The present invention provides a cover for a grip that includes a first sheet of absorbent material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge and a second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge. The first longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material is attached to an inner surface of the absorbent material substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material to form a flap. The second longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material is removably attached to the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material via a first fastener to constrictively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material and the absorbent material around the grip. The first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material is removably attached to an external surface of the absorbent material via a second fastener so as to conceal the first fastener.
REMOVABLE MOISTURE ABSORBENT GRIP COVER

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to the field of coverings and, more particularly, to a removable moisture absorbent grip cover.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] In the health conscious world of today, many people regularly exercise at physical fitness clubs or spas. A primary advantage of using a fitness club is the availability of expensive, specialized workout machines such as spinning cycles, treadmills, elliptical trainers, and the like. However, this advantage comes with the cost of unwanted contact with the germs and sweat of other machine users.

[0003] Even with signs requesting users to wipe down their machine after use, there may still be residues of contaminating materials left on the grips and handholds of the exercise equipment. Many users attempt to isolate themselves from direct contact with these contaminates by draping a towel over the contact areas, only to have to temporarily stop their workout when the towel falls off due to the vibration and motion of the machine. This break in their routine could cause their heart rate to drop, lowering the intensity and effectiveness of their workout.

[0004] A need therefore exists for a removable moisture absorbent grip cover to accommodate a variety of grip and handhold sizes and able to act as a contact interface between the user and the exercise machine.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The present invention provides a removable moisture absorbent grip cover that can be used by people to cover the grips of exercise machines to avoid contact with the sweat and germs of previous exercise machine users. The covers are machine washable and can be produced in a variety of colors and designs that allow the user to express their individuality, match their workout clothes, or display an image/message (e.g., favorite sports team name/numbers/logo, charity name/logo, business name/logo, hobby, designer, etc.).

[0006] More specifically, the present invention provides a cover for a grip that includes a first sheet of absorbent material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge and a second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge. The first longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material is attached to an inner surface of the absorbent material substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material to form a flap. The second longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material is removably attached to the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material via a first fastener to constricatively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material and the absorbent material around the grip. The first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material is removably attached to an external surface of the absorbent material via a second fastener so as to conceal the first fastener.

[0007] In another embodiment, the present invention provides cover for a grip that includes a first sheet of absorbent material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge, a second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge, a depression formed in the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material, and an end cap attached to an end formed by the absorbent material and the elastic or semi-elastic material. The first longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material is attached to an inner surface of the absorbent material substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material to form a flap. The second longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material is removably attached to the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material via a zipper to constricatively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material and the absorbent material around the grip. The first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material is removably attached to an external surface of the absorbent material via a hook-and-loop strip so as to conceal the zipper.

[0008] The present invention is described in detail below with reference to the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] The above and further advantages of the invention may be better understood by referring to the following description in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0010] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a grip cover in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0011] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a grip cover in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention;

[0012] FIG. 3A is a perspective view of a grip cover in accordance with yet another embodiment of the present invention;

[0013] FIG. 3B is a partially exploded view of a grip cover from a first side in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 3C is a partially exploded view of a grip cover from a second side in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0015] FIG. 4 is an example of an exercise apparatus in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0016] FIGS. 5A-5D is a series of examples of application of the grip cover to an exercise apparatus handhold in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0017] FIGS. 6A-6C is a series of examples showing the typical stages of installation of the present invention in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0018] FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of a grip cover applied to a handhold in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0019] FIGS. 8A-8B are partial views of alternative end caps of an exploded grip cover in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0020] FIGS. 9A-9B are front and rear views of an alternative embodiment of the present invention;

[0021] FIG. 10 is an example of the alternative embodiment of the present invention applied to an exercise apparatus;

[0022] FIG. 11 is a cross-sectional view of a grip cover applied to a handhold in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0023] While the making and using of various embodiments of the present invention are discussed in detail below, it should be appreciated that the present invention provides many applicable inventive concepts that can be embodied in a wide variety of specific contexts. The specific embodiments
discussed herein are merely illustrative of specific ways to make and use the invention and do not delimit the scope of the invention. The discussion herein relates primarily to removable moisture absorbent grip covers for exercise equipment, but it will be understood that the concepts of the present invention are applicable to grip covers for any device.

[0024] The present invention provides a removable moisture absorbent grip cover that can be used by people to cover the grips of exercise machines to avoid contact with the sweat and germs of previous exercise machine users. The covers are machine washable and can be produced in a variety of colors and designs that allow the user to express their individuality, match their workout clothes, or display an image/message (e.g., favorite sports team name/colors/logo, charity name/logo, business name/logo, hobby, designer, etc.).

