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(54) **MULTI-POSITION TRAVEL PILLOW**

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

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USPC **5/636**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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A travel pillow configured to support a person's head in multiple different positions that includes a number of shaped surfaces configured to support a user's head and/or neck in different positions. The top side includes a chamfered neck support surface and a flat top surface. The chamfered neck support surface further includes a pair of humps providing additional side-to-side support for the head. The rear side includes two flat rear surfaces and a rounded forehead support surface. The bottom side includes a beveled support surface and a flat connector surface and a slight chamfer surface for comfort against the neck. The travel pillow may also carry a hook-and-loop fastener for removably attaching a head strap to the pillow, which can be used for holding the pillow to the user in various support configurations, for binding the pillow in a compressed state, and as a blindfold to aid in sleeping.

(21) Appl. No.: **13/798,035**

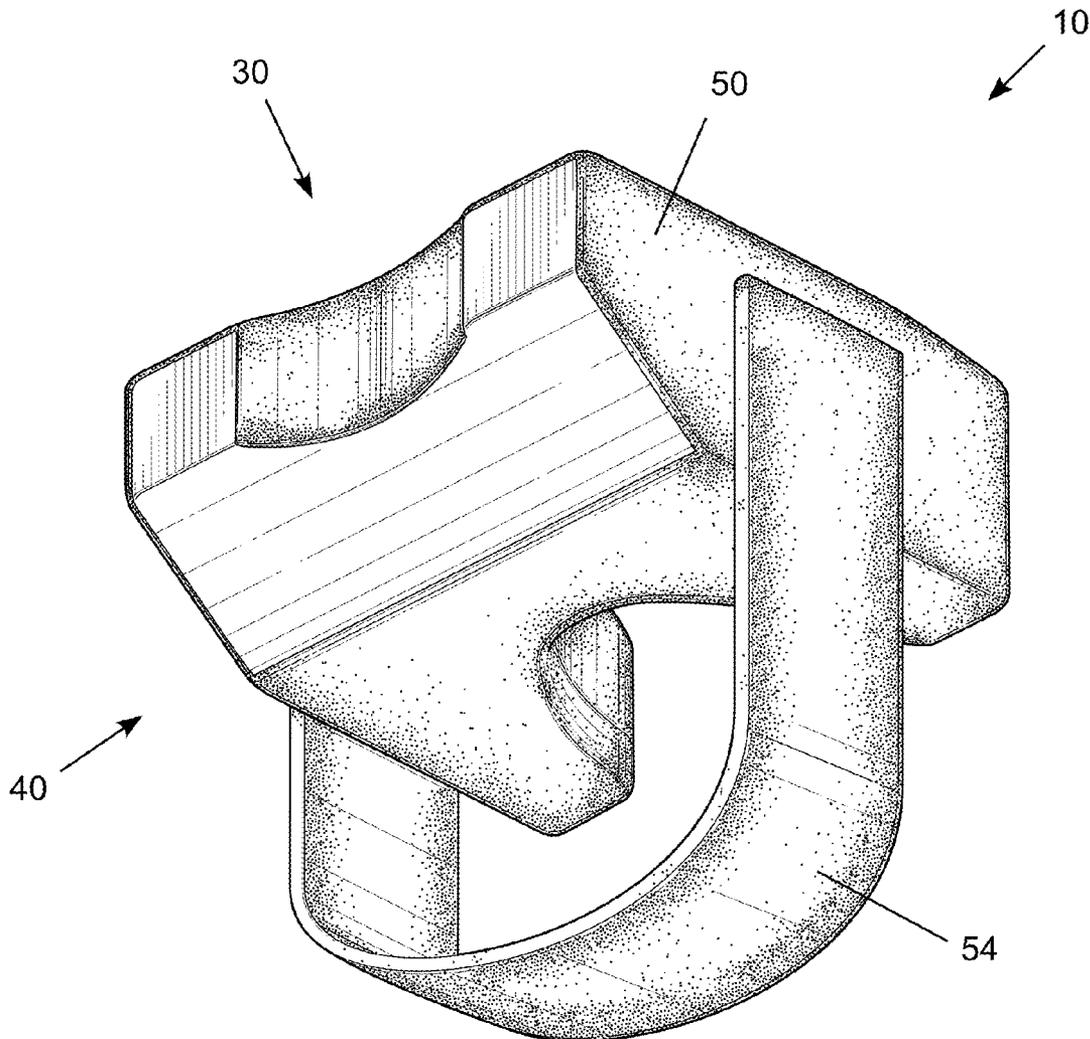
(22) Filed: **Mar. 12, 2013**

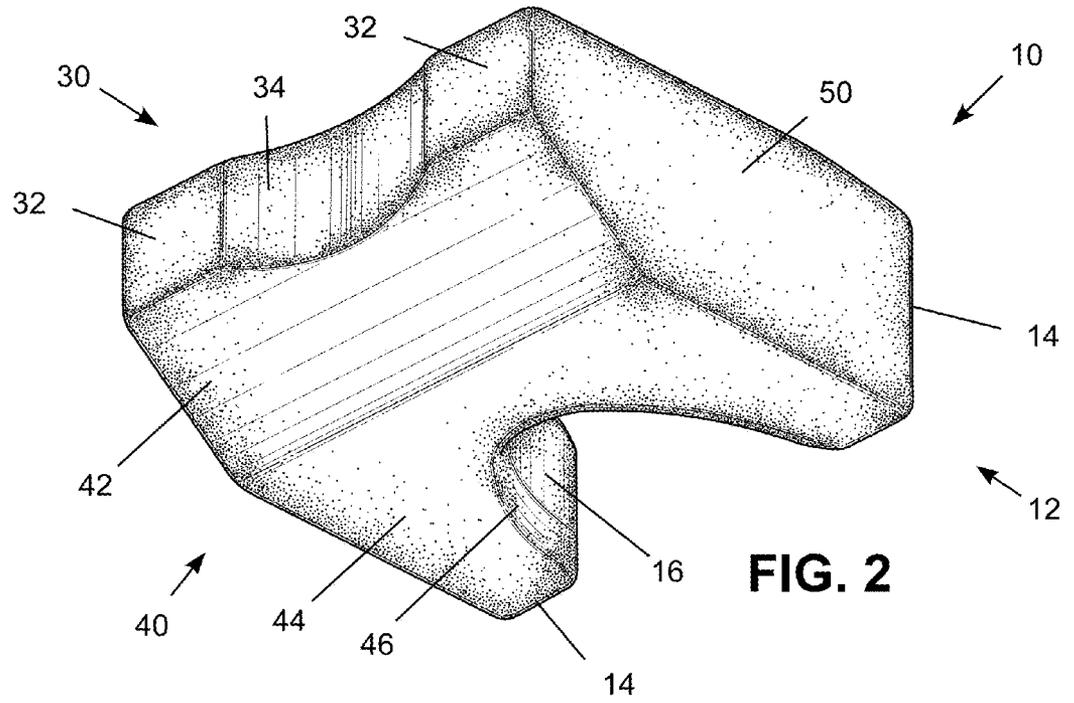
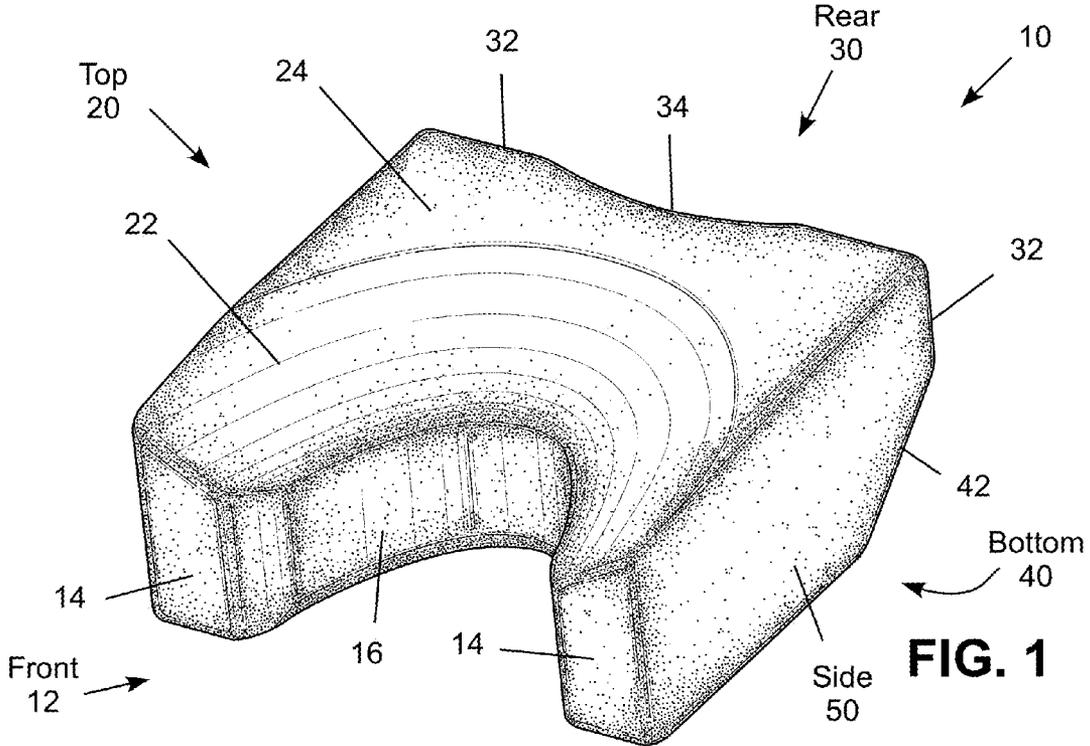
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(60) Provisional application No. 61/609,819, filed on Mar. 12, 2012.

