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(54) **DISPOSABLE TOOTHBRUSH COVER**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

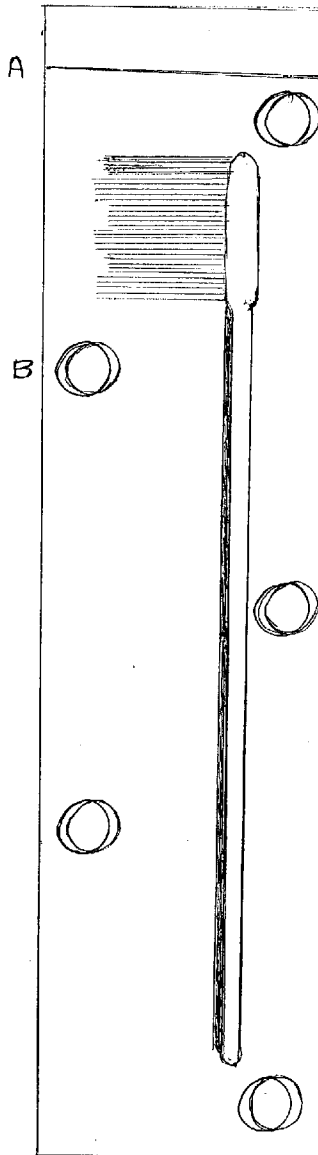
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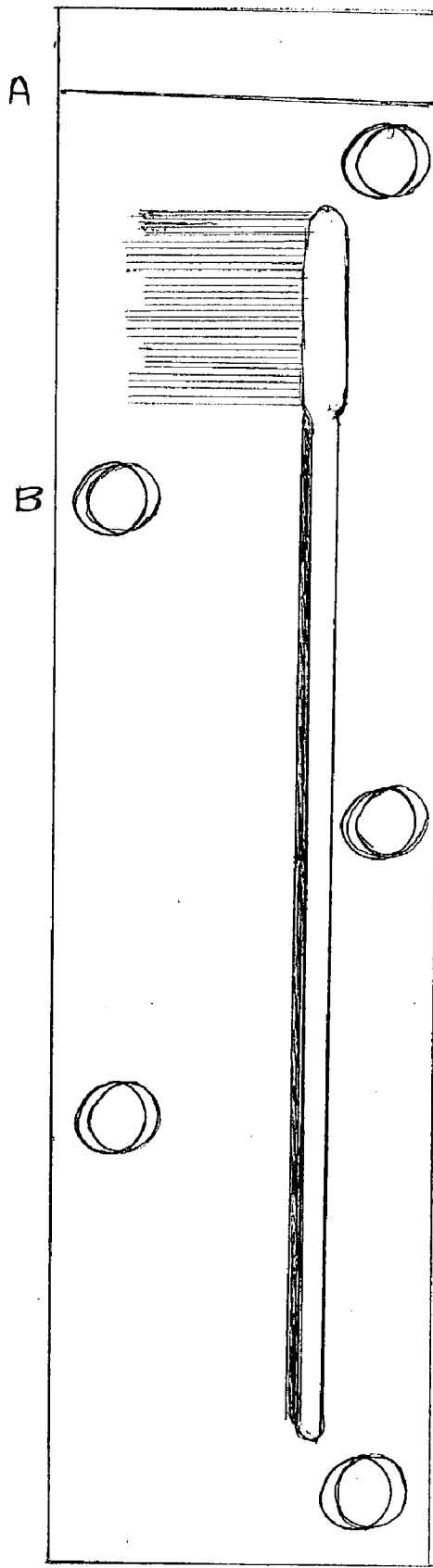
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Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 60/349,631, filed on Jan. 18, 2002.

A protective cover for the entire toothbrush that is disposable. It is convenient, simple, compact, and promotes good oral hygiene. The cover is made from a polyethylene bag that is slightly longer than the toothbrush and slightly wider than the bristle portion. The entire toothbrush slides into the bag and can be sealed for protection. The cover has holes for ventilation. The cover is inexpensive to produce and used just once before disposing.





DISPOSABLE TOOTHBRUSH COVER**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

[0001] The title of this invention is disposable toothbrush cover. This application is related to the provisional patent application that was filed on Jan. 18, 2002. The application number for the provisional patent application is 60/349,631. The same individual filed both applications.

STATEMENT REGARDING FED SPONSORED R & D

[0002] Not applicable

REFERENCE TO SEQUENCE LISTING, A TABLE, OR A COMPUTER PROGRAM LISTING APPENDIX

[0003] Not applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] A disposable toothbrush cover can be used when traveling, working, camping, or anytime one needs to store a toothbrush. For health reasons, it is important to have the toothbrush protected when it is in transit or used outside the home.