[0025] A perspective view of a grip cover 100 in accordance with the present invention is shown in FIG. 1. The grip cover 100 includes a first sheet of absorbent material 110 having a first longitudinal edge 112 and a second longitudinal edge 114, a second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material 120 having a first longitudinal edge 122 and a second longitudinal edge 124, a depression 116 formed in the second longitudinal edge 114 of the absorbent material 110, and an end cap 150 attached to the end 126 formed by the absorbent material 110 and the elastic or semi-elastic material 120. Note that the end cap 150 can be permanently attached, removable, partially removable or omitted altogether. Alternatively, the depression 116 can be formed in the first longitudinal edge 112 instead of the second longitudinal edge 114. The elastic or semi-elastic material 120 typically will not extend beyond the depression 116 so that a portion of the handle bar can extend through the depression 116 (see FIGS. 5A-5D and 6A-6C). As a result, the length of the second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material 120 can be equal to or less than a distance between the end cap 150 and the depression 116. The absorbent material 110 can be terrycloth, cotton, lyocell, toweling, chamois leather, microfiber, wool or a combination thereof. Other natural or man-made fabrics can be used as long as they are able to transfer moisture from the user to the absorbent material 110. The elastic or semi-elastic material 120 can be spandex, modacrylic, velour, a knitted fabric, a woven fabric or a combination thereof. Other natural or man-made fabrics can be used as long as they are able to elastically or resiliently deform under a load or stress, and return proximate to the dimensions of an unloaded or unstressed material. The materials used to construct the grip cover 100 are preferably, but not required, to be machine washable.

[0026] The first longitudinal edge 122 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 is attached to an inner surface 118 of the absorbent material 110 substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110 to form a flap 180. The first longitudinal edge 122 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 is attached through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. The second longitudinal edge 124 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 is removably attached to the second longitudinal edge 114 of the absorbent material 110 via a first fastener or zipper (130 and 135) to constrictively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 and the absorbent material 110 around the grip (not shown). As shown, one side of the zipper 130 is attached to the second longitudinal edge 124 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 and the other side of the zipper 130 is attached to the second longitudinal edge 114 of the absorbent material 110. The zipper (130 and 135) may be attached through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. The zipper (130 and 135) can be any form of the commonly known device, but is preferably made of a rust-inhibiting material such as plastic, nylon, brass, bronze, aluminum, galvanized metal, or stain-less steel, for example. An operable zipper slider 135 is attached to one side of the zipper 130. The zipper slider 135 is operated by a user to join or disconnect the interlocking pieces of the zipper 130 by moving the slider 135 along the length of the zipper 130. The zipper slider 135 is constrained at either end (in a length direction) of at least one side of the zipper 130 in order to prevent inadvertent removal of the zipper slider 135. The other side of the zipper 130 may be inserted into the zipper slider 135 or configured as pre-installed in the zipper slider 135 (i.e., the zipper slider 135 is permanently attached to both sides of the zipper 130). Preferably, the zipper slider 135 is configured as constrained from removal from either end of both sides of the zipper 130 (i.e., both sides are pre-installed in the zipper slider 135). Alternatively, the zipper (130 and 135) can be replaced by another type of fastener, such as a snap, a hook-and-loop strip, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof.

[0027] The first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110 is removably attached to an external surface 119 of the absorbent material 110 via a second fastener or hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) (e.g., Velcro®) so as to conceal the zipper (130 and 135). As shown, the second fastener piece 145 is disposed on a first side of the depression 116 and on an opposite side of the depression 116 along the second longitudinal edge 114 of the absorbent material 110. The second fastener piece 140 is disposed along the first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110 to mate with the second fastener piece 145. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are preferably in the form of elongated strips and are oriented approximately parallel to the longitudinal edges (112 and 114) of the absorbent material 110. Each of the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) may be formed as continuous units or as two or more segments. Additionally, the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are not limited to having the same dimensions. One second fastener piece may have more contact area than the other second fastener piece. Note that the loop portion of the hook-and-loop strips (e.g., second fastener piece 145) may not be necessary if the external surface 119 of the absorbent material 110 is a loop-type fabric, such as terrycloth. In such a case, the absorbent material 110 would function as part of the second fastener piece 145 and the other part of the second fastener piece 140 would secure the flap 180 directly to the absorbent material 110. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) may be joined, interlocked, or engaged together through direct pressing contact with one another. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastening pieces 140 and 145) are separated by applying a force to one of the second fastener pieces in a direction away from the other second fastener piece. Alternatively, the hook-and-loop strips (fastening pieces 140 and 145) can be replaced by another type of fastener, such as a zipper, snap, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof.

