POST-SURGERY BRA

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ABSTRACT

A post-surgery bra is disclosed. The bra is for use by a patient after breast surgery. The bra includes an inner lining, an outer decorative layer, and a partial cup portion disposed between the layers. The partial cup portion is preferably made of a molded foam, and does not extend above the apex of the cup position of the bra. Thus, the bra helps prevent irritation of sore areas and remains cooler over the upper cup area. In various embodiments, the seams are inverted to prevent an abrasive edge from forming. A pocket is provided on the inner portion of the cup area for a prosthesis. Ideally, a wide lower band is provided to help hold the bra in place, and for comfort.
Under arm seams are turned inside for extra softness and comfort.
Fig. 3

Bra fabric folded over
Elastic

Fig. 4

Fabric folded inside
Elastic
POST-SURGERY BRA

CROSS REFERENCES

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/187,942, filed Jun. 17, 2009, which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to a bra for use after surgery, and more particularly, a post-surgery bra having partial cup portions in a configuration which addresses needs of post-surgery patients.

[0004] 2. Background

[0005] Patients who have undergone breast surgery have various post-surgery needs. For example, mastectomy patients will have various sensitivities and needs for garments after undergoing such procedures.

[0006] A number of bras having various designs and configurations have been created prior to the present invention. However, none of them fully meet the needs of patients recovering from various forms of breast surgery.

[0007] Conventional bras have a cup portion which extends substantially above the apex of the cup area of the bra. This can be problematic for breast surgery patients for a couple of reasons. First, this area can be sensitive or sore after surgery. Thus, having this thick material covering the area can create irritation and discomfort. Secondly, post-surgery patients may be sensitive to too much heat in this area. The thick layer of the cup portion adds to the amount of heat the patient may experience.

[0008] Various bras have additional features which can lead to discomfort. For example, the seams at the edges of conventional bras can be rough or jagged. This can lead to irritation.

[0009] Another issue with conventional bras is that, in mastectomy patients, there may be a problem with the bra staying properly in place. Not enough material or no particular feature is designed to hold the bra in place in such a situation in conventional bras.

[0010] Thus, conventional bras lack the ability to meet the needs of breast surgery patients. Therefore, there exists a need for a post-surgery bra which meets various needs and provides comfort to post-surgery patients.

SUMMARY

[0011] The present invention is a post-surgery bra to be worn by a patient recovering from breast surgery. The bra provides comfort and utility in its construction.

[0012] The bra includes an inner lining, preferably having good wicking properties. For example, cotton knit with lycra may be used. An outer layer, such as a decorative layer, is disposed over at least a substantial portion of the inner lining. The outer layer may be a lace layer.

[0013] Disposed between the two layers is a half or partial cup portion. Such partial cups are placed in the lower cup position of the bra. However, they do not extend above or substantially above the apex of the cup position. The partial cups may be formed of any suitable material. Ideally, they are formed of molded foam. By covering the lower portion only, the partial cups provide shape and support; however, they do not further irritate potentially sore areas of the patient. Furthermore, as heat is a frequent issue in post-surgery patients, the upper cup area remains cooler.

[0014] The bra, in various embodiments, includes a pocket accessible on the inner side of the cup area. A prosthesis may be positioned inside the pocket for shape, for example, for a post-mastectomy patient.

[0015] Various other features further enhance the bra in various embodiments. For example, the inner lining and outer layer may be joined with inverted seams to prevent the creation of a rough edge. A band of elastic may be sewn between these layers along an edge of the bra. Furthermore, a wide lower band may be included below the cup portions of the bra. Such a band may help seat the bra in place and provide additional comfort.

[0016] Still other objects and advantages of the present invention will become readily apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description, wherein it is shown and described only the preferred embodiments of the invention, simply by way of illustration of the best mode contemplated of carrying out the invention. As will be realized, the invention is capable of other and different embodiments and its several details are capable of modifications in various obvious respects, without departing from the invention. Accordingly, the drawings, wherein like reference numerals represent like features, and description are to be regarded as illustrative in nature and not as restrictive.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] FIG. 1 shows a front view of the post-surgery bra of the present invention, the partial cups being visible behind the outer layer.

[0018] FIG. 2 shows a perspective view of an embodiment of the post-surgery bra of the present invention.

[0019] FIG. 3 shows the construction of the seams in an embodiment of the post-surgery bra of the present invention.

[0020] FIG. 4 shows another view of the construction of the seams in an embodiment of the post-surgery bra of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0021] While this invention is susceptible of embodiments in many different forms, there are shown in the drawings and will herein be described in detail, preferred embodiments of the invention with the understanding that the present disclosure is to be considered as an exemplification of the principles of the invention and is not intended to limit the broad aspect of the invention to the embodiments illustrated.

[0022] The present invention is a post-surgery bra 10 for use by a breast surgery patient. The bra includes an inner lining 20 adapted to be placed adjacent the wearer’s skin. An outer layer 30 is sewn to the inner lining 20 over at least a portion of the inner lining 20.

