A container is provided including a receptacle and a lid that covers a receptacle opening. The receptacle houses a plurality of solid consumable products and comprises a bottom surface and a first ergonomic contour that is substantially oblong in shape, has a
width from about 1.25 centimeters to about 2.5 centimeters, and is arranged and disposed perpendicularly to a vertical axis passing through a center of the bottom surface. A container is also provided comprising a first and second housing, the housings defining an interior containing a plurality of solid consumable products. The container also provides a spring biasing the first housing with respect to the second housing. The container also defines a first opening that provides access to the interior upon activation of the spring, and a second opening providing access to the interior that is defined by one of the first housing and the second housing.
A container is provided including a receptacle and a lid that covers a receptacle opening. The receptacle houses a plurality of solid consumable products and comprises a bottom surface and a first ergonomic contour that is substantially oblong in shape, has a width from about 1.25 centimeters to about 2.5 centimeters, and is arranged and disposed perpendicularly to a vertical axis passing through a central axis of the bottom surface. A container is also provided comprising a first and second housing, the housings defining an interior containing a plurality of solid consumable products. The container also provides a spring biasing the first housing with respect to the second housing. The container also defines a first opening that provides access to the interior upon activation of the spring, and a second opening providing access to the interior that is defined by one of the first housing and the second housing.
TITLE OF THE INVENTION
CONSUMABLE PRODUCT CONTAINER ASSEMBLY

BACKGROUND

[0001] The present disclosure relates generally to packaging. More particularly, the present disclosure relates to containers for storing and dispensing confectionery products.

[0002] The packaging for confectionery products is important to the marketing and storage of the product. As such, containers for confectionery products come in a variety of sizes, shapes and designs. For example, containers can be hand-held containers, with an openable lid for the dispensing of small, individual pieces of confectionery product. Such containers are traditionally useful for dispensing of one individual product, or a small number of individual products, at a time. Alternately, containers may be larger, with an openable lid for dispensing many pieces at once.

[0003] Traditional containers are useful for a number of purposes. In particular, traditional containers keep products fresh and free from contaminants. Additionally, where a product consists of a number of small pieces, traditional containers are useful for maintaining them in a restricted space for easy carrying. Where the containers are larger, they are useful for maintaining a large number of small pieces in a convenient, often decorative, manner.

[0004] Many traditional containers, however, do not adequately allow for easy removal of the product. For example, where the container is located in a high-traffic area, such as a reception area, it may be desirable to dispense a larger number of pieces at a time. If the opening in the container is too small, significant amounts of agitation may be necessary to dispense a large number of pieces. Similarly, if the opening in the container is too small for a consumer to use his or her hand to remove the pieces, the contents of the container may be spilled, or the consumer may become frustrated and give up.

[0005] In this regard, many traditional containers do not provide a consumer with the choice of removal of multiple pieces, or removal of a small number of pieces. When a consumer desires a small number of pieces where only a large opening is present it may become difficult to remove the pieces without spilling the contents. In these instances, the large opening is unnecessary and creates a burden on the consumer. Furthermore, a large opening may allow multiple consumers to inadvertently touch unwanted pieces of the product when trying to remove an individual piece, creating an unhygienic environment. It would therefore be useful to provide a container that allows the option of either removal of a large number of pieces or a small, individual piece.
Further, conventional containers are often manufactured using multiple pieces of material. For example, when several openings are found in the container, these openings require multiple covers for sealing the openings to maintain control and for preservation of the pieces. The need for multiple covers makes the processing of such containers costly and time-consuming, as each cover is likely individually manufactured.

SUMMARY

The present disclosure provides a container for dispensing a plurality of consumable products. The present disclosure also provides a container with increased capacity to help alleviate product outages. The container may be portable so as to be ready for use in different environments. The container can comprise a lid, a receptacle and design features therein which enable the container to be opened intuitively. The container is durable and stable and yet may be opened using a single hand. The container may dispense a large amount of products and/or a portion controlled amount of products from an interior.