[0028] The end cap 150 can be the same material as the absorbent material 110 or the elastic or semi-elastic material 120. In addition, the end cap 150 can be a third type of material, such as nylon, acrylic, or other natural or man-made materials for example. The end cap 150 is not limited to absorbent or resilient materials. The end cap 150 of this
embodiment is shown in a preferred circular shape. However, the end cap 150 is not limited to this geometric configuration. Any shape able to at least partially close off one end of the grip cover 100 is usable. In addition, the end cap 150 can be formed as a continuous part of the absorbent material 110 (see FIGS. 8A and 83).

[0029] A perspective view of a grip cover 200 in accordance with the present invention is shown in FIG. 2. The grip cover 200 includes a first sheet of absorbent material 110 having a first longitudinal edge 112 and a second longitudinal edge 114, a second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material 202 having a first longitudinal edge 204 and a second longitudinal edge 206, a depression 116 formed in the first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110, and an end cap 150 attached to an end 126 formed by the absorbent material 110 and the elastic or semi-elastic material 202. The elastic or semi-elastic material 202 is attached to the inner surface 118 of the absorbent material 110 from the second longitudinal edge 114 of the absorbent material to longitudinal seam 208, which is substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110, to form flap 180a. The elastic or semi-elastic material 202 is attached to the absorbent material 110 through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. Note that the end cap 150 can be permanently attached, removable, partially removable or omitted altogether. Alternatively, the depression 116 can be formed in the second longitudinal edge 114 instead of the first longitudinal edge 112. The elastic or semi-elastic material 202 typically will not extend beyond the depression 116 so that a portion of the handle bar can extend through the depression 116 (see FIGS. 5A-5D and 6A-6C). As a result, the length of the second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material 202 can be equal to or less than a distance between the end cap 150 and the depression 116. The absorbent material 110 can be terrycloth, cotton, lyocell, towelling, chamois leather, microfiber, wool or a combination thereof. Other natural or man-made fabrics can be used as long as they are able to transfer moisture from the user to the absorbent material 110. The elastic or semi-elastic material 202 can be spandex, modacrylic, velour, a knitted fabric, a woven fabric or a combination thereof. Other natural or man-made fabrics can be used as long as they are able to elastically or resiliently deform under a load or stress, and return proximate to the dimensions of an unloaded or unstressed material. The materials used to construct the grip cover 200 are preferably, but not required, to be machine washable.

[0030] The first fastener or zipper (130 and 135) is attached between the first longitudinal edge 204 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 202 and the second longitudinal edge 206 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 202 to constructively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material 202 around the grip. The zipper (130 and 135) is used to constructively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material 202 around the grip (not shown). As shown, one side of the zipper 130 is attached to the first longitudinal edge 204 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 202 and the other side of the zipper 130 is attached to the second longitudinal edge 206 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 202. The zipper (130 and 135) may be attached through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. The zipper (130 and 135) can be any form of the commonly known device, but is preferably made of a rust-inhibiting material such as plastic, nylon, brass, bronze, aluminum, galvanized metal, or stainless steel, for example. An operable zipper slider 135 is attached to one side of the zipper 130. The zipper slider 135 is operated by a user to join or disconnect the interlocking pieces of the zipper 130 by moving the slider 135 along the length of the zipper 130. The zipper slider 135 is constrained at either end (in a length direction) of at least one side of the zipper 130 in order to prevent inadvertent removal of the zipper slider 135. The other side of the zipper 130 may be inserted into the zipper slider 135 or configured as pre-installed in the zipper slider 135 (i.e., the zipper slider 135 is permanently attached to both sides of the zipper 130). Preferably, the zipper slider 135 is configured as constrained from removal from either end of both sides of the zipper 130 (i.e., both sides are pre-installed in the zipper slider 135). Alternatively, the zipper (130 and 135) can be replaced by another type of fastener, such as a snap, a hook-and-loop strip, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof.

