

[54] **AURAL DRESSING**

[75] Inventor: **Navnit Shankerlal Shah**, London, England

[73] Assignee: **Richards Manufacturing Company**, Memphis, Tenn.

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[51] Int. Cl. **A61f 13/00**

[58] Field of Search 128/155, 156, 157, 163, 128/151, 152, 82; 2/174, 209

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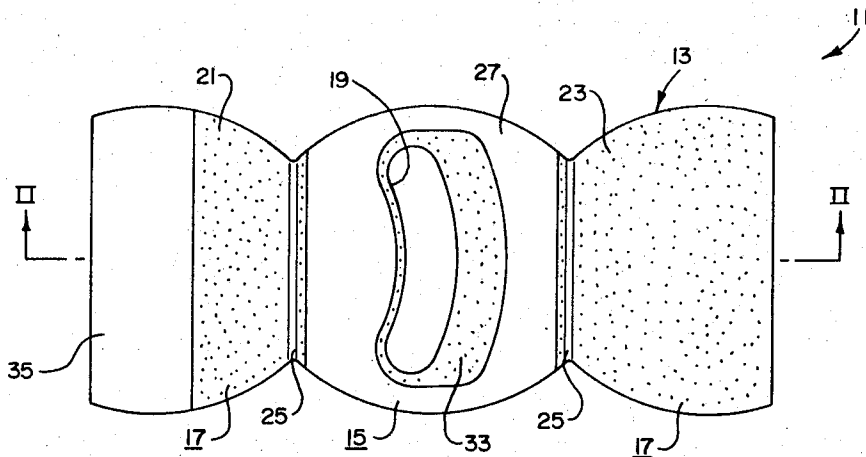
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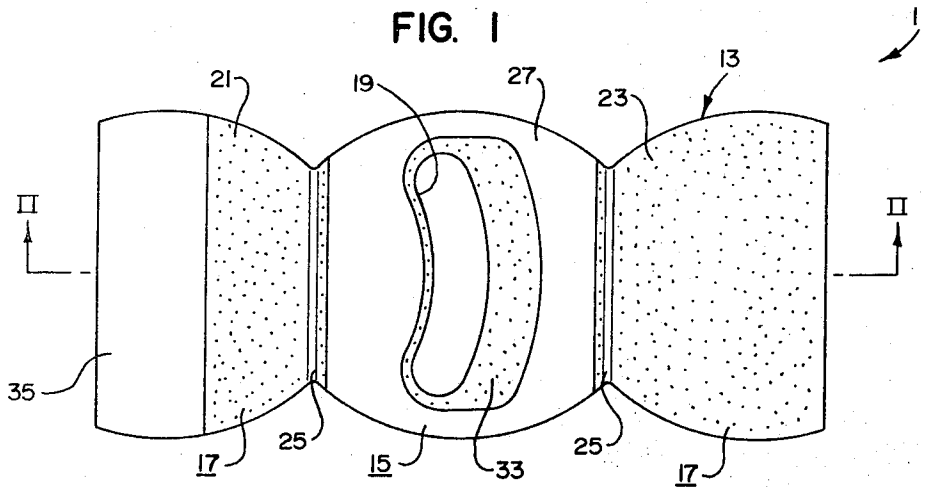
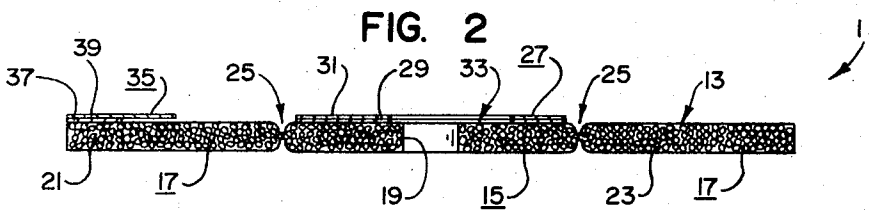
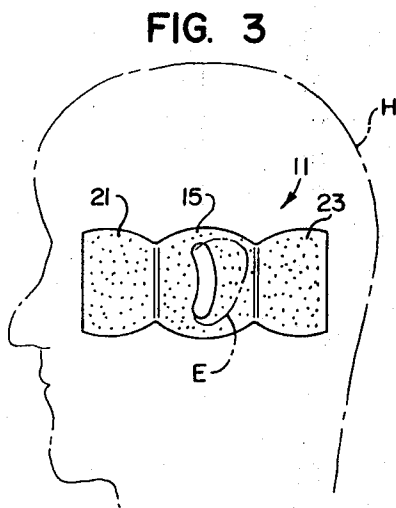
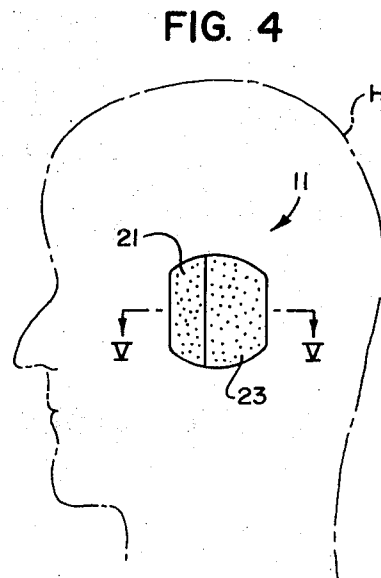
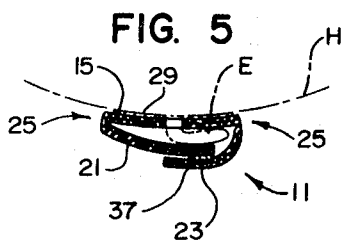
Primary Examiner—Lucie H. Laudenslager
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—John R. Walker, III