The present disclosure also provides an apparatus for dispensing individual confectionery products. More particularly, the present disclosure provides a two-piece lid for a confectionery product container. The products in one embodiment are confectionery products. The teachings of the present disclosure, however, are not dependent upon the products being any particular type as long as the products can fit within and be dispensed by the product container lid described herein. The container herein, regardless of what product is being dispensed, is configured to be highly functional, as described.

The present disclosure provides, in an embodiment, a container comprising a lid and a receptacle where the receptacle houses a plurality of solid consumable products. The receptacle has a bottom surface and a first ergonomic contour. The first ergonomic contour is substantially oblong in shape, has a width from about 1.25 centimeters to about 2.5 centimeters, and is disposed perpendicularly to a vertical axis passing through a center of the bottom surface. The lid covers an opening in the receptacle.

In an embodiment, the first ergonomic contour has a length of at least half of the receptacle’s circumference.

In an embodiment, the receptacle includes a second ergonomic contour disposed perpendicularly to the axis.

In another embodiment, the present disclosure provides a container comprising a first housing and second housing. The housings define an interior containing a plurality of solid consumable products. The first housing is biased with respect to the second...
housing via a spring. A first opening can be defined by the container. The first opening provides access to the interior upon activation of the spring. A second opening can be defined by one of the first and second housings. The second opening also provides access to the interior.

[0013] In an embodiment, the spring biases the first housing in a closed position with respect to the second housing.

[0014] In an embodiment, the spring biases the first housing in an open position with respect to the second housing.

[0015] In an embodiment, the second opening is larger than the first opening.

[0016] In an embodiment, the second opening is smaller than the first opening.

[0017] In an embodiment, the second opening provides access to the interior via a hinge.

[0018] In an embodiment, the first housing is a lid and the second housing is a receptacle.

[0019] In an embodiment, the first housing is an inner housing and the second housing is an outer housing.

[0020] An advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a container with an increased capacity for consumable products to alleviate outages and to reduce packaging.

[0021] Another advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a stable container that may not easily be tipped.

[0022] Yet another advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a durable container that may resist spills and unwanted opening.

[0023] A further advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a portable container that can be placed in various settings.

[0024] Yet another advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a container that permits easy removal of products from the first piece to the last piece.

[0025] Still another advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a container for consumable products that is intuitive and easy to open.

[0026] Another advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a container that may be opened using only one hand.

[0027] An advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a product container for dispensing individual products.

[0028] A further advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a product container that is compact and easily stored.
[0029] Another advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a product container that is controllable to dispense only a desired amount of product.

[0030] Yet another advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a receptacle lid that allows a product to be dispensed via reach-in access or shaking.

[0030a] Provided herein is a container comprising: a receptacle and a lid defining an interior, the lid including a base and a cover, and the cover including a major opening covered by a major cover and a minor opening covered by a minor cover, wherein the major opening is defined by a top face of the lid and the minor opening is defined by the major cover, and wherein the minor cover is located on the major cover; and a hinge mechanism at a pivot point between the base and cover portion for providing access to the interior.

[0031] Additional features and advantages are described herein, and will be apparent from, the following Detailed Description and the figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0032] FIG. 1 illustrates a perspective view of a push-button lid embodiment of the present disclosure in an open position.

[0033] FIG. 2 illustrates a perspective side view of another push-button lid embodiment.

[0034] FIGS. 3 to 9 illustrate perspective views of various embodiments of the receptacle of the present disclosure.

[0035] FIGS. 10A to 12C illustrate further embodiments of the consumable product container from a closed position to an open position.

[0036] FIGS. 13A to 13C illustrate further embodiments of the consumable product container from a closed position to an open position.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0037] The present disclosure provides a container including a lid and a receptacle for housing consumable products. Although the illustrated embodiments display the consumable products as tablets of products, it will be understood that the products to be dispensed can be of any suitable shape and size. Examples of such shapes include pill, block, flat stick, pillow, round, rectangular, triangular, and any combination of same.