[0031] The first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110 is removably attached to an exterior surface 119 of the absorbent material 110 via a second fastener or hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) (e.g., Velcro®) so as to conceal the zipper (130 and 135). As shown, the second fastener piece 140 (140a and 140b) is disposed on a first side of the depression 116 and on an opposite side of the depression 116 along the first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110. Note that in this embodiment, second fastener piece 140a is located on the interior surface 118 of the absorbent material 110 and second fastener piece 140b is located on the exterior surface 119 of the absorbent material 110. The second fastener piece 145 (145a and 145b) is disposed along the second longitudinal edge 114 of the absorbent material 110 to mate with the second fastener piece 140. Note that in this embodiment, second fastener piece 140b is located on the interior surface 118 of the absorbent material 110 and second fastener piece 140a is located on the exterior surface 119 of the absorbent material 110. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are preferably in the form of elongated strips and are oriented approximately parallel to the longitudinal edges (112 and 114) of the absorbent material 110. Each of the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) can be formed as continuous units or as two or more segments. Additionally, the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are not limited to having the same dimensions. One second fastener piece may have more contact area than the other second fastener piece. Note that the loop portion of the hook-and-loop strips (e.g., second fastener piece 145) may not be necessary if the external surface 116 of the absorbent material 110 is a loop-type fabric, such as terrycloth. In such a case, the absorbent material 110 would function as part of the second fastener piece 145 and the other part of the second fastener piece 140 would secure the flaps 180a and 180b directly to the absorbent material 110. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) can be joined, interlocked, or engaged together through direct pressing contact with one another. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are separated by applying a force to one of the second fastener pieces in a direction away from the other second fastener piece. Alternatively, the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) can be replaced by another type of fastener, such as a zipper, snap, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof.

[0032] The end cap 150 can be the same material as the absorbent material 110 or the elastic or semi-elastic material 202. In addition, the end cap 150 can be a third type of material, such as nylon, acrylic, or other natural or man-made
materials for example. The end cap 150 is not limited to absorbent or resilient materials. The end cap 150 of this embodiment is shown in a preferred circular shape. However, the end cap 150 is not limited to this geometric configuration. Any shape able to at least partially close off one end of the grip cover 200 is usable. In addition, the end cap 150 may be formed as a continuous part of the absorbent material 110 (see FIGS. 8A and 8B).

[0033] A perspective view of a grip cover 300 in accordance with the present invention is shown in FIG. 3A. The grip cover 300 includes a first sheet of absorbent material 110 having a first longitudinal edge 112 and a second longitudinal edge 114, a first sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material 120 having a first longitudinal edge 122 and a second longitudinal edge 124, a third sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material 302 having a first longitudinal edge 304 and a second longitudinal edge 306, a depression 116 formed in the first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110, and an end cap 150 attached to an end 126 formed by the absorbent material 110 and the elastic or semi-elastic materials 120 and 302. Note that the end cap 150 can be permanently attached, removable, partially removable or omitted altogether. Alternatively, the depression 116 can be formed in the second longitudinal edge 114 instead of the first longitudinal edge 112. The elastic or semi-elastic materials 120 and 302 typically will not extend beyond the depression 116 so that a portion of the handle bar can extend through the depression 116 (see FIGS. 5A-5D and 6A-6C). As a result, the length of the second and third sheets of elastic or semi-elastic material 120 and 302 can be equal to or less than a distance between the end cap 150 and the depression 116. The absorbent material 110 can be terylene, cotton, lycocell, toweling, chamoy leather, microfiber, wool or a combination thereof. Other natural or man-made fabrics can be used as long as they are able to transfer moisture from the user to the absorbent material 110. The elastic or semi-elastic materials 120 and 302 can be spandex, modacrylic, velour, a knitted fabric, a woven fabric or a combination thereof. Other natural or man-made fabrics can be used as long as they are able to elastically or resiliently deform under a load or stress, and return proximate to the dimensions of an unloaded or unstressed material. The materials used to construct the grip cover 300 are preferably, but not required, to be machine washable.

[0034] The first longitudinal edge 122 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 is attached to an inner surface 118 of the absorbent material 110 substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110 to form a flap 130a. The first longitudinal edge 122 is attached through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. The first longitudinal edge 304 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 302 is attached to the second longitudinal edge 114 of the absorbent material 110. The first longitudinal edge 304 is attached through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. As shown, one side of the zipper 130 is attached to the second longitudinal edge 306 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 302 and the other side of the zipper 130 is attached to the second longitudinal edge 124 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120. The zipper (130 and 135) may be attached through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. The zipper (130 and 135) is used to constructively affix the elastic or semi-elastic materials 120 and 302 and the absorbent material 110 around the grip (not shown). The zipper (130 and 135) can be any form of the commonly known device, but is preferably made of a rust-inhibiting material such as plastic, nylon, brass, bronze, aluminum, galvanized metal, or stainless steel, for example. An operable zipper slider 135 is attached to one side of the zipper 130. The zipper slider 135 is operated by a user to join or disconnect the interlocking pieces of the zipper 130 by moving the slider 135 along the length of the zipper 130. The zipper slider 135 is constrained at either end (in a length direction) of at least one side of the zipper 130 in order to prevent inadvertent removal of the zipper slider 135. The other side of the zipper 130 may be inserted into the zipper slider 135 or configured as pre-installed in the zipper slider 135 (i.e., the zipper slider 135 is permanently attached to both sides of the zipper 130). Preferably, the zipper slider 135 is configured as constrained or removable from either end of both sides of the zipper 130 (i.e., both sides are pre-installed in the zipper slider 135). Alternatively, the zipper (130 and 135) can be replaced by another type of fastener, such as a snap, a hook-and-loop strip, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof.