[0023] The inner lining 20 is preferably formed of a material having good wicking properties to absorb perspiration. For example, a cotton knit material or cotton knit material with lycra may be used. Alternatively, a polyester fiber material may be used. However, any suitable material is contemplated to be within the scope of the present invention.

[0024] The outer layer 30 may be a decorative layer. For example, it may be a lace material, or it may have lace along its edges.

[0025] Two lower cup portions 40 are disposed between the inner lining 20 and the outer layer 30 at lower cup positions on
the bra. The cup portions \textit{40} are substantially half-cups which do not substantially extend above an apex of the cup positions of the bra \textit{10}. The cup portions \textit{40} may be formed of any suitable material. In various embodiments, the cup portions \textit{40} are formed of a molded foam material. Thus, the cup portions \textit{40}, even though covered with a fabric or thinner material on at least the inner side, will cover only a lower portion of the cup area, and an upper portion of the cup area will be covered by fabric or thinner material only.

[0026] In various embodiments, the post-surgery bra \textit{10} includes a pocket \textit{50} on one or both sides on the inner portion of the cup positions of the bra \textit{10}. Such a pocket \textit{50} may extend both above and below the apex of the cup positions, and is adapted to receive a prosthesis.

[0027] In various embodiments, the post-surgery bra \textit{10} is formed to avoid rough edges. For example, it may be formed by joining the inner lining \textit{20} and outer layer \textit{30} together via an inverted seem \textit{60}. The inverted seem \textit{60} keeps the rough edges on the inside of the seem so that the outer edge is soft. In other words, the edge where the materials are joined is turned inside out after being sewn. This provides for greater comfort for the wearer so as not to be exposed to the rough edge of the seems, which can be of particular importance for a post-surgery patient.

[0028] An elastic strip or band \textit{70} is included in various embodiments of the bra \textit{10}. The strip \textit{70} is ideally sandwiched between the inner lining \textit{20} and outer layer \textit{30}, so as not to create an abrasive edge.

[0029] In various embodiments of the post-surgery bra \textit{10} according to the present invention, the bra \textit{10} may include a wide bottom band \textit{80}. The band \textit{80} may be at least an inch wide as it extends below the cup portions of the bra \textit{10}. In a preferred embodiment, the band \textit{80} is approximately an inch and a half in width. Such a band \textit{80} helps keep the bra \textit{10} in proper position and adds comfort.

[0030] While specific embodiments have been illustrated and described, numerous modifications come to mind without significantly departing from the spirit of the invention and the scope of protection is limited by the scope of the accompanying claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A post-surgery bra comprising:
   - an inner lining adapted to be placed adjacent the wearer’s skin,
   - an outer layer of material sewn to said inner lining over at least a portion of said inner lining,
   - two lower cup portions disposed between said inner lining and said outer layer at lower cup positions on said bra,
   wherein said cup portions are substantially half-cups which do not substantially extend above an apex of said cup positions of said bra.
2. The post-surgery bra according to claim 1, further comprising at least one pocket formed on an inner side of the cup position of said bra adapted to receive a prosthesis.
3. The post-surgery bra according to claim 1, wherein the inner lining is formed of a material having effective wicking properties.
4. The post-surgery bra according to claim 3, wherein the inner lining is formed of a cotton knit material.
5. The post-surgery bra according to claim 3, wherein the inner lining is formed of a polyester fiber material.
6. The post-surgery bra according to claim 1, wherein said lower cup portions are formed of a molded foam material.
7. The post-surgery bra according to claim 3, wherein said outer layer is a lace material.
8. The post-surgery bra according to claim 1, wherein said inner lining and said outer layer are joined with inverted seems about at least a portion of an outer edge.
9. The post-surgery bra according to claim 8, further comprising an elastic strip substantially adjacent the outer edge of said bra sandwiched between said inner lining and said outer layer.
10. The post-surgery bra according to claim 2, wherein said pocket extends both above and below the apex of the cup positions of said bra.
11. The post-surgery bra according to claim 1, further comprising a bottom band portion of said bra extending at least one inch below the cup positions of said bra.
12. The post-surgery bra according to claim 9, further comprising a bottom band portion of said bra extending at least one inch below the cup positions of said bra.
13. The post-surgery bra according to claim 1, further comprising a bottom band portion of said bra extending approximately one and a half inches below the cup positions of said bra.
14. The post-surgery bra according to claim 9, further comprising a bottom band portion of said bra extending approximately one and a half inches below the cup positions of said bra.
15. The post-surgery bra according to claim 6, wherein said cup portions are disposed at a lower cup area of the bra, and wherein an upper cup area of the bra is covered by a thinner material than the lower cup area.
16. The post-surgery bra according to claim 15, wherein the thinner material consists of the inner liner and outer layer.
17. The post-surgery bra according to claim 16, wherein the inner liner and outer layer are formed of fabric material.

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