[57] **ABSTRACT**

An aural dressing having a flexible body formed of open cell material. The body includes a base portion for attaching to a patient's head surrounding his ear and includes flap portions for folding over the base portion and covering the patient's ear. The base portion is provided with a slot for allowing the patient's ear to pass therethrough.

3 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures





AURAL DRESSING

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to an aural dressing for various medical uses.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Previous aural dressings known to the applicant consist of gauze attached to the patient's head by gauze strips or by adhesive tape. This type of dressing is known as the "firm mastoid dressing." To construct such a dressing, a hole is cut in the center of a 4" x 4" gauze pad. The gauze pad is then placed over the ear. The gauze pad is then attached to the patient's head by wrapping gauze strips or adhesive tape around his head and the gauze pad. It can be clearly seen that such a dressing would be time-consuming to apply and uncomfortable to wear.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed towards overcoming the problems and disadvantages in previous aural dressings. The concept of the present invention is to provide an aural dressing comprising a flexible body consisting of an open cell foam material. The body includes a base portion for surrounding the patient's ear and includes flap portions for folding over the base portion and covering the patient's ear. The base portion has a slot therein for allowing the patient's ear to pass therethrough. Adhesive means is provided on the base portion for attaching the body to a portion of the patient's head surrounding his ear. Adhesive means is also provided on one flap portion for holding the flap portions together when they are folded over the base portion.

The present invention is a very versatile aural dressing which is adapted for many uses in a hospital or the like, as for example, following many types of mastoid surgeries, tympanoplasties and otoplasties. It meets the requirements of protecting the post aural wound and prevents the packing in the ear canal from falling out without the bulk of the old style aural dressings. It is quickly applied and is soft and comfortable to wear. The open cell foam material allows the patient to hear through the aural dressing. Also, air can flow through the open cell foam material and keep the patient's ear cool.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front view of the aural dressing of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a sectional view of the aural dressing as taken on the line II—II of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a diagrammatic view showing the aural dressing in an open position on a patient's head.

FIG. 4 is a diagrammatic view showing the aural dressing in a closed position on a patient's head.

FIG. 5 is a sectional view taken as on the line V—V of FIG. 4.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The aural dressing 11 of the present invention comprises in general a body 13 including a base portion 15 and flap means 17. The base portion 15 is provided with an opening or slot 19 for allowing the external ear

of a patient to extend therethrough. The opening 19 is preferably curved for closely surrounding the external ear. The body 13 is formed of a flexible porous material for permitting air to flow therethrough. The porous material is preferably an open cell material of the type known to those skilled in the art as reticulated polyurethane foam. An open cell material found suitable for this purpose is that produced by the Foam Division of Scott Paper Co. of 1500 East Second Street, Chester, Pa., and known as Scott Industrial Foam. Preferably, the foam material used provides a soft and fine pore characteristic having approximately 84 pores per square inch as designated by Scott Paper Co.