[0035] The first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110 is removable attached to an external surface 119 of the absorbent material 110 via a second fastener or hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) (e.g., Velcro®) so as to conceal the zipper (130 and 135). As shown, the second fastener piece 140 is disposed on a first side of the depression 116 and on an opposite side of the depression 116 along the first longitudinal edge 112 of the absorbent material 110. The second fastener piece 145 is disposed along the second longitudinal edge 114 of the absorbent material 110 to mate with the second fastener piece 140. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are preferably in the form of elongated strips and are oriented approximately parallel to the longitudinal edges (112 and 114) of the absorbent material 110. Each of the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) may be formed as continuous units or as two or more segments. Additionally, the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are not limited to having the same dimensions. One second fastener piece may have more contact area than the other second fastener piece. Note that the loop portion of the hook-and-loop strips (e.g., second fastener piece 145) may not be necessary if the external surface 119 of the absorbent material 110 is a loop-type fabric, such as terylene. In such a case, the absorbent material 110 would function as part of the second fastener piece 145 and the other part of the second fastener piece 140 would secure the flaps 180a and 180b directly to the absorbent material 110. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) may be joined, interlocked, or engaged together through direct pressing contact with one another. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are separated by applying a force to one of the second fastener pieces in a direction away from the other second fastener piece. Alternatively, the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) can be replaced by another type of fastener, such as a zipper, snap, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof.

[0036] The end cap 150 can be the same material as the absorbent material 110 or the elastic or semi-elastic materials 120 and 302. In addition, the end cap 150 can be a third type of material, such as nylon, acrylic, or other natural or man-made materials for example. The end cap 150 is not limited to absorbent or resilient materials. The end cap 150 of this embodiment is shown in a preferred circular shape. However, the end cap 150 is not limited to this geometric configuration. Any shape able to at least partially close off one end of the
grip cover 300 is usable. In addition, the end cap 150 may be formed as a continuous part of the absorbent material 110 (see FIGS. 8A and 8B).

[0037] As more easily seen in FIGS. 3B & 3C, the absorbent material 110 has edges 112, 114, 170, and 172. A depression 116 is located in edge 112, proximate to edge 172. Preferably the depression 116 is a semi-oval shape as shown in the figures. However, the depression 116 is not to be limited to this shape. Any geometric shape or arch-shaped configuration may be used for the depression 116. Moreover, depression 116 can be formed in either the first longitudinal edge 112 or the second longitudinal edge 114. Edge 170 is along a widthwise edge of the absorbent material 110, proximate to the end cap 150. The flap 180a is a section of the absorbent material 110 bounded by the edge 112 and a line extending coincident to the first longitudinal edge 124 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 proximate to the edge 112. Flap 180b is a similar section of absorbent material 110 bounded by the edge 112 and a line extending coincident to the first longitudinal edge 124 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 proximate to the edge 112. However, flap 180b is located on an opposite side of the depression 116 relative to the flap 180a. The end cap 150 is attached to one end of the grip cover 300. The end cap perimeter 155 of the end cap 150 may be attached to the widthwise edges of the elastic or semi-elastic materials 120 and 302 proximate to edge 170, and the edge 170 not including the flap 180a. Alternatively, the end cap perimeter 155 may be attached to just the entire edge 170, i.e., including the flap 180a. Additionally, the end cap perimeter 155 may be attached to the end of the grip cover 300 through some combination of these two configurations. The end cap perimeter 155 is attached to the end of the grip cover 300 through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. Preferably, the end cap perimeter 155 is attached to the widthwise edges of the elastic or semi-elastic materials 120 and 302 and the edge 170 (not including the flap 180a) through sewing.

[0038] A description of the use of the grip cover 100 (alternatively, grip cover 200 or 300 can be used) will follow with reference to FIGS. 4-7. In the following description, a spin-cycle 400 is used as an illustration of an exercise apparatus for the use of the grip cover 100, but the grip cover 100 is not to be limited to only this use. A wide variety of exercise equipment including, but not limited to treadmills, cross-country skiing simulators, elliptical trainers, stair-masters, and treadmills for example, may have the grip covers 100, 200 or 300 applied thereon.