[0038] The present disclosure expressly provides the container sized and shaped to fit conveniently into a standard cup holder. However, it will be appreciated that the receptacle and lid illustrated in the embodiments are not expressly limited to any particular size or shape. The
present disclosure also provides the receptacle and lid made of any suitable material. The container receptacle and lid in the embodiments described below are generally made of a plastic material. In an embodiment, the material is polyethylene or polypropylene.

[0039] The receptacle and lid may be constructed using conventional molding processes, including such non-limiting examples as injection blow molding, extrusion blow
molding, injection molding, and thermoforming. The container may be made from disposable materials. More specifically, the lid and receptacle may be made from materials including such non-limiting examples as plastic, tin, paper and combinations thereof.

[0040] Referring now to the drawings, in particular to the embodiments illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, a lid 34/36 is illustrated. The lid 34/36 generally comprises two pieces: a base 22 and a cover 26. As illustrated further below, the base 22 and/or the cover 26 can be organized into portions, while maintaining their unitary structures and maintaining the two-piece construction of the lid. For example, the cover 26 may comprise a major cover 28 and a minor cover 30 as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. Moreover, the cover 26 may comprise a major opening 60 and a minor opening 62.

[0041] In an embodiment, the base portion 22 and cover 26 comprise two separate pieces of material. Moreover, regardless of the number of openings in the base 22 and the number of portions defined by the cover 26, the cover 26 is may be made of a single piece of material.

[0042] The cover 26 is generally connected to the base 22. While it is desirable that the cover 26 is connected to the base 22 in a manner to allow the cover to pivot, it will be appreciated that any manner of connecting the cover 26 to the base 22 may be employed. For example, the cover 26 is movably attached to the base 22 by at a pivot point 70.

[0043] In the embodiments illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, the lid 34/36 may include a push button assembly 90 to open the major opening 60 via the pivot point 70. The pivot point 70 may involve a hinge mechanism 76. The hinge mechanism 76 may include a spring (not shown) that may be made from either silicone or metal. When the push button 90 is activated, the spring may bias the major cover 28 towards an open position with respect to the base 22. To lock the major cover 28 in a closed position with respect to the base 22, the major cover 28 may engage the push button 90 at a latch closure 92 (best shown in Figure 2) to cover the major opening 60. The push button 90 may enable a consumer to open the container with a single press using only one hand. In an embodiment, the base 22, major cover 28, and push button 90 may be molded separately.

[0044] It is understood that various changes and modifications to the embodiments discussed above will be apparent. For example, as shown in the Figures 1 and 2, the lid 34/36 includes a top face 44 defined in a plane at an angle with respect to a horizontal plane to create a sloped surface. However, the top face 44 of the lid may also define a plane that is parallel with respect to a horizontal plane to create a flat surface. In other words, the top face 44 may be either flat or sloped.
[0045] It should be appreciated that the major and minor openings 60, 62 may be in various portions of the container. For example, the top face 44 of the lid 34/36 may define the major opening 60, while a side of the lid 34/36 may define the minor opening 62. Further, the top face 44 of the lid 34/36 may define the minor opening 62, as shown in the embodiments of Figure 1 and Figure 2. In another embodiment, the minor opening 62 may be defined by the major cover 28 and the top face 44 of the lid at the same time. In a further embodiment, a receptacle may define the major and minor openings 60, 62, as discussed in detail below.

[0046] It should also be appreciated that the major 60 and minor 62 openings may lie in various planes with respect to one another and with respect to various portions of the container. For example, the openings may lie in the same plane with respect to one another (e.g. the plane of the top face 44). The minor opening 62 may also lie within the major opening 60.

[0047] As discussed above, the major and minor openings 60, 62 may also lie on different planes. For example, as shown in Figures 1 and 2, the major opening 60 may lie in a flat plane, while the top face 44 may lie in a sloped plane. Alternatively, the major and minor openings 60, 62 may lie on separate but parallel planes.

