

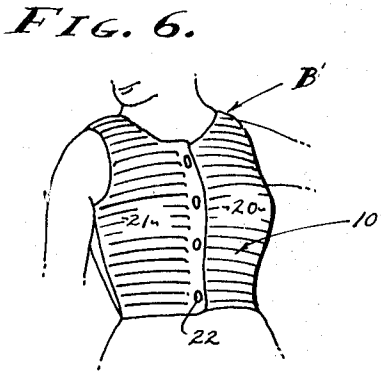
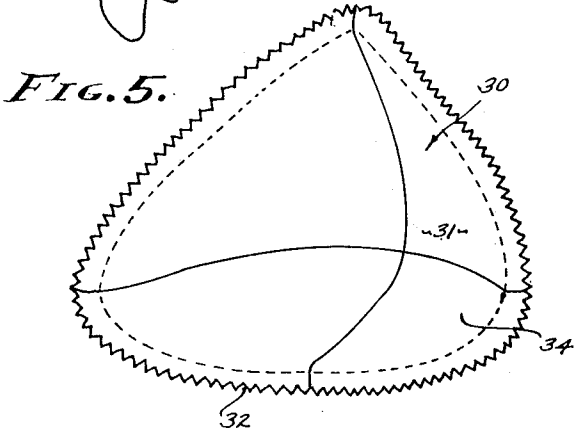
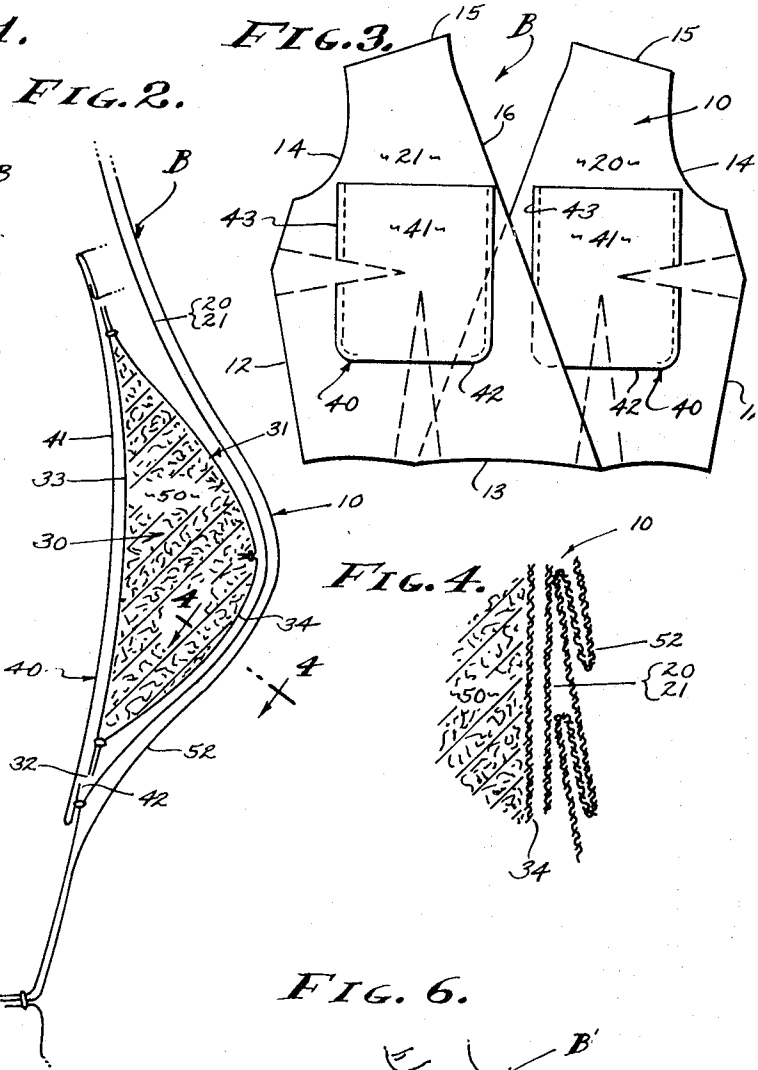
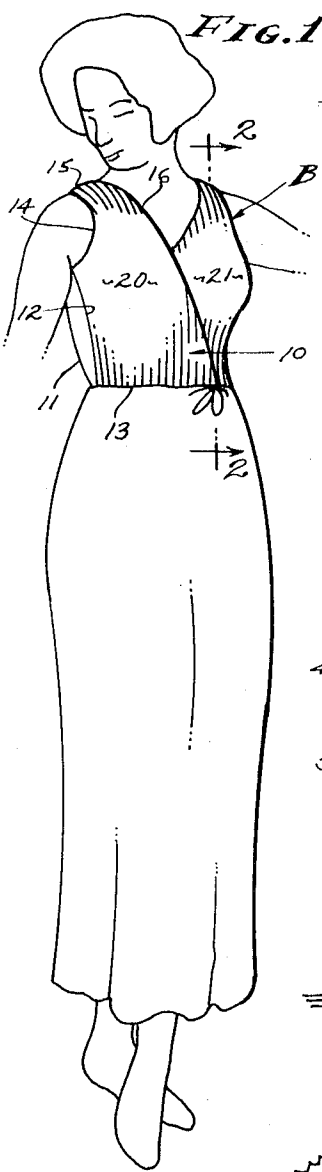
Oct. 24, 1967

