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M. R. BUCKINGHAM

3,127,897

FOUNDATION GARMENT

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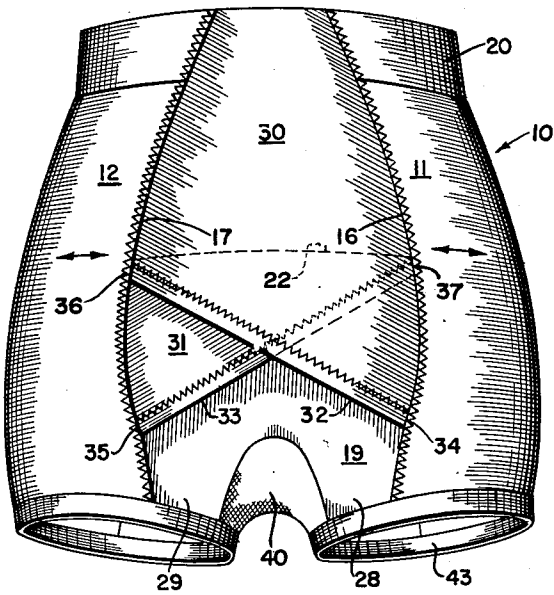


FIG. 1.

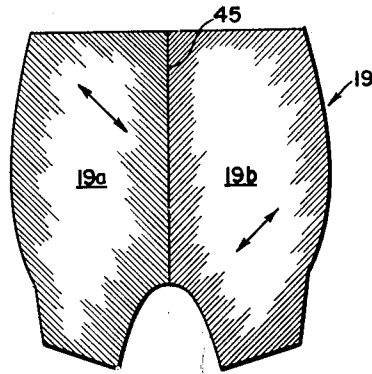


FIG. 4.

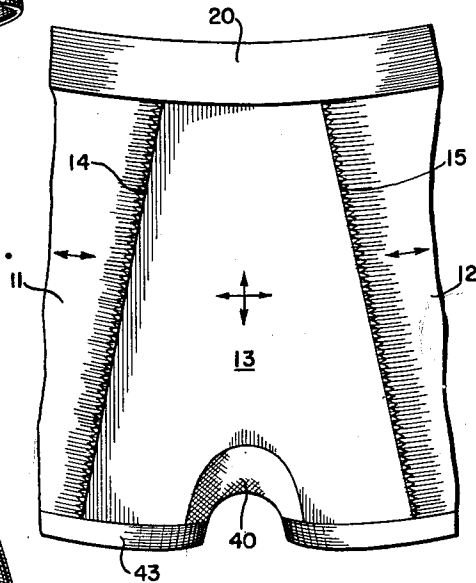


FIG. 2.

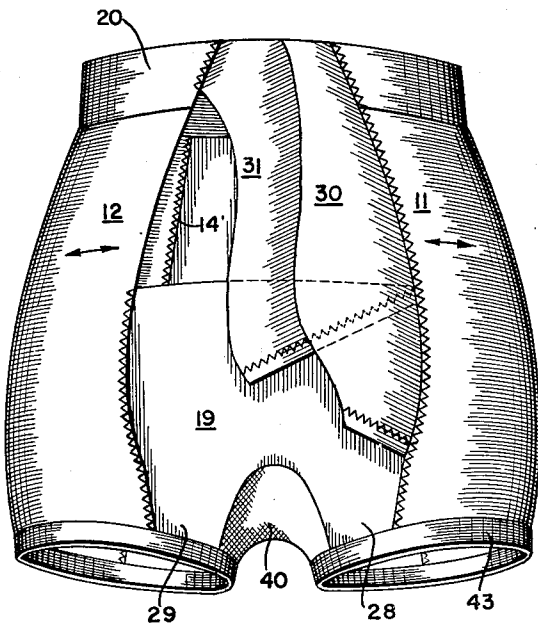


FIG. 3.

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This invention relates to foundation garments for women and more particularly to a panty girdle having a lower abdominal portion adapted to conform to the varying waist to crotch measurements of different figure types.

