The sweatband head support’s unique features: Being designed specifically to be attached to almost any adjustable headrest without the need with any extra or special accessories. It allows effortless freedom of movement within normal range, while still providing adequate support and complete comfort even with long periods of wear by the user. If attached to a wheelchair, encountering rough terrain, the head can still comfortably maintain a correct upright position on its own. Regardless of the activity the user can remain focused for longer periods of time without compromising comfort, therefore giving the user a better quality of life. The sweatband portion’s soft fabric covering can be provided in an assortment of colors or patterns, making it even more personalized for the user. It has the stylish appearance of a regular sweatband, so it does not appear like a support device.
ORTHOSWEATBAND HEAD RESTRAINT FOR ADJUSTABLE HEADRESTS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention pertains to an elastic sweatband type of head support for adjustable headrests used to aid persons with "Dropped Head Syndrome" in holding their heads up correctly while allowing them freedom of movement, within the correct range, from side to side, with minimal forward movement without compromising comfort even with long periods of wear by the user.

[0002] Ross. U.S. Pat. No. 6,301,716 B1 patent date Oct. 16, 2001 describes a head support assembly to facilitate the care of a physically disabled individual. The head support assembly includes a headpiece and an attachment cord attached to the headpiece, which is adapted to be attached to a high back chair, etc.

[0003] Swartz. U.S. Pat. No. 7,628,456 B1 patent date Dec. 8, 2009 describes a head restraint device and method therefore capable of being coupled to an article of high back furniture, and capable of comfortably securing the head of a user to an article of high back furniture so that the user may rest in the article of high back furniture, with his or her head secured in a substantially upright position.

[0004] Whittemore. U.S. Pat. No. 5,306,232 patent date Apr. 26, 1994 describes a head alignment system for a person having reduced muscular or loss of muscular control of their neck and shoulders, whereby the device maintains the head of the person in a generally upright position. The device comprises of at least one pulley attached to a support, a headband having two ends, and a cord having two ends, each of the ends of the cord being adjustable attached to a corresponding one of the ends of the headband. The cord being received by the pulley and the headband, and the cord forming an adjustable loop. The loop being adapted for placement about the head of the person, whereby the cord is adjusted so that the head of the person is held generally upright. The cord, by moving about the pulley, permits the headband to move with the head of the person as the person rotates their head about an axis extending from their neck through the top of their head.

[0005] Scher. U.S. Pat. No. 6,607,245 B1 date of patent Aug. 19, 2003 describes a head restraint for supporting a users head with respect to the high back headrest portion of a seat. The head restraint has a headband strap for placing over the head across the forehead of the user an anchor band is secured around the headrest portion of the high back seat. A right hand securement strap is affixed between the strap placed over the head of the user and the anchor band. Similarly, a left hand strap is affixed between the strap placed over the head of the user and the anchor band.

[0006] Some individuals have weak neck muscles, sometimes due to Cerebral Palsy, Parkinson’s, or other medical conditions often resulting in “Dropped Head Syndrome” also sometimes known as “Floppy Head Syndrome” or “Head Posis“. These persons neck muscles become sore and tired easily, which results in head dropping when the neck muscles are relaxed. Some restraints are either too restrictive or uncomfortable, therefore not suitable for many individuals.

[0007] My ten-year old grandson, Phoenix, has Cerebral Palsy, along with an issue of “Dropped Head Syndrome”. He is the main reason for this invention, as I originally designed it to help him. He, like many other people with weak neck muscles, can hold his head up on his own for short periods and then his neck becomes sore and tired, and when he relaxes his neck, it causes his head to drop, thus having to turn his head in an uncomfortable manner in order to stay focused on whatever activity he was involved in. My daughter has tried other devices, one a more restrictive strap type, and the other a pulley system type. He was not happy with either one. They were either too restrictive or uncomfortable with long periods of use, he threw fits. I live in a different state, but had an opportunity to help care for him while my daughter went on vacation, and it really saddened me to see him have to deal with this problem. It was then I decided there had to be a way to address this problem, so I put my mind to work.

[0008] After some trial and error, I came up with an idea that was not only workable, but ended up being universal as well. The idea was to create a device that could be attached to his existing adjustable headrest of his wheel chair, since he spends a good bit of time in it, and I ended up with not only a device that provided comfort and more freedom of movement even with long periods of wear, comfort being one of my main concerns, but it ended up being fairly universal as well as it can be attached to almost any adjustable headrests without the need for any other accessories to do so because the straps are elastic, as well as adjustable.

[0009] I have only had the finished product in complete functional operation since June 2013, but he uses it at home quite frequently, and does not mind wearing it at all, my daughter tells me, as well as his grandmother who helps care for him on a daily basis. They tell me that Phoenix loves it and even smiles more often now. You have no idea how happy that makes the entire family; it gives him a better quality of life, because he can now, comfortably stay focused on watching T.V., sporting events, or just a walk around the block. If it can help him that much, I can only pray that sometime soon it could help many others with the same issue have a better quality of life as well.

[0010] This device is meant to be custom fit for each individual, so one size does not fit all. I felt that by making the headband adjustable, it might infringe on the comfort aspect by having any hardware near the head. The entire device is completely washable, either by hand or in a machine on gentle cycle, lightweight, and can be folded up to fit in the palm of the hand.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] This invention addresses the previously mentioned problem by means of an elastic sweatband type head support, which is intended to be attached to an adjustable headrest, whether wheelchair or otherwise. It can be used while the chair is at rest or in motion.