[0005] Current toothbrush covers available are bulky and do not promote good oral hygiene care. There are basically two options currently available: hard plastic covers that contain the entire toothbrush and hard plastic covers that cover only the bristle portion of the brush. These covers are not routinely cleaned by individuals and can even be difficult to clean. Continued use of these products without proper cleaning can lead to illness.

[0006] A family of six (2 parents and 4 children) traveling would need six separate hard plastic covers for their set of toothbrushes. For hygiene purposes, it would be important that each family member continue to use the same hard plastic cover on their toothbrush for the duration of the trip. Interchanging covers could promote the transfer of germs and bacteria. Yet, it is difficult to avoid as so many of these hard plastic covers look alike. These covers are also more complex and more expensive to produce.

[0007] Some individuals travel with their toothbrush in a large gallon size food storage bag. This is very wasteful and provides no ventilation for the toothbrush.

[0008] Expired U.S. Pat. No. 5,139,142 developed a disposable cover that protects just the bristle portion of the brush. It recommended disposal after a usage period of up to ten days. Ten days of usage with a disposable cover could lead to a build-up of bacteria and would not promote good oral care.

[0009] There are many instances when one must pack a toothbrush wet right after use. This is an additional downside to a cover that just covers the bristle portion of a toothbrush. For example, when an out-of-town business man brushes his teeth right before attending a meeting and then plans to travel home, his toothbrush is still wet when he needs to store it. Placing a toothbrush in a cover that just protects the bristle can lead to dripping excess water, toothpaste, or saliva from the brush onto any article that it is near.

[0010] The general downside to these above mentioned covers are cost, bulkiness, wastefulness, and minimal protection. Most importantly, these covers can lead to poor oral hygiene and illness.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] Disposable toothbrush covers are thin plastic covers. They enclose and protect a toothbrush. The covers are slightly longer than the toothbrush and slightly wider than the bristle head. One end of the cover has an opening for the toothbrush to slide inside. The toothbrush slides in to the open end of the cover and can then be sealed. The end of the cover can be closed with a rib and groove, resealable, closure. They are disposable on a daily basis.

[0012] There are small openings in the covers for ventilation. The covers are to be used just once and then discarded. The covers provide better oral hygiene. The majority of toothbrushes would fit into the standard 2"x8" cover, although it is simple to enlarge the cover in production to provide for a variety of toothbrush sizes.

[0013] The present invention has many advantages:

[0014] (1) better oral hygiene

[0015] (2) inexpensive to produce

[0016] (3) simple to use

[0017] (4) high speed production

[0018] (5) completely encloses the toothbrush

[0019] (6) provides a cover for the toothbrush that is disposable

[0020] (7) reduction in the spread of germs with proper use

[0021] (8) compact

[0022] (9) provides for better protection for items that are stored with or around the enclosed toothbrush

[0023] Especially useful for frequent travelers, the invention is an improved disposable toothbrush cover that offers great benefits in the oral hygiene area.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

[0024] The drawing shows the disposable toothbrush cover with a toothbrush inside.

[0025] A is the rib and groove resealable closure which is shown sealed

[0026] B is a ventilation hole

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0027] The drawing shows a disposable toothbrush cover protecting a toothbrush. The cover is made from a resealable, 0.002 mil, low density, polyethylene bag that is 2 inches x 8 inches. Small round holes placed through the bag provide ventilation for the cover. Additional ventilation holes can be added if necessary. The ventilation holes can also be placed at different areas on the cover.

[0028] The majority of toothbrushes currently on the market would fit into the 2"x8" cover. Although, changing the production to increase the size or the thickness of the cover

to accommodate larger brushes would be simple. The cover protects the entire toothbrush and can also accommodate printing/advertising on the bag if desired.

[0029] To use the cover, one places a toothbrush inside the cover and seals it closed with the rib and groove closure. Removing the toothbrush is simple. To open, pull apart the rib and groove feature. Remove the toothbrush and discard the disposable cover.

[0030] The closure feature recommended for the cover is the rib and groove closure because it is simple, commonly used and resealable. Although, simply folding the end of the cover may provide enough protection or possibly an adhe-

sive strip for the closure. Having the disposable covers packaged into a small dispenser that would dispense one cover at a time would also be beneficial and would provide convenience to the user.

I claim:

1. a disposable protective cover for the toothbrush, comprising a thin polyethylene bag with ventilation holes which is slightly longer than the toothbrush and slightly wider than the bristle portion, which completely encloses the entire toothbrush, can be sealed, and disposed of after each use.

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