[0048] An advantage of the present disclosure is to provide a product container that is controllable to dispense only a desired amount of product. One way of carrying out this aspect of the invention involves providing ergonomic contours 54 on the lid 36 to assist a consumer in dispensing the consumable products. In an embodiment, as shown in Figure 2, ergonomic contours 54 in the lid may assist a consumer in pouring products from the minor opening 62 when the minor cover 30 is in an open position. In another embodiment, the contours 54 may assist in pouring from the major opening 60. Furthermore, the contours 54 may provide an ergonomic means for the consumer to hold the container during transport.

[0049] In the present specification, as used herein the term “ergonomic contour” means a shape formed or molded along an outer periphery of a container to fit a particular portion of a consumer’s hand, where the shape is designed to promote the natural orientation of a consumer’s grip and to minimize the strain a consumer exerts when gripping the container by the ergonomic contours.

[0050] In addition to the lid 34/36, the container also includes a receptacle for housing the consumable products. It will be appreciated that the lid may be removably attached to a receptacle via any known means. For example, the lid may contain threads to fit with a receptacle via a twisting action. Threads may also be present around the opening of the
receptacle such that the lid and receptacle have cooperating pairs of single threads. Cooperating threads can ensure that there is only one starting point at which the lid starts twisting with respect to the receptacle (i.e. where the threads meet), and only one ending point at which the lid stops twisting with respect to the receptacle (i.e. where the threads end). Cooperating threads may also ensure that properly aligned labels on the lid and will appropriately align with respect to one another once the lid stops twisting around the receptacle. Moreover, the lid and/or the receptacle may include more than one set of threads.

[0051] In another embodiment, the lid is manufactured to snap-fit with the receptacle. In a further embodiment, the lid is manufactured to fit with the receptacle in a friction-fit. These connections may provide an airtight seal between the lid and the receptacle. As stated above, it will be appreciated that the lid may be removably attached to a receptacle via any known means.

[0052] In an alternate embodiment, the lid is permanently attached to, or integral with, the receptacle.

[0053] The container may also involve at least one closure assembly (e.g. sealed cover portions, hinge assemblies, push-button assemblies, etc., as discussed in further detail below) which can activate the lid or provide access to an opening in the lid. The closure assembly and the connection between the lid and the receptacle may act in concert to secure the container so the container may not open when dropped or agitated. More specifically, the container will not inadvertently open when dropped or when agitated inside a purse or bag. Furthermore, the container may be sufficiently rigid to prevent the container from deforming or opening when squeezed.

[0054] It should be appreciated that any lid embodiment discussed above may be paired with any of the receptacles illustrated in Figures 3 to 9 to form the consumable product container fitted together as disclosed above.

[0055] The receptacle may be any suitable size or shape, including but not limited to cubic, rectangular, pyramidal, cylindrical, conical and spherical. The receptacle defines an opening that enables dispensing or removal of the consumable products from the receptacle.

[0056] The receptacle may be of increased capacity, providing a large amount of products to the consumer to help alleviate product outages. With the increased amount of products, a consumer may be encouraged to share the products with other consumers. The capacity of the receptacle also reduces the amount of overall packaging material required for the container with respect to the amount of product provided therein. In this way, the
container may house a large amount of relatively small, solid consumable products at the same time.

[0057] Similar solid consumable products may typically be packaged into smaller packages relative to the container of the present disclosure. In this regard, such small packages housing similar consumable products may be placed on impulse racks near the checkout counter of a store. Alternatively, the increased size of the container of the present disclosure can afford similar solid consumable products with valuable shelf space within the aisles of a store. A plurality of containers of the present disclosure can be displayed together on aisle shelves or sold together in bulk. The entire container may be disposed or reused. Furthermore, the container may be portable so as to be ready for use in different environments. For example, the container may be suitable for use in a car, in an office, or at home.