[0039] A typical spin-cycle 400 (see FIG. 4) includes a handhold 410, a seat 420, and pedals 430. A user will sit on the seat 420 and hold on to the handhold 410 while pedaling the pedals 430. The handhold 410 (see FIG. 5A) may include a plurality of outer handhold grips 404 and inner handhold grips 406. In this example, each of the handhold grips includes a grip end 402. An alternative form of the handhold 410 replaces the two inner handhold grips 406 with a single inner loop 408 (shown in broken lines). The single inner loop 408 is continuous with the handhold 410 and does not include a grip end 402.

[0040] As seen in FIG. 6A (only one half of the handhold 410 is shown for the sake of simplicity), the grip cover 100 is initially prepared by moving the zipper slider 135 to an open position, proximate to the end cap 150. The second fastener piece 140 is unengaged and separated from the second fastener piece 145. Additionally, the flap 180a and the flap 180b are moved away from the rest of the grip cover 100. This configuration is referred to as an open position of the grip cover 100.

[0041] The open grip cover 100 is applied over an end 402 of an outer or inner handhold grip 404, 406 (i.e., in FIGS. 6A-6C, the grip cover is applied over an end 402 of an outer handhold grip 404 and the end 402 is not visible in these views). Once the handhold grip 404, 406 is inserted into an open grip cover 100, the user moves the zipper slider 135 along the entire length of the zipper 135 to a closed position, away from the end cap 150 (see FIG. 6B). The elastic or semi-elastic material 120 stretches to conform to the shape and circumference of the outer handhold 404. The grip cover 100 should be oriented so that the depression 116 coincides with an inner handhold grip 406 (as in FIGS. 6A-6C), or with the base of the handhold 410 (as in FIG. 5C). The flap 180a is then wrapped around the grip cover 100 so as to cover the zipper 130. In addition, a flap 180b, located on the other side of the depression 116, is wrapped around the grip cover 100. In both situations, the flaps 180a, 180b are secured by engaging the second fastener piece 140 with the second fastener piece 145 along the length of the grip cover 100. This configuration is referred to as a closed grip cover 100 (see FIG. 6C).

[0042] The fastening of the flap 180b may help to secure the grip cover 100 to the handhold 410. FIG. 5B shows a grip cover 100 as applied to an outer handhold grip 404 and FIG. 5C shows a grip cover 100 as applied to an inner handhold grip 406. Additionally, grip covers 100 may be applied to both the outer handhold grip 404 and inner handhold grip 406 (see FIG. 5D).

[0043] A cross-section VII in FIG. 6C of a closed, applied grip cover 100, is shown in FIG. 7. As seen in FIG. 7, a handhold grip 404 of a handhold 410 may include a metal cylindrical bar 710, and a foam covering 720. The flap 180a is shown as wrapping over the zipper 130 and being positioned such that the second fastener piece 145 is in at least partial engagement with the second fastener piece 140.

[0044] In typical applications, the circumference of the outer handhold 404 ranges from 4½" (10.5 cm) to approximately 6½" (16.2 cm). Therefore a preferred circumference of the combination of elastic or semi-elastic material 120, zipper 130 and absorbent material 110 in a closed configuration is less than 4" (10.2 cm) in an unstressed condition. However, it would be preferable for the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 to be sized and configured to allow the combination of elastic or semi-elastic material 120, zipper 130, and absorbent material 110, in a closed configuration to be able to resiliently expand to a circumference of 6½" (16.2 cm) or more. Therefore, a grip cover 100 with a closed circumference in the range bounded by 4" (10.2 cm) unstressed to 6½" (16.2 cm) stressed (for example) would allow a single grip cover 100 to be used with a wide variety of exercise equipment. Additionally, in the illustrative embodiment shown in FIG. 3B, the overall length of the grip cover 100 can be approximately 19" (48.3 cm) for example. The depression 116 is approximately 1½" (3.8 cm) wide and located approximately ½" (6.4 cm) from the edge 172 of the absorbent material 110, for example.

[0045] Referring to FIGS. 9A and 9B another embodiment of the grip cover 900 is shown. The grip cover 900 includes a first sheet of absorbent material 910 having a first longitudinal edge 912 and a second longitudinal edge 914, a second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material 120 having a first longitudi-
dinal edge 122 and a second longitudinal edge 124. As shown, the length of the second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material 120 can be equal to or less than a the length of the absorbent material 910. The absorbent material 910 can be terrycloth, cotton, lyocell, toweling, chamois leather, microfiber, wool or a combination thereof. Other natural or man-made fabrics can be used as long as they are able to transfer moisture from the user to the absorbent material 910. The elastic or semi-elastic material 120 can be spandex, modacrylic, velour, a knitted fabric, a woven fabric or a combination thereof. Other natural or man-made fabrics can be used as long as they are able to elastically or resiliently deform under a load or stress, and return proximate to the dimensions of an unloaded or unstressed material. The materials used to construct the grip cover 900 are preferably, but not required, to be machine washable.