[0012] The device includes an elastic sweatband type headpiece, which is sized for each individual. I chose this method to not infringe upon the comfort aspect of the invention by not having any hardware near the head. Therefore, also giving it a more stylish look, meaning it does not have the appearance of a support device from the front or the sides, it simply has the appearance of a regular sweatband. Two elastic straps are sewn down to the inside of the sweatband portion itself. Each strap having parachute type buckles at the end of the elastic straps, which enables it to now be encircled around almost any adjustable headrest, making it universal. The device is then snuged around the adjustable headrest by means of adjustability at the male buckle ends of the strap, the strap ends are then secured to the strap itself by means of hook and loop fasteners (brand name Velcro). The sweatband portion is then placed over the users head and positioned correctly. If
downward pull is required at the back of the sweatband, this can be achieved by simply sliding straps forward on the headrest to the desired degree, this will enable the sweatband portion to stay in place on the users head. Now the users head can remain in a correct upright position while still allowing them complete freedom of movement from side to side (in the correct range) with limited forward movement, without compromising comfort even with long periods of wear by the user. During use, the device offers a more stylish look by not having the appearance of a support device from the front and sides; it simply has the appearance of a regular sweatband. The entire device is completely washable (either by hand or machine-wash on gentle cycle), is lightweight (less than 2½ ounces), and is compact (can folded up to fit in the palm of the hand).

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the invention.
Fig. 2 is a rear view showing an embodiment of the invention.
Fig. 3 is a view of user wearing the invention, attached to an adjustable headrest.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The invention is shown in its entirety in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, and Fig. 3 shows the device attached to an adjustable headrest being worn by user. The entire device includes an elastic sweatband portion 9 which is comprised of a band of elastic 1 fashioned in a circular manner, and covered with a soft fabric material 2 which is sewn 12 so that the combination creates the sweatband portion. Elastic straps 3A and 3B are sewn 4A and 4B to the inside of the sweatband portion 9, adequately apart from each other.

The ends of the elastic straps 3A and 3B have what is commonly referred to as "parachute buckles"; the female ends being 5A and 5B and the male ends being 6A and 6B. The elastic strap ends are sewn down 11 to the strap itself 3A and 3B after being looped through the female buckle end 5A and 5B. They are looped through the male buckle ends 6A and 6B (not sewn) to allow for adjustment. Washable hook and loop type fasteners are sewn 7A and 7B near the ends of straps 3A and 3B, where the male buckle end 6A and 6B are so they can be secured after adjustment when encircled around the adjustable headrest 10. A soft fabric material 2 was chosen for maximized comfort. The choices of the elastic sweatband portion 9 in combination with the elastic straps 3A and 3B provide complete freedom of side to side movement (within normal range) with limited forward motion, even if chair is in motion and encounters rough terrain, the elasticity of the invention allows the head to gently remain in an upright position.

The invention was designed to not have the appearance of a support device. It was intended to have the appearance of a regular sweatband when viewed from the front and sides, thus giving it a more stylish look, which can be personalized for the user 8 by offering soft fabric covering 2 in an assortment of colors and/or patterns aside from being custom fit for the individual user 8. The entire device is completely washable, lightweight, and very compact. The invention is also universal, as it can be attached to almost any existing adjustable headrest, without the need for any other accessories. Therefore, it has many advantages.

1-10. (canceled)
11. A sweatband head support designed to aid persons having a disability resulting in issues with head dropping, and a said head support compromising: a sweatband portion to be positioned on the users head; two elastic straps positioned and attached to said sweatband portion with means for attachment to each other as well as adjustment and securement for the strap ends after adjustment, this device is specifically designed for attachment to an adjustable headrest; the sweatband portion being non-adjustable, so as to be sized for the individual, providing maximized performance of the head support; said sweatband portion and elastic straps provide adequate support for the individuals head, while allowing freedom of normal range movement and providing complete comfort, even with long periods of wear.
12. the sweatband head support of claim 11 wherein said sweatband portion having an inner band of elastic.
13. the sweatband head support of claim 12 wherein said inner band of elastic is covered by a soft fabric material.
14. the sweatband head support of claim 13 wherein said inner band of elastic covered by the soft fabric material has two elastic straps positioned and attached to the sweatband portion.
15. the sweatband head support of claim 11 wherein said means of attachment of the elastic straps to each other consists of buckles placed at the strap ends.
16. the sweatband head support of claim 11 wherein said securement of strap ends after adjustment consists of washable hook and loop fasteners (brand name Velcro) attached to one of each of the strap ends.
17. the sweatband head support of claim 11 wherein said head support was designed to not appear like a support device at all, but to have the appearance of any other normal sweatband, making it a most stylish looking head support.
18. the sweatband head support of claim 11 wherein said head support is very universal as it can be attached to almost any adjustable headrest, without the need for any extra or special accessories.
19. the sweatband head support of claim 11 wherein said head support can be attached to a stationary chair or a wheelchair with an adjustable headrest and can be used even if chair is in motion.
20. the sweatband head support of claim 11 wherein said head support provides adequate support for the users head while maintaining complete comfort, even with long periods of wear so the user can comfortably stay focused longer on various activities.