B. O. DODDS

3,348,241

WOMEN'S PROSTHETIC LOUNGEWEAR

Filed March 26, 1965



INVENTOR.
BEATRICE O. DODDS
BY
W. H. Tappin
AGENT

1

3,348,241

WOMEN'S PROSTHETIC LOUNGEWEAR

Beatrice O. Dodds, 11735 Tennessee Ave.,

Los Angeles, Calif. 90064

Filed Mar. 26, 1965, Ser. No. 442,998

2 Claims. (Cl. 3—36)

This invention relates to prosthetic garments wherein an artificial form is added thereby for replacement or augmentation of a corresponding human body part that is underdeveloped or which has been removed as by surgery. In particular, this invention relates to light-weight comfort garments associated with the human body as adversely affected by mastectomy surgery and the like, and to this end it is a general object of this invention to provide loungewear incorporating therein prosthetic features completing the human body form in cases of underdevelopment and/or surgery and particularly in the area of the bosom or breasts.

Although there are natural occurrences of underdevelopment where human body parts are subnormal, there are also increasingly prevalent occurrences of surgery where human body parts are removed as a matter of necessity. In cases of mastectomy surgery, there is great psychological impact upon the woman involved, and in addition there is great discomfort as a result of both physical and mental sensitivity. As a result of such operations, mastectomy patients and/or victims resort to prosthetic forms that are molded, padded and weighted so as to substitute as exactly as possible the body part or parts replaced. For obvious reasons, therefore, it is the desire of these unfortunate women to recover and return to a natural appearance and to continue all of their previous activities. However, in many instances radical breast surgery necessitates the removal of muscle having to do with the locomotion of the arm or arms and creating substantial cavities in the surface of the chest and underlying the normal bosom contours. Therefore, as a result of such surgery, the victim must not only recover physically but she must also wear a prosthesis in the form of an artificial breast commonly held in place by a usual brassiere.

The problems and inconveniences involved with the use of a breast prosthesis are many, and among them are the discomforts resulting from the harness effect of the brassiere coupled with the normal weight of the prosthetic device, and all of which is adversely affected due to the usually greater sensitivity in the area of the surgery. As a result of the usual discomfort there is extreme anxiety among mastectomy patients and victims to shed such prostheses when in privacy. However, in leading a normal life a woman cannot be expected to isolate herself from her family and friends and for this reason there is a great need for prosthetic lounging garments which will hide any abnormality with regard to said breast surgery. Therefore, it is an object of this invention to provide prosthetic loungewear which inconspicuously garments mastectomy victims and so as to effectively avoid any embarrassment whatsoever that might otherwise result from the innocent observations of children, and from otherwise well-meaning observations and remarks of other persons whether they be of the family, or of intimate or casual friends.

It is an object of this invention to provide a bodice or blouse, or the like, which has combined therein prosthetic features that inconspicuously robe a woman having a sunken chest area, in such a manner that a normal bosom is apparently presented and all without resort to the uncomfortable restraint and heaviness which is imposed when wearing regular or out of doors clothing and the like.

2

It is another object of this invention to provide a lounging garment of the character referred to and which can be worn in a normal and casual manner and from which the prosthetic element or feature is removable so that the garment can be cleaned and laundered in the usual way. Further, it is an object to make provision for said removal in order to gain sleeping comfort when the features of the invention are incorporated in a nightgown or pajamas.

The various objects and features of this invention will be fully understood from the following detailed description of the typical preferred forms and applications thereof, throughout which description reference is made to the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a view of a woman garmented in loungewear incorporating the features of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged detailed sectional view taken substantially as indicated by line 2—2 on FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is an elevational view of the front of the bodice as it appears when viewed from the interior side of the garment shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged detailed fragmentary view taken as indicated by line 4—4 on FIG. 2.

FIG. 5 is a frontal view of a typical prosthesis.

FIG. 6 is a view similar to FIG. 1 showing a modified style of loungewear incorporating the features of the present invention.

