A device adapted to be worn on a human finger and used to relieve the wearer of the urge to smoke by addressing some of the mentally addictive aspects of smoking. The device has first and second portions that cooperate to define an opening having an axis and sized to receive a human finger. A cylindrical-shaped feature is disposed at the second portion and oriented so that an axis thereof is perpendicular to the axis of the opening. The cylindrical-shaped feature is configured so as not to be capable of securing a cigarette.
RING FOR RELIEVING THE URGE TO SMOKE

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/885,762, filed Jan. 19, 2007, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention generally relates to articles that can be worn on a finger, and more particularly to a device that when worn helps to alleviate the wearer's urge to smoke. Various types of medications and therapies have been proposed to help curb a smoker's urge to smoke. Most are rather expensive and often don't address some of the habits of smokers that, to some extent, contribute to the perceived satisfaction or mentally addictive aspects of smoking. For example, the act of smoking involves the use of the fingers, including holding, rolling, and ficking the ashes from a cigarette, all of which can serve to occupy and calm the smoker and in even event often conribute to the mental addiction that smokers develop over time.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a device adapted to be worn on a human finger and used to relieve the wearer of the urge to smoke by addressing some of the mentally addictive aspects of smoking. The device has a first and second portions that cooperate to define an opening having an axis and sized to axially receive a human finger. A cylindrical-shaped feature is disposed at the second portion and oriented so that an axis thereof is perpendicular to the axis of the opening. The cylindrical-shaped feature is configured so as not to be capable of securing a cigarette. In view of the above, it can be seen that the device can be very simple in its construction. When worn, the first portion partial surrounds the wearer's finger and the cylindrical-shaped feature is positioned and oriented to simulate a cigarette located between the finger on which the device is worn and a second finger of the wearer. The cylindrical-shaped feature preferably defines a protrusion that the wearer can manipulate in a manner similar to a cigarette. As such, the wearer can use the device to perform habitual acts associated with smoking, for example, holding the cylindrical-shaped feature between two fingers and flicking one end of the cylindrical-shaped feature to simulate flicking the ashes from a cigarette. Such acts tend to occupy and calm the smoker, relieving at least in part the urge to smoke.

Other objects and advantages of this invention will be better appreciated from the following detailed description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1, 2, and 3 show a side view and opposing end views, respectively, of a device in accordance with a preferred embodiment of this invention.

FIGS. 4 and 5 are side and end views of a device in accordance with a second embodiment of this invention.

FIGS. 6 and 7 are side and end views of a device in accordance with a third embodiment of this invention.

FIGS. 8 and 9 depict the use of the device of FIGS. 1 through 3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

FIGS. 1 through 7 depict three embodiments of a device 10 capable of being worn on a finger to simulate holding a cigarette, thereby at least partially alleviating the wearer's urge to smoke. In the Figures, consistent reference numbers are used to identify functionally similar structures.

The device 10 of each embodiment is fashioned similarly to a ring. In FIGS. 1 through 3, the device 10 has an arcuate portion 12 and a solid cylindrical portion 16 that cooperate to define an opening 18 having an axis 14. The arcuate portion 12 is at least partially and preferably entirely defined by an axis of curvature that coincides with the axis 14 of the opening 18. The cylindrical portion 16 is immovable relative to the arcuate portion 12 and oriented so that its axis 28 is perpendicular to the axis 14 of the opening 18. In a preferred embodiment, the arcuate and cylindrical portions 12 and 16 are simultaneously formed, such as by injection molding.

The opening 18 is sized to receive a human finger, and preferably any finger of a given user, in the direction of its axis 14. Because the size of human fingers vary widely, the device 10 is preferably produced in a wide variety of sizes. Generally, a maximum width (diameter) of the opening 18 will typically be less than one inch (about 2.5 cm), for example, about 0.75 to about 0.85 inch (about 1.9 to 2.2 cm). The cross-sectional shape and thickness of the arcuate portion 12 can also vary widely, though will typically be chosen with consideration for the comfort of the wearer. A round cross-sectional shape is suitable, resulting in the arcuate portion 12 being a partial toroid. A suitable cross-sectional thickness for the arcuate section is about \( \frac{1}{6} \) inch (about 1.5 mm).