[0058] In an embodiment, the products housed in the receptacle may be confectionery products, including such non-limiting examples as hard candies, gummy candies, mints, tablets, gum pellets, beads, liquid filled beads, chewy candy, chocolate, caramels, and gumballs. In another embodiment, the products may be snack foods, including such non-limiting examples as peanuts, nuts, pretzels, and salty snacks. In yet another embodiment, the products can alternatively be any other type of solid consumable product. For instance, the products can be cough drops or breath mints or other types of medical, consumable products. In a further embodiment, the container may include combinations of products. It should also be appreciated that the container may house non-edible products of similar size and shape.

[0059] In the embodiments illustrated in Figures 3-9, a receptacle 68 may be tall enough so a consumer can grab a periphery of the receptacle 68 with an entire hand. In other words, the height of the receptacle (i.e. from a bottom surface 64 of the receptacle 68 to a mouth 66) may measure at least the width of an average adult palm. In an embodiment, the height of the receptacle 68 may measure from about 6.35 centimeters to about 9.0 centimeters.

[0060] In another embodiment, the receptacle 68 is sized and shaped to fit conveniently into a standard cup holder such as a cup holder in an automobile. The receptacle 68 may also be sized to prevent the container from rattling inside the cup holder. For example, the average diameter of the receptacle 68 may measure from about 5 centimeters to about 7.6 centimeters.
[0061] In a further embodiment, the receptacle 68 may be shallow enough so a consumer can remove the last consumable product touching the bottom surface 64 of the receptacle 68 without shaking or inverting the container. In other words, a consumer can reach into an interior of the container with an index finger to retrieve the last product from the bottom surface of the receptacle.

[0062] In the embodiments illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, a consumer can extract the last consumable product from the major opening 60 in the lid 34/36. Thus, the height of the container from the bottom surface 64 of the receptacle 68 to the top face 44 of the lid 34/36 in Figures 1 and 2 may measure the length of an average adult index finger. For example, the height of container from a bottom surface 64 of the receptacle 38 to the tallest point of the lid 34/36 may measure between about 7.6 centimeters to about 11.4 centimeters. In an embodiment, the maximum height of the container may measure about 9.0 centimeters.

[0063] In a further embodiment, the mouth 66 of the receptacle 68 is sized for an average adult hand to scoop products from an interior of the receptacle. For example, the mouth 66 of the receptacle 38 may have a diameter from about 5.0 centimeters to about 7.6 centimeters.

[0064] In an embodiment, the receptacle 68 may generally be fructo-conical in shape so that the diameter of the bottom surface 64 of the receptacle 68 may be smaller than the diameter of the mouth 66 of the receptacle 68. In other embodiments, as stated previously, the receptacle 686 may resemble shapes such as, for example, a cylinder, a cube, a block, a pyramid, a cone, or a sphere.

[0065] In another embodiment, the bottom surface 64 of the receptacle 68 may be a flat surface. Alternatively, the bottom surface 64 may be slightly concave towards an interior of the receptacle 68. If the bottom surface 64 is slightly concave, the bottom surface 64 may not be configured to constrict a consumer’s access to the last piece of consumable product located within a crevice at the bottom surface 64 of the receptacle 68.

[0066] The receptacle 68, like the lid, may also include ergonomic contours to aid a consumer in dispensing the consumable products from the container. In an embodiment illustrated in Figure 3, the receptacle 68 may include an ergonomic contour such as a tapered middle region 86 between shoulders 56 and 58. The concave curve of the taper may involve a large radius of curvature. In an embodiment, the radius of curvature of the taper may measure between about 7.6 centimeters to about 12.7 centimeters. In other words, the taper may be gradual enough so that a single consumable product may not get stuck in a crevice 78 at the bottom surface 64 of the receptacle 68. Therefore, even with this tapered ergonomic
design, a consumer may use an index finger to extract the last consumable product lying in the crevice 78 of the receptacle 68 without shaking, inverting, or pouring from the receptacle 68.

[0067] The tapered design permits a label to surround the circumference of the receptacle 68 in a consistent manner. The shoulders 56 and 58 of the receptacle 68 may lock the label at the middle of the receptacle 68, preventing the label from sliding off. In an embodiment, the label may be a pre-printed shrink wrapper or a pressure sensitive layer (e.g. sticker). In another embodiment, the label may be molded into various parts of the container.