As clearly illustrated in the drawings, the garment that I provide is a lounging garment suitable for casual wearing when in privacy and the like. Specifically, the garment is characterized by a combination of features involved in the bodice portion thereof and therefore may be considered as a bodice or blouse. This is, therefore, necessarily a woman's garment and which most often is made of soft, sheer and filmy fabrics, all of which appeals to femininity and which conforms with universal custom. Generally, such garments can take the form of robes, pajamas, nightgowns, bed jackets, shifts, housedresses and blouses, and the like; all of which are styled accordingly so as to have the prevailing and current appearances.

In accordance with this invention a garment is involved which incorporates feminine appearance, having a bodice B with or without sleeves. In most cases the garment is made of rather sheer material although not necessarily revealing, but for the most part loosely fitted for wearing comfort. It is to be understood that it is the bodice B with which the present invention is concerned and that the garment can terminate at the waist or that it can continue in a suitable skirt (as indicated) or pair of legs, all as circumstances require. As shown, the bodice B involves, generally, a front 10 and a back 11, sewn together along vertically disposed seams 12 extending between the waist 13 and arm holes 14, and along horizontally disposed seams 15 extending between the neck opening 16 and arm holes 14.

Both the front 10 and back 11 can vary widely in practice in order to accomplish the esthetic appearance desired, it being required of the present invention that the front 10 be all encompassing of the bosom and fashioned so as to substantially cover the areas of the breasts. Such a bodice is shown in the several forms thereof illustrated, the first form showing a nightgown type of garment wherein front 10 is divided into right and left panels 20 and 21 that cross intermediate the breasts so as to present a V-neck, and the second form showing a bedjacket type of garment wherein the front 10' is divided into right and left panels 20' and 21' fastened together intermediate the breasts preferably as by buttons 22.

The back 11 is of limited importance to the present invention except that it is to be understood that a backless garment is more likely to be revealing than one in which

the back completes the arm holes 14. Therefore, it is preferred that the bodice include some form of back 11, with or without a yoke (not shown) and with the neck opening cut, even to extreme, as desired. In extreme instances, however, the back 11 can be comprised of shoulder straps, in which case care must be taken to take in the sides of the front panels 20 and 21 (20' and 21') so that they cling closely to the body of the wearer.

In the sewing and construction of the garment it will be apparent that suitable stitching is employed as variations occur in styling, and all according to the finish and quality required of said garment.

In accordance with this invention I provide a prosthesis 30 and support means 40 therefor incorporated in the front panels 20 and 21 (21' and 20'). In the interest of uniform appearance of the opposite and right and left breast areas, the said right and left panels are treated the same and each is provided with support means 40 even in the event that a prosthesis 30 is to be carried at but one side only. Therefore, each front panel has incorporated therein a support means 40, for all intents and purposes identically formed, so that a description of one will suffice for both. Accordingly, the support means is provided to receive and carry a prosthesis 30 properly aligned to correspond with the position of the breast at the opposite panel. In actual practice, except in cases of extreme firmness, the female breast is rather soft and depressible and as a consequence it naturally flattens and depends somewhat when free of a support such as the usual brassiere. As a result of this released condition the natural breast configuration is not as sharp and conspicuous as when contained in the pocket of a brassiere, and this factor is advantageously employed in forming the prosthesis 30 which is required to fill out the bosom to dimensions corresponding to the opposite breast, or to the breast previously removed as the case may be.

The support means 40 can vary in form, it being conceivable that a prosthesis 30 can be held in place by ties, buttons, snaps and zippers. However, in accordance with this invention and in order to avoid any semblance of uncomfortable protrusions that would irritate sensitive amputated areas, it is preferred that the support means 40 be a pocket 41 opening interiorly within the garment. As shown, the pocket is of substantial size occupying the entire area overlying the breast and it opens upwardly for the insertion and reception therein of the prosthesis 30. A practical pocket 41 is rectangular with a horizontal bottom 42 and vertical side seams 43 sewn to the inside of the front panels.

The prosthesis 30 is provided to substitute for the amputated breast and in accordance with the present invention is a soft pillow in the form of the missing body part. The prosthesis 30 is proportioned so as to enter into the pocket 41 and has a straight bottom edge 32 for engagement with the bottom 42 whereby said prosthesis is properly oriented in working position. A typical prosthesis 30 is shown wherein an envelope 31 is constructed of a base 33 and a superimposed cup 34 sewn to the perimeter of said base. In practice the base 33 remains substantially flat and is made of one section of material, while the cup 34 is substantially rounded or full and is made of a plurality of sections as is indicated. The fullness of the remaining breast and/or amputated breast will of course determine the extent of said roundness or fullness, all to the end that a prosthesis 30 is provided having a breast-form corresponding to the free and released breast-form of the said remaining breast and/or said amputated breast.