The cross-sectional thickness and shape of the cylindrical portion 16 preferably simulate that of a cigarette. The cross-sectional shape of the cylindrical portion 16 is therefore preferably circular and constant along its entire length between first and second ends 20 and 22 thereof, and the diameter of the cylindrical portion 16 is preferably about \( \frac{1}{6} \) inch (about 8 mm). The length of the cylindrical portion 16 is not critical to the extent that the portion 16 is not required to simulate the full length of a cigarette. However, a sufficient length ensures that the portion 16 will provide for an adequate simulation. In practice, a length greater than the maximum outer diameter of the arcuate portion 12 is preferred, for example, about 1\( \frac{1}{4} \) inch (about 2.7 cm) is believed suitable. In FIG. 1, the length of the cylindrical portion 16 can be seen as offset relative to a transverse axis 24 of the opening 18, such that the first end 20 of the cylindrical portion 16 defines a protrusion that projects from the edge of the arcuate portion 12, and extends farther leftward (as viewed in FIG. 1) from the axis 24 than the farthest extent of the arcuate portion 12. In contrast, the second end 22 of the cylindrical portion 16 does not extend as far rightward (as viewed in FIG. 1) from the axis 24 as the farthest extent of the arcuate portion 12. Instead, the arcuate portion 12 is shown adjoining the second end 22 of the cylindrical portion 16 and a midportion of the cylindrical portion 16 between its first and second ends 20 and 22. Finally, the cylindrical portion 16 helps to define the
opening 18, such that the interior boundary 26 of the opening 18 is arcuate (26A) where defined by the arcuate portion 12 and straight (26B) where defined by the cylindrical portion 16. With the construction as described above and shown in FIG. 1, the device 10 can be seen as having a lowercase d-shaped cross-section in the plane perpendicular to the axis of the opening 18.

[0016] As seen in FIGS. 8 and 9, the shape and length of the cylindrical portion 16 enables the wearer to hold (FIG. 8) and flick (FIG. 9) the cylindrical portion 16 much as the wearer would hold and flick a cigarette. Notably, the cylindrical portion 16 does not have any structure or feature capable of securing a cigarette to the device 10, for example, a ring or tube into which a cigarette can be inserted or a clip capable of grasping a cigarette. Because the device 10 is intended to help the wearer resist smoking, any such feature capable of securing a cigarette would defeat the purpose of the device 10.

[0017] The embodiments of the device 10 shown in FIGS. 4 through 7 differ from that of FIGS. 1 through 3 primarily by the length of the cylindrical portion 16 and the manner in which the cylindrical portion 16 is integrated into the arcuate portion 12. In FIGS. 4 and 5, the cylindrical portion 16 is a discrete component having a tubular shape, and the arcuate portion 12 is a complete toroid or annulus, a segment 16A of which is within the interior 30 of the cylindrical portion 16. The interior wall of the cylindrical portion 16 preferably contacts the segment 16A at three points as shown, thereby inhibiting movement of the cylindrical portion 16 around the arcuate portion 12. In FIGS. 6 and 7, the cylindrical portion 16 is a solid cylinder, and the arcuate portion 12 adjoins both ends 20 and 22 of the cylindrical portion 16. As with the embodiment of FIGS. 1 through 3, the cylindrical portion 16 in FIGS. 6 and 7 is completely immovable relative to the arcuate portion 12. It is foreseeable that the arcuate and cylindrical portions 12 and 16 of FIGS. 4 through 7 could be individually formed (such as by injection molding) and then assembled, or formed in a single process, or by some other suitable procedure.

[0018] The arcuate and cylindrical portions 12 and 16 can be formed from a variety of materials, including thermoplastic elastomers (TPE) such as Santoprene. If formed separately, such as for the embodiments of FIGS. 4 through 7, the arcuate portion 12 may be a formed of a silicone rubber and the cylindrical portion 16 can be formed of plastic tubing used as is (e.g., FIGS. 4 and 5) or filled to form a solid cylinder (e.g., FIGS. 6 and 7).