[0046] The first longitudinal edge 122 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 is attached to an inner surface 918 of the absorbent material 910 substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge 912 of the absorbent material 910 to form a flap 980. The first longitudinal edge 122 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 is attached through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. The second longitudinal edge 124 of the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 is removably attached to the second longitudinal edge 914 of the absorbent material 910 via a first fastener or zipper (130 and 135) to constructively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 and the absorbent material 910 around the grip (not shown). The zipper (130 and 135) may be attached through sewing, adhesive, bonding, fusing, or the like. The zipper (130 and 135) can be any form of the commonly known device, but is preferably made of a rust-inhibiting material such as plastic, nylon, brass, bronze, aluminum, galvanized metal, or stain-less steel, for example. An openable zipper slider 135 is attached to one side of the zipper 130. The zipper slider 135 is operated by a user to join or disconnect the interlocking pieces of the zipper 130 by moving the slider 135 along the length of the zipper 130. The zipper slider 135 is constrained at either end (in a length direction) of at least one side of the zipper 130 in order to prevent inadvertent removal of the zipper slider 135. The other side of the zipper 130 may be inserted into the zipper slider 135 or configured as pre-installed in the zipper slider 135 (i.e., the zipper slider 135 is permanently attached to both sides of the zipper 130). Preferably, the zipper slider 135 is configured as constrained from removal from either end of both sides of the zipper 130 (i.e., both sides are pre-installed in the zipper slider 135). Alternatively, the zipper (130 and 135) can be replaced by another type of fastener, such as a snap, a hook-and-loop strip, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof.

[0047] The first longitudinal edge 912 of the absorbent material 910 is removably attached to an external surface 919 of the absorbent material 910 via a second fastener or hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) (e.g., Velcro®) so as to conceal the zipper (130 and 135). The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are preferably in the form of elongated strips and are oriented approximately parallel to the longitudinal edges (912 and 914) of the absorbent material 910. Each of the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) may be formed as continuous units or as two or more segments. Additionally, the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are not limited to having the same dimensions. One second fastener piece may have more contact area than the other second fastener piece. Note that the loop portion of the hook-and-loop strips (e.g., second fastener piece 145) may not be necessary if the external surface 919 of the absorbent material 910 is a loop-type fabric, such as terrycloth. In such a case, the absorbent material 910 would function as part of the second fastener piece 145 and the other part of the second fastener piece 140 would secure the flap 980 directly to the absorbent material 910. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) may be joined, interlocked, or engaged together through direct presssing contact with one another. The hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) are separated by applying a force to one of the second fastener pieces in a direction away from the other second fastener piece. Alternatively, the hook-and-loop strips (second fastener pieces 140 and 145) can be replaced by another type of fastener, such as a zipper, snap, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof. Note the grip cover 900 can be modified to use elastic or semi-elastic materials 202 (FIG. 2) or elastic or semi-elastic materials 120 and 302 (FIG. 3A).

[0048] The grip cover 900 may be used in a similar fashion as with the grip covers 100, 200 and 300. However, the grip cover 900 may also be used for a continuous or intermediate section of handhold 410 such as the inner loop handhold 408 (see the broken line section of FIG. 5A). In addition, the grip cover 900 may be used on a section of side rails such as the handholds 1010 shown in FIG. 10 for a treadmill 1000 or a stair stepping machine (not shown), among others. The installation of the grip cover 900 involves placing an open grip cover 900 (as seen in FIGS. 9A and 9B) around a handhold of an exercise apparatus. The other side of the zipper 130 is then inserted into the zipper slider 135. The zipper slider 135 is operated along the length of the zipper 130 until the zipper 130 is closed or latched.

[0049] In typical applications the circumference of the outer handhold 404 ranges from 4½" (10.5 cm) to approximately 6½" (16.2 cm). Therefore a preferred circumference of the combination of elastic or semi-elastic material 120, zipper 130 and absorbent material 910 in a closed configuration is less than 4" (10.2 cm) in an unstressed condition. However, it would be preferable for the elastic or semi-elastic material 120 to be sized and configured to allow the combination of elastic or semi-elastic material 120, zipper 130, and absorbent material 910, in a closed configuration to be able to resiliently expand to a circumference of 6½" (16.2 cm) or more. Therefore, a grip cover 900 with a closed circumference in the range bounded by 4" (10.2 cm) unstressed to 6½" (16.2 cm) stressed (for example) would allow a single grip cover 900 to be used with a wide variety of exercise equipment. Additionally, in the illustrative embodiment shown, the overall length of the grip cover 900 (as laid out in FIGS. 9A and 9B) is approximately 15½" (38.1 cm) for example.