In accordance with the invention, and a most practical and desirable feature thereof, the above described prosthesis 30 is inflated and/or distended to the desired breast-form by means of a light-weight and resilient body 50. The body 50 is made up of a mass of resilient fibres, natural or synthetic, and which are contained within the envelope 31. Although a wide variety of filling materials will suffice, such as kapok, cotton, wool shredded

and/or molded rubber or plastic (solid or foam), an extremely light synthetic fibre is preferred and namely Dacron polyester fibre as manufactured by Du Pont de Nemours & Co., Inc. A prosthesis 30 filled with the polyester fibre as prescribed then becomes so adaptable to contours and yet so resilient as to fully inflate the envelope 31, that the presence thereof is imperceptible.

With the bodice B constructed as hereinabove described and pocketed to receive and support a breast-form prosthesis 30, a very natural and inconspicuous simulation of the missing body part is attained, all without resort to heavy and cumbersome prosthesis that are necessary for the fully dressed woman. A feature resulting from the structural relationship of elements described is the identical opacity that inherently prevails at each breast whether backed by a natural breast or by a prosthetic breast, said opacity being controlled in either situation by immediate presentation to the eye of two layers of material. In practice it is usually desirable to construct the prosthesis of flesh colored material, this color being psychologically acceptable, and in which case the inside layer of pocket 41 of the bodice B is also of flesh colored material. That is, the outside panel of the bodice B presents a first layer of material while either the pocket 41 or prosthetic envelope 31 presents a second layer of material beneath said first layer. Therefore, in accordance with the invention the pocket 41 and envelope cup 34 are made of similar and/or preferably identical materials whereby the color depth at the opposite breast areas is presented as the same.

In addition to the structural relationship of parts and elements as hereinabove described, and in accordance with the usual style involved with such garments, a decorative overlay 52 is readily applied and which further enhances the utility of the said garment. In the interest of rendering any change in anatomy imperceptible though present, the above described uniformity of opacity at opposite breasts, natural or prosthetic, is made even more inconspicuous by the application of lace or pleats or the like. In the first form illustrated the overlay 52 is a superimposed panel of vertically disposed pleating 23 and 24, while in the second form illustrated the overlay is superimposed tiers of lace 23' and 24' and in this instance horizontally disposed.

From the foregoing it will be apparent that I have provided an extremely useful lounging garment which permits maximum comfort to the wearer, keeping in mind that said wearer is most likely to be an amputee suffering from great physical as well as psychological impacts. With this bodice and its structural cooperation with a properly sized prosthesis constructed as specified, the wearer can attain as fully a relaxed condition as possible in that both physical and mental sensitivity are relieved.

Having described only typical preferred forms and applications of my invention, I do not wish to be limited or restricted to the specific details herein set forth but wish to reserve to myself any modifications or variations that may appear to those skilled in the art and fall within the scope of the following claims.

Having described my invention, I claim:

1. A lounging garment, especially for mastectomy amputees and the like, and including, a bodice made of sheer semi-transparent material substantially enclosing the upper portion of the amputee's torso, said bodice having a pair of opposite interiorly opening pockets overlying the opposite breast areas of the bosom and made of colored material underlying the corresponding areas of said bodice respectively, and a prescribed shaped prosthesis breast of light weight and made with surface material having substantially the same body and color as the material of the said pockets and removably positioned in either pocket respectively, whereby opacity as observed through the bodice material is the same at each opposite breast area.

5

2. A lounging garment, especially for mastectomy amputees and the like, and including a bodice made of sheer semi-transparent material substantially enclosing the upper portion of the amputee's torso, said bodice having a pair of opposite interiorly opening pockets overlying the opposite breast areas of the bosom and made of colored material underlying the corresponding areas of said bodice respectively, and each with a straight horizontally disposed bottom, and a prescribed asymmetri-
 5 cally shaped prosthesis breast of light weight and made with surface material having substantially the same body and color as the material of said pockets and removably positioned in each pocket respectively and each with a straight bottom edge engageable on the bottom of the pocket for rotational orientation of said respective pros-
 10 theses, whereby opacity as observed through the bodice material is the same at each opposite breast area.

6

References Cited

UNITED STATES PATENTS

	938,856	11/1908	Henderson	-----	128—481
5	1,845,011	2/1932	Yerkes	-----	2—267 X
	2,405,368	8/1946	Oresman	-----	2—70
	2,568,175	9/1951	Ullrich	-----	128—478
	2,657,386	11/1953	Wolff	-----	2—267 X
	2,696,616	12/1954	Worcester	-----	2—74
10	2,709,811	6/1955	Cotsakis	-----	2—267 X
	3,065,471	11/1962	Leu	-----	2—267 X

PATRICK D. LAWSON, *Primary Examiner*.15 JORDAN FRANKLIN, *Examiner*.J. R. BOLER, *Assistant Examiner*.