the shape of the blanket during use.

9. A nursing apron substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to, and as shown in, the accompanying drawings.
INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int. Cl.

A41D 1/20 (2006.01) A41D 13/04 (2006.01)

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

DWPI: IPC Marks A41D, A41C + Keywords (Nurse, breastfeed, Mother, Expose, Cover, Hide, Conceal)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>US 4712251 A (COBBLE) 15 December 1987 Figures</td>
<td>1-9</td>
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C

See patent family annex

- Special categories of cited documents
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  - "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
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Date of the actual completion of the international search: 28 February 2007

Date of mailing of the international search report: 2 March 2007

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Due to data integration issues this family listing may not include 10 digit Australian applications filed since May 2001.

END OF ANNEX