It is an established fact that the region extending from the waist to the crotch varies as much as three inches in different female figures in spite of the fact that other body measurements such as waist size, may remain the same. Thus, where a girdle, and especially a panty girdle provided with a closed crotch, is suitable for what is commonly referred to as a "short" figure, such garment will be entirely too short for a "long" figure.

In order to make mass production of such garments a possibility there are established "average" sizes taken as standards by the industry. This makes a precise fit impossible for both the long and short figure. Where, therefore, a mass produced garment is desired, because of price factors or the like, the buyer is left to her own devices to make whatever adjustment is necessary before the garment provides a proper fit.

There are various proposed designs in which elastic connections between crotch and girdle body are provided, but these merely help to reduce strain and discomfort with changes in position or with body movements. However, such devices cannot provide accommodation for the "long" figure without stress and discomfort due to the reaction of the elastic when subjected to the extra stretch required for the longer waist to crotch measurement.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an undergarment of the panty girdle type which can be standardly sized to fit the average figure, yet which also fits a long figure and a short figure as well. This is accomplished without the necessity of individual alterations or adjustments, and without the limitations of elastic suspensions or attachments of the crotch portion to the body of the girdle.

Another object of the present invention is the provision of a panty girdle having a lower abdominal portion which is self-adjusting without increase in tension in the crotch to conform to the varying lengths of the female figure in the region between the waist and crotch.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a panty girdle which is self-adjusting to conform to the varying positions assumed by the body of the wearer.

In accomplishing the foregoing, there is provided, in a foundation garment of the panty girdle type, a plurality of torso-encircling panels, those in the front being in a particular relationship to each other which will be automatically adjustable to varying female figure lengths, especially in the region between the waist and crotch area. The particular arrangement of the panels of the garment of the present invention is further adapted to adjust itself to the varying positions which may be assumed while the body is in motion or at rest.

More specifically, the invention comprises a foundation garment of the panty girdle type comprising a plurality of panels adapted to encircle the lower torso, including at least two front panels disposed between the waist and crotch in overlapping relation and secured at their sides to edges of adjacent panels, said front panels being free of attachment to each other except at their side edges.

The above and further objects and advantages of the present invention will be apparent to those versed in the art from the following description of specific embodi-

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ments of the invention as illustrated in the drawing, wherein like characters designate like parts in the several views, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of a girdle constructed according to the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a rear view of the girdle as seen in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is an elevational view of the girdle of FIG. 1 with parts broken away to show the construction in the overlapping areas.

FIG. 4 is a view of a modified form of lower front girdle panel.

Referring now to FIG. 1 of the drawing, there is illustrated a foundation garment 10 of the panty girdle type adapted to encircle the lower torso of a wearer from a point generally above the waistline to a point below the buttocks. Body-encircling garment 10 comprises right and left side panels 11 and 12, respectively, which are shown in the drawings as material having a primary horizontal stretch characteristic, although they may be inelastic, or of any other stretch characteristic. A rear panel 13 is secured by stitching 14 and 15 along its right and left side edges to the rear edges of the side panels 11 and 12, respectively. The right 11 and left 12 side panels at their front edges are further secured to a front portion, described below, to form the lower torso-encircling garment 10.

The rear panel 13 is a two-way stretch fabric with about equal stretch in both directions. The front of the girdle 10 is provided with two inelastic overlapping upper front panels 30 and 31 which have their lower edges 32 and 33, respectively, disposed in criss-cross relationship by means of the upwardly extending disposition of each of the edges from their points of attachment 34 and 35 to their points of attachment 36 and 37, respectively, on the opposing side panels 11 and 12. The two upper panels are also attached to the waist band, or as shown may constitute a part of the waist as an inset. The lower front panel 19 is free of attachment from either of the two upper front panels as shown in FIG. 3, its upper edge 22 extending above the lower edge of both of the upper front panels. The lower edge of lower front panel 19 is stitched to a one piece crotch section 40 and has extensions 28 and 29 forming with the crotch section the front leg portions of the panty girdle 10. An elastic band 43 is provided around the entire periphery of the leg portions which are formed, as stated above, by the crotch 40, the lower front panel extensions 28 and 29, and the bottom edges of the side panels 11 and 12 and the rear panel 13. The elastic band is not essential, and may be replaced by a facing tape on the interior or exterior of the leg portion, or simply a finished hem.