[0068] The receptacle 68 may include more than one ergonomic contour. The ergonomic contour may include one or more thumb contours, hand contours, or separate finger contours. In an embodiment illustrated in Figure 4, the receptacle 68 may include a first ergonomic contour 84 as well as a second ergonomic contour 86. In this embodiment, the first ergonomic contour 84 includes a thumb contour 84 which may be substantially oblong or elongate in shape and have a width of about the average adult thumb. In an embodiment, the thumb contour 84 has a width between about 1.25 centimeters to about 2.5 centimeters. In an embodiment, the thumb contour 84 can stretch across at least half of the circumference of the receptacle 68. The thumb contour 84 may be positioned perpendicularly around the receptacle 68 with respect to a vertical axis that passes through the center of the bottom surface 64.

[0069] The second ergonomic contour 86 may also be positioned perpendicularly around the receptacle 68 with respect to the same vertical axis. The second ergonomic contour 86 may include a hand contour 86 (as illustrated in Figure 4) or set of separate finger contours. This ergonomic arrangement illustrated by the embodiment in Figure 4 is designed for both left- and right-handed consumers. For example, a consumer can align a left thumb with a left-handed area 83 of the thumb contour 84 and a hand with the second ergonomic contour 86. Similarly, a consumer can align a right thumb with a right-handed area 85 of the thumb contour 84 and a hand with the second ergonomic contour 86. Thus, whichever way the receptacle 68 is positioned on a surface, a consumer can comfortably and quickly grab the receptacle 67 from various angles utilizing the first and second ergonomic contours 84 and 86.

[0070] It should be appreciated that a consumer is not limited in utilizing the ergonomic contours in any specific manner. For example, a consumer can align a right or left index finger with the first ergonomic contour 84 rather than a thumb, and align his or her thumb with the second ergonomic contour 86 rather than his or her hand.
[0071] In another embodiment, as shown in Figure 5, a receptacle 68 may include a first contour and a second contour. In an embodiment, the first and second contours can each be a set of symmetrically disposed finger contours 88. Like the embodiment of Figure 4, the receptacle of Figure 5 is designed for both left- and right-handed consumers.

[0072] Figure 6 through Figure 9 illustrate further embodiments of the receptacle 68 having multiple ergonomic contours disposed around the circumference of the receptacle 68, which are also designed for both left-and right-handed consumers.

[0073] In yet another embodiment (not shown), the ergonomic contours may be specifically arranged for either a left- or right-handed consumer. For example, only a left-handed area 83 or a right-handed area 85 may be provided on the thumb contour 84. In other words, only a portion of the thumb contour 84 stretching no more than half of the length of the thumb contour 84 can be disposed on the receptacle. In these examples, the thumb contour 84 would not be disposed symmetrically with respect to the second ergonomic contour 86 on the receptacle.

[0074] The receptacle may also include gripping surfaces on the exterior of the receptacle. The gripping surfaces may include a coating layer with a higher coefficient of friction than the rest of the receptacle. In an embodiment, the gripping surface is co-extruded with the receptacle. The gripping surface may be made from any suitable material capable of being extruded with and attached to the receptacle material. Alternatively, the gripping surface may involve textured regions of the receptacle. In an embodiment, gripping surfaces may be located on each ergonomic contour area. In another embodiment, gripping surfaces may be located on a single ergonomic contour area. In a further embodiment, the gripping surface may be located on at least a portion of or on an entire ergonomic contour area. In yet another embodiment, the gripping surface may be located on various other portions of the lid and the receptacle, such as on the bottom surface of the receptacle so as to provide a non-slip surface for the container.

