ABSTRACT

A disposable hospital curtain ensemble is provided for use with existing hospital curtain assemblies. The upper portion of the disposable hospital curtain ensemble is attached to the existing hooks in a mounted track in a hospital room. The lower portion of the hospital curtain ensemble removably attaches to the upper portion of the hospital curtain ensemble. The lower portion is disposable and easily replaced. Additionally, the disposable lower portion may have varying aromas, colors and patterns to serve in relaxing a patient and promoting patient recovery.
DISPOSABLE HOSPITAL CURTAIN

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to hospital curtains. More specifically, the present invention relates to a disposable hospital curtain which acts as a hanging room divider.

[0002] Many hospital rooms are divided into separate patient areas by hanging room dividers. The hospital rooms contain tracks that are mounted into the ceiling of the room. Typically, a curtain is hung from the hooks slidably mounted within a track. The curtain is used to separate patient areas when more than one patient is placed into the hospital room. The curtain may also be used to provide privacy to a patient in a hospital room or other hospital settings such as in the Emergency Room ("ER"), Intensive Care Unit ("ICU") and Recovery rooms.

[0003] Typically, hanging curtains that are used to divide the room can be slid along the track to enclose a patient in a private and discrete area. The hospital curtains can also be moved such that the patient area is open to the rest of the hospital room.

[0004] Usually the drapes that are hung to divide a hospital room are made of a woven material such as cloth. These curtains provide a nest for bacteria and other germs that become airborne or are otherwise transmitted by touch through daily use within a hospital setting. Most hospitals remove these curtains and have them cleaned no more than once or twice a year at a significant cost. Furthermore, the removal of the cloth curtains take significant hospital staff time as the curtain has to be removed from each and every hook extending from the curtain track.

[0005] While attempts have been made to provide a sanitary environment in private and semiprivate rooms as well as in the ER, Recovery and ICU, the maintenance of a sanitary environment in an economical way has yet to be resolved.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] It is an aspect of the present invention to provide a disposable hospital curtain that can utilize the existing hooks that are slidably mounted within the tracks on a hospital room ceiling. To achieve this and other aspects and advantages, the disposable hospital curtain ensemble contains an upper portion that is attached to the existing hooks in a mounted track on the ceiling of a hospital room. The bottom portion of the hospital curtain ensemble removably attaches to the upper portion of the hospital curtain ensemble. The lower portion of the hospital curtain ensemble is disposable and easily replaced.

[0007] These and other features, advantages and objects of the present invention will be further understood and appreciated by those skilled in the art by reference to the following specification, claims and appended drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a hospital room setting utilizing the disposable hospital curtain of the present invention.

[0009] FIG. 2 is a front elevational view of the disposable hospital curtain of the present invention.

[0100] FIG. 3 is a front elevational view of the disposable hospital curtain of the present invention with the upper and lower portion of the disposable hospital curtain partially separated.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0011] The disposable hospital curtain constructed in accordance with the present invention can be used with the existing curtain tracks in hospital rooms.

[0012] In the illustrated example, FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of a disposable hospital curtain 2 made in accordance with the present invention hung in a hospital room 18. The disposable hospital curtain 2 is hung from the curtain track 4 installed in the ceiling 20 of a hospital room 18. The upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 is attached to the curtain track 4 via the curtain hook 6, movably mounted within the curtain track 4. The curtain hook 6 and the curtain track 4 move along the curtain track 4 such that the disposable hospital curtain 2 can be used to divide a hospital room 18 and surround a patient bed 24 to provide privacy for a hospital patient. The curtain hook 6 within the curtain track 4 may also be moved such that the disposable hospital curtain 2 is withdrawn along the track so as to open up the hospital room 18.

[0013] FIG. 2 illustrates the attachment of the disposable hospital curtain 2 to the curtain track 4. The upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 is attached to the curtain track 4 by the curtain hooks 6. Holes 10 located in spaced arrangement along the top side of the upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 are placed on the curtain hooks 6. The curtain hooks 6 are moveably mounted in the curtain track 4 such that the disposable hospital curtain 2 can be slid along the curtain track 4.