As shown in FIG. 4, there is provided an additional feature of the invention whereby the lower front panel 19 is divided generally along the center or vertical median line into two separate panels 19a and 19b, the two being stitched or otherwise inelastically attached along the center line. These panels 19a and 19b are preferably of an elastic or stretch fabric positioned so the stretch is biased upwardly and outwardly from the center seam 45. However the panels may be of inelastic material cut on the bias to exert a diagonal pull. This construction provides an additional abdominal uplift and support in the lower abdomen region, while at the same time the freedom of attachment of the lower abdominal panels from the upper front panels permits self-adjustment of the garment in these regions to accommodate for variation in the waist to crotch measurements of the wearer. The crotch piece may be of soft jersey, or may be partially or totally of elastic or stretch fabric.

It will be seen from the foregoing that when the garment is placed upon the body of the wearer, the crotch piece effectively retains the garment in a fixed position

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as is generally the case in all garments of the panty girdle type. The lower edges of the upper panels 31 and 32 and the upper edge 22 of the lower panel 19, being entirely free of each other and of any other attachment, allow for a limited relative movement to lengthen the garment in the lower abdominal and crotch area to accommodate the "tall" figure, while in the "short" figure, the stretch characteristic of the rear panel effectively reduces the overall length of the garment allowing for a proper fit of the "short" figure.

The garment of the present invention further makes possible movement of the body, as for example, bending, without any resulting binding or folding of the fabric especially at the front thereof, which usually creates unsightly bulges or uncomfortable layered folds. This is especially permitted by the fact that the arrangement of the front panels is such that as the figure bends forward, the overlying portions of the front panel, being free of attachment to each other, are able to ride over the surfaces of each other at the points of overlapping and thus avoid bulges of fabric or uncomfortable folding and consequent digging into the fleshy area of the body of the wearer.

The invention is by no means limited to the particular panty girdle shown in the drawings, but is equally applicable to the long leg version, or any panty girdle regardless of style.

It is to be understood that the present invention also is not limited to the specific details of embodiments described and illustrated in the drawings, but various changes and adaptations may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention as herein described and defined. For example, the panels may be inelastic as well as elastic throughout the entire garment except for a required minimum of one panel which must be stretchable. In addition, the panels may be part elastic and part inelastic as in well known gore or insert constructions. The torso-encircling panels may consist of side, rear and front panels, or the side and rear panels may be merged into one. Wherever the term "elastic" is used, it means fabric of a rubbery or elastomeric yarn or thread, while "stretch" fabric means the type made from thread or yarn of relatively inelastic material, but made stretchable in most cases by pre-coiling or crimping

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the thread or in some cases condensing the thread, all of which is well known in the art.

I claim:

1. A foundation garment of the panty girdle type comprising plurality of torso-encircling panels including two upper front panels and a lower front panel, said panels being secured along their side edges to front edges of an adjacent panel, said upper front panels extending from the top of the girdle to below the midpoint of the girdle and being in substantial overlapping relationship with their free lower edges disposed obliquely and crossing generally at the vertical median line of the panels, said lower front panel extending from the crotch region upwardly over the lower abdominal region when in position on the wearer and underlying the two upper front panels and being unattached to said upper front panels except at the side edges, and a crotch piece and leg-forming portions secured to the bottom of said lower front panel.

2. A foundation garment according to claim 1 in which the lower front panel is made into two parts inelastically attached along generally the vertical median line, and the two parts are biased upwardly from said line.

3. A foundation garment according to claim 1 wherein separate rear and side panels are provided, said rear panel has a vertical stretch characteristic, and said crotch piece is provided with a primary vertical stretch characteristic at least in the upper inner thigh contacting portions.

4. A foundation garment according to claim 1 in which the front panels are of inelastic fabric.

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