[0075] In an alternative embodiment, the container of the present disclosure includes a lid that includes functional aspects specifically designed for chewing gum. For example, as illustrated in Figures 10A and 10B, a lid 134 may include a plurality of sheets 94 for disposing the gum after it has been consumed. In an embodiment, the sheets may be tissues, wax paper or foil. A stack of sheets may be disposed on an underside of the lid 134. The lid 134 may also be spring-biased towards an open position with respect to a receptacle 168. Moreover, a push button 190 may enable a consumer to move lid 134 to an open position.
with a single press of push button 190. In another embodiment (not shown), the receptacle may house the plurality of sheets within a receptacle interior.

[0076] As illustrated by Figures 11A to 11C, an embodiment of the present disclosure provides a container 150. The container 150 includes a larger opening 160 for individual use and a smaller opening 162 for hygienic sharing. The smaller opening 162 may be placed on an opposite end of the container 150 from the larger opening 160. Moreover, the smaller opening 162 and the larger opening 160 may include two different types of closure assemblies or modes of operation.

[0077] As illustrated in Figure 11A, the smaller opening 162 uses a first type of assembly, or a press-and-pop assembly described below, while the larger opening 160 uses a second type of assembly, or a multiple squeeze zone assembly.

[0078] In the embodiment shown in Figure 11A, the smaller opening 162 is defined by or between both a first inner housing (darker portion) and in a second outer housing (lighter portion). The inner housing includes the lid 136 that is spring-biased with respect to the inner housing. The inner housing is also spring biased towards a closed position with respect to the outer housing so that a smaller opening 162 in the inner housing (not shown) is blocked from a smaller opening 162 in the outer housing (shown in Figures 11A to 11C). Therefore, when the entire inner housing is depressed, as indicated by the arrow in Figure 11C, the smaller openings 162 in both the first and second housings overlap with one another to dispense a portion controlled amount of products from an interior of the container 150.

[0079] Figures 11A to 11B also illustrate the larger opening 160 utilizing the multiple squeeze zone assembly, which involves two diametrically opposed squeeze zones (indicated at arrows in Figure 11A). By depressing the two squeeze zones, a consumer can open lid 136 to an open position illustrated in Figure 11B.

[0080] It should be appreciated that any container embodiment discussed herein may include at least two dispenser openings therein. Furthermore, any container embodiment discussed herein may include a major opening for dispensing a large amount of products and a minor opening for dispensing a portion controlled amount of products from an interior of the container. Moreover, it should also be appreciated that any container embodiment discussed herein may include more than one type of closure assembly or mode of operation (e.g. push-button assembly, spring hinge, sealed cover portions, twisting connections, multiple squeeze zones, press-and-pop assembly, or pour spouts as discussed below).

[0081] Figures 12A to 12C illustrate an embodiment including a twisting closure assembly where a consumer may apply a twisting force to a connection between a lid 234 and
a receptacle 268 to provide access to an opening. The lid 234 may be swiveled about an axis between an open and closed position (see Figures 12A to 12C). In other words, the lid 234 may be connected to the receptacle 268 via a swivel such that the lid turns in a circle, within a horizontal plane, about a pivot axis with respect to the receptacle 268. The pivot axis can include a headed pin (not shown) connecting the lid 234 and the receptacle 236 such that the lid can turn or pivot about the headed pin independently from receptacle.

[0082] As discussed above, the receptacle may include ergonomic contours. The receptacle 268 of Figures 12A to 12C shows an ergonomic contour as a peripheral coil. Furthermore, the lid 234 may include an ergonomic contour such as the thumb contour (indicated at arrow in Figure 12A).

[0083] In another embodiment illustrated in Figures 13A to 13C, a container 350 is provided that includes a self-rise mechanism to bring the products to the consumer. The container 350 includes a receptacle 368 and a moving lid 234 that is spring-biased with respect to the receptacle 368. The lid 234 may include a shaft 396 and a floor 398 designed to adjust the internal volume of the receptacle 368. The lid 334 may be pressed to activate the self-rise mechanism and to lift the products towards a mouth 366 of the receptacle 368. In an embodiment, the mouth 366 may be flared to provide a space for a consumer to reach between the lid 334 and the mouth 366. This flared shape may also provide a wider space for a flow of products as the products become more accessible to the consumer when they emerge from the receptacle 368.