In use, the base portion 15 surrounds the external ear of the patient and the flap means 17 folds over the base portion 15 and covers the external ear, thus protecting the post aural wound and preventing the packing in the ear canal from falling out. The flap means 17 preferably includes a first flap portion 21 and a second flap portion 23. The first and second flap portions 21, 23 are disposed on either side of the base portion 15. Flexible joints 25 are provided between the first and second flap portions 21, 23 and base portion 15. Preferably, the flexible joints 25 are made by an impulse sealing operation performed by a well known method on the foam material of the body 13 between the base portion 15 and the first and second flap portions 21, 23. In other words, the base portion 15 and the first and second flap portions 21, 23 are formed integrally of one piece of foam material. The foam material is heated on one side along a pair of lines between the base portion 15 and the first and second flap portions 21, 23, thereby making a pair of creases along the joints 25. Excess foam material is then clipped away from the joints 25. The first and second flap portions 21, 23 will then lie substantially flat against the base portion 15 when folded thereover.

The base portion 15 preferably includes an adhesive means 27 adjacent the opening 19 for attaching the body 13 to a portion of the patient's head surrounding his external ear. The adhesive means 27 consists of an adhesive portion 29 and a protective cover portion 31. The adhesive portion 29 consists of a double face medical tape having one face attached to the base portion 15 and having the other face attached to the protective cover portion 31. When the aural dressing 11 is applied to a patient's head, the cover portion 31 is removed from the adhesive portion 29 and the adhesive portion 29 is attached to a portion of the patient's head surrounding his external ear. Preferably, the adhesive means 27 is spaced away from one side of the opening 19 to provide an open area 33. This open area 33 prevents damage to the sutures located behind the patient's ear after mastoid surgery.

The first flap portion 21 includes an adhesive means 35 positioned so that when the first and second flap portions 19, 21 are folded over the base portion 15, the adhesive means 35 attaches to the second flap portion 23 where it overlaps the first flap portion 21. The adhesive means 35 includes an adhesive portion 37 and a protective cover portion 39. The adhesive portion 37 consists of a double faced medical tape having one face attached to the first flap portion 21 and having the other face attached to the protective cover portion 39. When the aural dressing 11 is attached to a patient's head, the first flap portion 21 is folded over the base portion 15 and the protective cover portion 39 is re-

moved. Next, the second flap portion 23 is folded over the base portion 15 and overlaps the adhesive portion 37 of the first flap portion 21 and is attached thereto.

In using the aural dressing 11 of the present invention, the first step is to remove the protective cover portion 31 from the adhesive means 27, as heretofore described. Next, the aural dressing 11 is positioned on the patient's head H in an open position as shown in FIG. 3. The patient's external ear E is pulled through the opening 19 and the aural dressing 11 is secured to the patient's head H by means of the adhesive portion 29. Next, the first flap portion 21 is folded over the base portion 15 and the patient's external ear E. The protective cover portion 39 is removed from the adhesive means 35 and the second flap portion 23 is folded over the base portion 15 and the patient's external ear E and is attached to the adhesive portion 37 of the first flap portion 21 so that the aural dressing 11 is in the closed position as shown in FIGS. 4 and 5.

It should be noted that the aural dressing 11 is designed in such a way that it may be used on either the right or left ear of the patient. When in the closed position, the aural dressing 11 takes on a rounded form to appear as least conspicuous as possible. For the same reason, the aural dressing 11 is preferably constructed of a foam material that is flesh colored.

It should be noted that when the term "external ear" is used in the specification, it is deemed to comprise, in general, the helix, the antihelix, the fossa of the antihelix, the antitragus, the tragus, and the lobe.

Although the invention has been described and illustrated with respect to a preferred embodiment thereof, it is not to be so limited since changes and modifications may be made therein which are within the full intended scope of the invention.

I claim:

1. An aural dressing for protecting a patient's ear, said dressing comprising a body including a base portion for surrounding the external ear and including flap means for folding over the base portion and covering the external ear, said base portion being provided with an opening for allowing the external ear to extend therethrough, said flap means including first and second flap portions disposed on either side of said base portion for folding over said base portion and for partially overlapping each other.

2. The aural dressing of claim 1 in which said first flap portion includes adhesive means, said adhesive means being positioned so that when said first and second flap portions are folded over said base portion said adhesive means attaches to said second flap portion where it overlaps said first flap portion.

3. An aural dressing for protecting a patient's ear, said dressing comprising a flexible body consisting of a porous material for allowing air to flow therethrough, said body including a base portion for surrounding the external ear, said base portion having a curved slot for allowing the external ear to extend therethrough, said base portion including adhesive means adjacent said slot for attaching said body to a portion of the patient's head surrounding his external ear, and said body including first and second flap portions disposed on either side of said base portion for folding over said base portion, partially overlapping each other and covering the external ear, said first flap portion including adhesive means, said adhesive means being positioned so that when said first and second flap portions are folded over said base portion said adhesive means attaches to said second flap portion where it overlaps said first flap portion.

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