[0014] The lower portion 14 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 is attached to the upper portion 8 by a fastening means such as strips of hook-and-loop type fasteners, sold under the trade name VELCRO®. Corresponding strips of hook-and-loop type fasteners are attached to the lower side of the upper portion 8 and to the top side of the lower portion 14 of the disposable hospital curtain 2. Thus, the lower portion 14 is attached to the upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 by the fastening means 12. Other conventional fasteners such as snaps, clips, etc., may be substituted or additionally employed. The fastening means 12 is approximately half an inch wide. Thus, the bottom half inch of the upper portion 8 comprises one portion of the fastening means 12. The top half inch of the lower portion 14 comprises the other portion of the fastening means 12.

[0015] FIG. 3 illustrates the separation of a portion of the lower portion 14 from the upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2. The fastening means 12 allows the lower portion 14 to be easily removed from the upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2. Similarly, the fastening means 12 allows the lower portion 14 to be easily attached to the upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2. The lower portion 14 may be replaced with each new patient or as needed on a daily, weekly or monthly basis depending on usage and current patient disease process.

[0016] The upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 should be made of a reusable material such that
multiple disposable lower portions 14 can be attached to a singly installed upper portion 8. The preferred material for the upper portion 8 is nylon. The lower portion 14 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 is made of an inexpensive material that is sterile and helps provide a sanitary environment when the disposable hospital curtain 2 is used to divide a hospital room 18. The preferred materials for the lower portion 14 include polypropylene, polyethylene, polyurethane, polyester cellulose and nylon.

[0017] In the illustrated example, the upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 is approximately 18" in height. The dimensions of the upper portion 8 and the lower portion 14 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 will vary based on the architectural design of the hospital rooms. The thickness of the upper portion 8 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 is approximately 0.5 to 10 mm. The thickness of the lower portion 14 of the hospital curtain 2 is approximately 0.5 to 10 mm. The disposable hospital curtain 2 should have a sufficient length to enclose a hospital bed and patient area.

[0018] The lower portion 14 may have varying colors, aromas and patterns to serve in relaxing a patient and promoting patient recovery. Ideally, the lower portion 14 would be available in multiple different color, aroma and pattern options. Disposable curtains are better suited for aromatherapy and color therapy since the curtain will be disposed before the aroma or color fades. Moreover, should a patient be adverse to a particular aroma, color or pattern, a different pattern may be easily substituted.

[0019] Additionally, weight may be added to the bottom of the lower portion 14 of the disposable hospital curtain 2. This weight may include some form of lead, metal, wood, etc. that is sewn into the bottom of the lower portion 14 of the disposable hospital curtain. Alternatively, materials that would add weight to the lower portion 14 may be added by clipping, clamping or other attachment means. The added weight to the lower portion 14 of the disposable hospital curtain 2 prevents excessive movement of the disposable hospital curtain 2.

[0020] The above description is considered that of the preferred embodiment only. Modification of the invention will occur to those skilled in the art and to those who make or use the invention. Therefore, it is understood that the embodiment shown in the drawings and described above is merely for illustrative purposes and not intended to limit the scope of the invention, which is defined by the following claims as interpreted according to the principles of patent law, including the doctrine of equivalents.

The invention claimed is:

1. A disposable hospital curtain comprising:
   an upper portion that attaches to the hospital curtain track in a hospital room; and
   a disposable lower portion that releasably attaches to said upper portion.

2. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said upper portion contains holes that receive the hooks of said curtain track.

3. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion is attached to said upper portion by a strip of hook and loop type fastener.

4. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion is attached to said upper portion by a series of snaps.

5. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion is attached to said upper portion by a series of clips.

6. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion comprises polypropylene.

7. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion comprises polyethylene.

8. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion comprises polyurethane.

9. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion comprises polyester.

10. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion comprises cellulose.

11. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion comprises nylon.

12. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said upper portion comprises nylon.

13. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said upper portion is used with multiple lower portions.

14. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 1, wherein said lower portion is replaced with each new patient.

15. A disposable hospital curtain comprising:
   an upper portion that attaches to the hospital curtain track in a hospital room;
   a disposable lower portion that attaches to said upper portion; and
   said lower portion colored to provide color therapy to a patient.

16. The disposable hospital curtain of claim 15, wherein said lower portion is scented to provide aromatherapy.

17. A disposable hospital curtain comprising:
   an upper portion that attaches to the hospital curtain track in a hospital room;
   a disposable lower portion that attaches to said upper portion; and
   said lower portion scented to provide aromatherapy.