[0084] To close the container 350, the lid 334 may be pressed again to lock the lid 334 within the receptacle 368. The top face of the lid 344 may include a thumb contour (indicated at arrow in Figure 13C) and the receptacle 368 may include contours as well.

[0085] In another embodiment, the mouth 366 may have the same size and shape as the bottom surface of the receptacle 368. The mouth 366 may include one or more pour spouts or tapered portions (not shown). Further, the receptacle 368 may include an inner housing and the lid 334 may include an outer housing. The inner and outer housings may act in concert with one another to provide access to a smaller opening 162 discussed in Figures 11A to 11C.

[0086] Although not illustrated, an embodiment provides a container that includes an induction seal. The induction seal may protect consumable products housed within the container, promote freshness of the products and extend the shelf life of the products. An induction liner may seal around a mouth of the receptacle. When a consumer first receives the container, the consumer can either open or remove a lid before breaking the induction seal.
and exposing the consumable products. Conventional induction sealing techniques may be used, including such non-limiting examples as cold sealing, heat sealing utilizing a hot melt, heat activated adhesive or fusible substrate, room temperature sealing utilizing room temperature adhesives, or other induction sealing processes utilizing conductive foil systems. Alternatively, a conduction seal may be used instead. Conventional conduction sealing techniques may also be used.

[0087] It should be understood that various changes and modifications to the presently preferred embodiments described herein would be apparent to those skilled in the art. Such changes and modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present subject matter and without diminishing its intended advantages. It is therefore intended that such changes and modifications be covered by the appended claims.
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A container comprising:
   a receptacle and a lid defining an interior, the lid including a base and a
   cover, and the cover including a major opening covered by a major cover and a
   minor opening covered by a minor cover, wherein the major opening is defined by a
   top face of the lid and the minor opening is defined by the major cover, and wherein
   the minor cover is located on the major cover; and
   a hinge mechanism at a pivot point between the base and cover portion
   for providing access to the interior.

2. The container of Claim 1 further comprising a push button on the lid.

3. The container of Claim 2, wherein pressing the push button biases the
   major cover to an open position.

4. The container of Claim 1, wherein the hinge mechanism includes a spring.

5. The container of Claim 4, wherein the spring is made from silicone.

6. The container of Claim 4, wherein the spring is made from metal.

7. The container of Claim 1, wherein the major and minor openings lie in
   different planes with respect to one another.

8. The container of Claim 1, wherein base and cover are two separate
   pieces.

9. The container of Claim 2 further comprising a latch closure at the push
   button.
10. The container of Claim 1 further comprising ergonomic contours on the lid.

11. The container of Claim 1 further comprising ergonomic contours on the receptacle.

12. The container of claim 1 wherein:
   the interior is capable of containing a plurality of consumable products;
   the receptacle has a top, a bottom, and a side wall, with the bottom defining a horizontal plane; and
   the major opening is sized to allow removal of multiple consumable products and the minor opening is sized to allow removal of individual consumable products, one at a time.

13. The container of claim 12 in which the lid is removable from the receptacle.

14. The container of claim 12 in which the lid is not removable from the receptacle.

15. The container of claim 12 in which the top face of the lid is positioned at an angle with respect to the bottom plane.

16. The container of claim 12 in which the top face of the lid is parallel to the bottom plane.

17. The container of claim 12 in which at least two closable openings are on the lid.
18. The container of claim 12 in which the side wall of the receptacle is cylindrical.

19. The container of claim 12 in which the side wall of the receptacle has an ergonomic contour.

20. The container of claim 19 in which the side wall having an ergonomic contour includes a gripping surface.

21. The container of claim 19 wherein the ergonomic contour is oblong in shape, having a width between half an inch to about an inch and arranged and disposed perpendicularly to a vertical axis passing through a center of the receptacle bottom.
FIG. 1
FIG. 6
FIG. 7