[0019] While the invention has been described in terms of specific embodiments, it is apparent that other forms could be adopted by one skilled in the art. For example, the physical configuration of the device 10 could differ from that shown, and materials, dimensions, and processes other than those noted could be used. Therefore, the scope of the invention is to be limited only by the following claims.

1. A device adapted to be worn on a human finger to relieve the wearer of the urge to smoke, the device comprising:
   a first portion and a second portion that cooperate to define an opening having an axis and sized to receive a human finger;
   a cylindrical-shaped feature at the second portion, the cylindrical-shaped feature being oriented so that an axis thereof is perpendicular to the axis of the opening, the cylindrical-shaped feature being configured so as not to be capable of securing a cigarette.

2. The device according to claim 1, wherein the opening has an arcuate boundary portion defined by the first portion and a straight boundary portion defined by the cylindrical-shaped feature.

3. The device according to claim 1, wherein the cylindrical-shaped feature is immovable on the second portion.

4. The device according to claim 1, wherein the cylindrical-shaped feature is a solid cylinder.

5. The device according to claim 1, wherein the cylindrical-shaped feature comprises a tube surrounding the second portion such that a portion of the cylindrical-shaped feature defines a straight boundary portion of the opening.

6. The device according to claim 1, wherein the cylindrical-shaped feature has a cross-sectional diameter larger than the maximum cross-sectional thickness of the first portion of the device and smaller than the maximum width of the opening.

7. The device according to claim 1, wherein the cylindrical-shaped feature has oppositely-disposed first and second ends that define a length therebetween, and the length of the cylindrical-shaped feature is longer than a maximum outer diameter of the first portion.

8. The device according to claim 7, wherein the first end of the cylindrical-shaped feature defines a protrusion that extends beyond an outer boundary of the first portion.

9. The device according to claim 1, wherein the first portion defines a partial toroid adjoining the second portion at first and second locations.

10. The device according to claim 9, wherein the second portion is arcuate and entirely enclosed by the cylindrical-shaped feature.

11. The device according to claim 9, wherein the second portion is entirely defined by the cylindrical-shaped feature.

12. The device according to claim 11, wherein the cylindrical-shaped feature has oppositely-disposed first and second ends and a midpoint therebetween, and the partial toroid adjoins the second end and the midpoint of the cylindrical-shaped feature.

13. The device according to claim 1, wherein the first portion is defined at least in part by an axis of curvature that coincides with the axis of the opening.

14. The device according to claim 1, wherein the device has a d-shaped cross-section in a plane perpendicular to the axis of the opening.

15. A device adapted to be worn on a human finger to relieve the wearer of the urge to smoke, the device comprising:
   an arcuate portion; and
   a solid cylindrical portion immovable relative to the arcuate portion and cooperating with the arcuate portion to define an opening having an axis and sized to receive a human finger, the cylindrical portion being oriented so that an axis thereof is perpendicular to the axis of the opening, the cylindrical portion having oppositely-disposed first and second ends that define a length therebetween, the length of the cylindrical portion being longer than a maximum outer diameter of the arcuate portion such that the first end of the cylindrical portion defines a protrusion that extends beyond an outer boundary of the arcuate portion;
   wherein the cylindrical portion is configured so as not to be capable of securing a cigarette.
16. The device according to claim 15, wherein the opening has an arcuate boundary portion defined by the arcuate portion and a straight boundary portion defined by the cylindrical portion.

17. The device according to claim 15, wherein the cylindrical portion has a cross-sectional diameter larger than the maximum cross-sectional thickness of the arcuate portion and smaller than the maximum width of the opening.

18. The device according to claim 15, wherein the arcuate portion defines a partial toroid adjoining the second end of the cylindrical portion and adjoining a midportion of the cylindrical portion between the first and second ends thereof.

19. The device according to claim 15, wherein the arcuate portion is defined at least in part by an axis of curvature that coincides with the axis of the opening.

20. The device according to claim 15, wherein the device has a d-shaped cross-section in a plane perpendicular to the axis of the opening.

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