[0050] A further embodiment is shown in FIG. 11. In the figure, the same components are identified by the same reference numbers and an additional description of these components may not be provided. FIG. 11 is similar to FIG. 7 but it shows a cross-section of a grip cover 300 in which only one elastic or semi-elastic material 120 is used.

[0051] Although preferred embodiments of the present invention have been described in detail, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various modifications can be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the appended claims.
What is claimed is:

1. A cover for a grip comprising:
   a first sheet of absorbent material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge;
   a second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge;
   the first longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material attached to an inner surface of the absorbent material substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material to form a flap;
   the second longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material removably attached to the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material via a first fastener to constrictively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material and the absorbent material around the grip; and
   the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material removably attached to an external surface of the absorbent material via a second fastener so as to conceal the first fastener.

2. The cover as recited in claim 1, further comprising a third sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material attached between the first fastener and the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material.

3. The cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the first fastener is attached between the first longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material and the second longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material to constrictively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material around the grip and the elastic or semi-elastic material is attached to the inner surface of the absorbent material from the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material to the flap.

4. The cover as recited in claim 1, further comprising a depression formed in the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material or the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material.

5. The cover as recited in claim 4, wherein the elastic or semi-elastic material does not extend beyond the depression.

6. The cover as recited in claim 4, wherein the second fastener is disposed on a first side of the depression and a third fastener is disposed on an opposite side of the depression along the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material.

7. The cover as recited in claim 1, further comprising an end cap attached to an end formed by the absorbent material and the elastic or semi-elastic material.

8. The cover as recited in claim 7, wherein the end cap is removable or partially removable.

9. The cover as recited in claim 1, wherein:
   the absorbent material comprises terrycloth, cotton, lycocell, toweling, chamois leather, microfiber, wool or a combination thereof;
   the elastic or semi-elastic material comprises spandex, modacrylic, velour, a knitted fabric, a woven fabric or a combination thereof;
   the first fastener comprises a zipper, a snap, a hook-and-loop strip, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof; and
   the second fastener comprises a zipper, a snap, a hook-and-loop strip, a tie, a clip, a clasp, a removable adhesive or a combination thereof.

10. The cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the cover is machine washable.

11. The cover as recited in claim 1, wherein the second sheet length is equal to or less than the first sheet length.

12. A cover for a grip comprising:
   a first sheet of absorbent material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge;
   a second sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material having a first longitudinal edge and a second longitudinal edge;
   the first longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material attached to an inner surface of the absorbent material substantially parallel to the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material to form a flap;
   the second longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material removably attached to the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material via a zipper to constrictively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material and the absorbent material around the grip; and
   a depression formed in the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material; and
   an end cap attached to an end formed by the absorbent material and the elastic or semi-elastic material.

13. The cover as recited in claim 12, wherein the depression is formed in the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material instead of the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material.

14. The cover as recited in claim 12, further comprising a third sheet of elastic or semi-elastic material attached between the zipper and the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material.

15. The cover as recited in claim 12, wherein the zipper is attached between the first longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material and the second longitudinal edge of the elastic or semi-elastic material to constrictively affix the elastic or semi-elastic material around the grip and the elastic or semi-elastic material is attached to the inner surface of the absorbent material from the second longitudinal edge of the absorbent material to the flap.

16. The cover as recited in claim 12, wherein the elastic or semi-elastic material does not extend beyond the depression.

17. The cover as recited in claim 12, wherein the hook-and-loop strip is disposed on a first side of the depression and on an opposite side of the depression along the first longitudinal edge of the absorbent material.

18. The cover as recited in claim 12, wherein the end cap is removable or partially removable.

19. The cover as recited in claim 12, wherein:
   the absorbent material comprises terrycloth, cotton, lycocell, toweling, chamois leather, microfiber, wool or a combination thereof; and
   the elastic or semi-elastic material comprises spandex, modacrylic, velour, a knitted fabric, a woven fabric or a combination thereof.

20. The cover as recited in claim 12, wherein the cover is machine washable.

21. The cover as recited in claim 12, wherein the second sheet length is equal to or less than a distance between the end cap and the depression.