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47G 9/10 (2006.01)





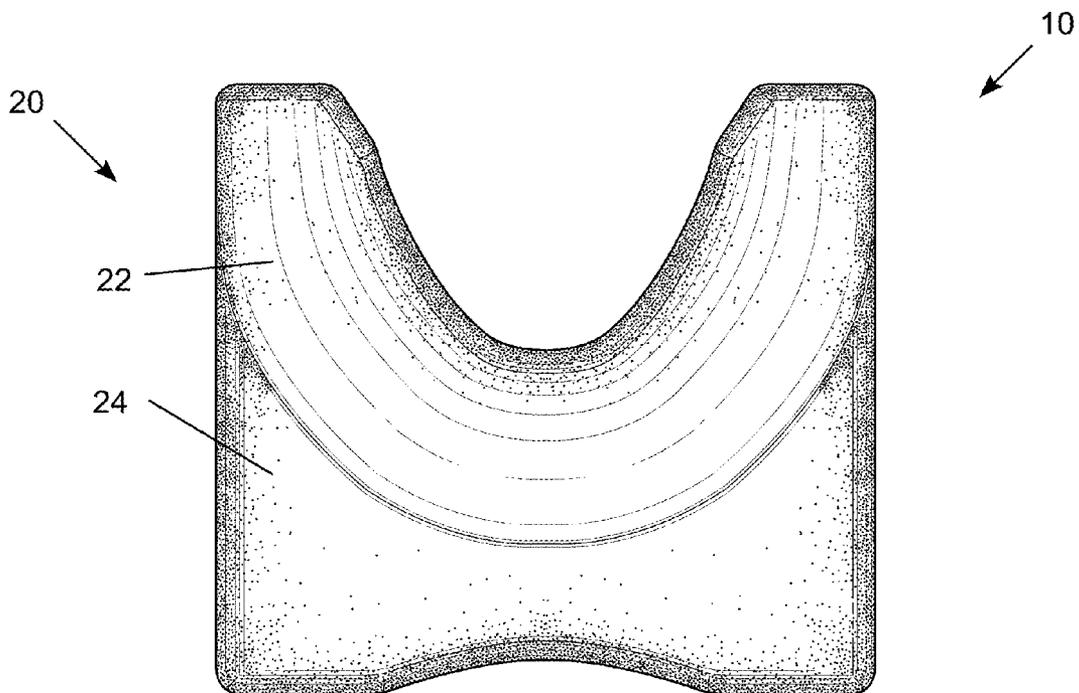


FIG. 3

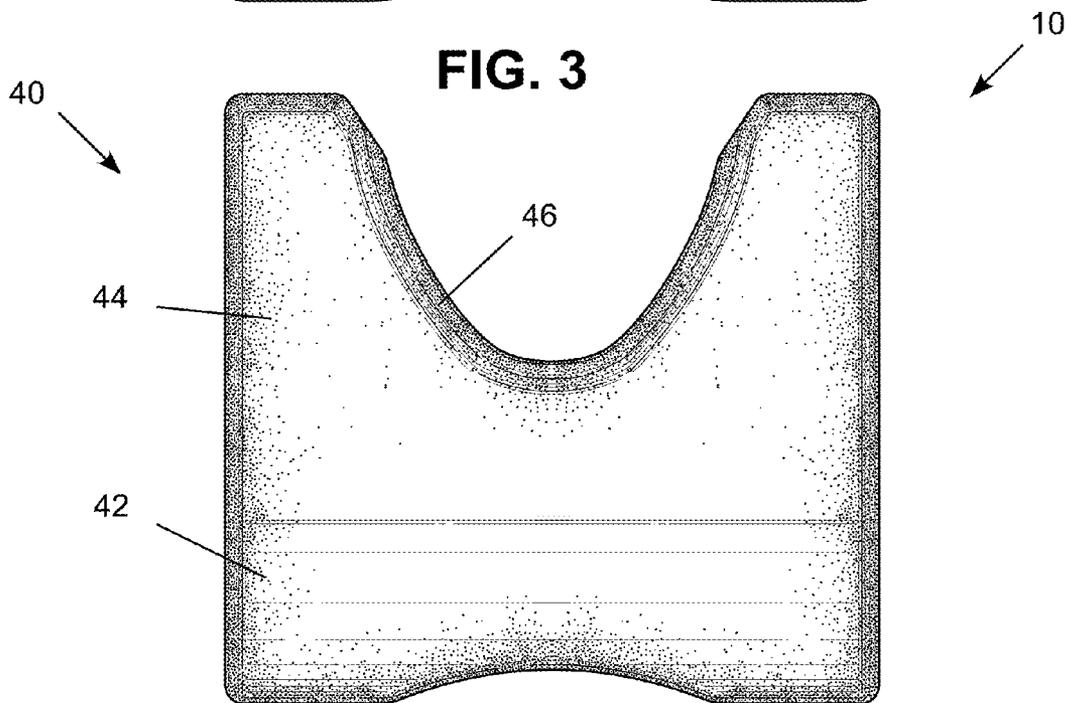


FIG. 4

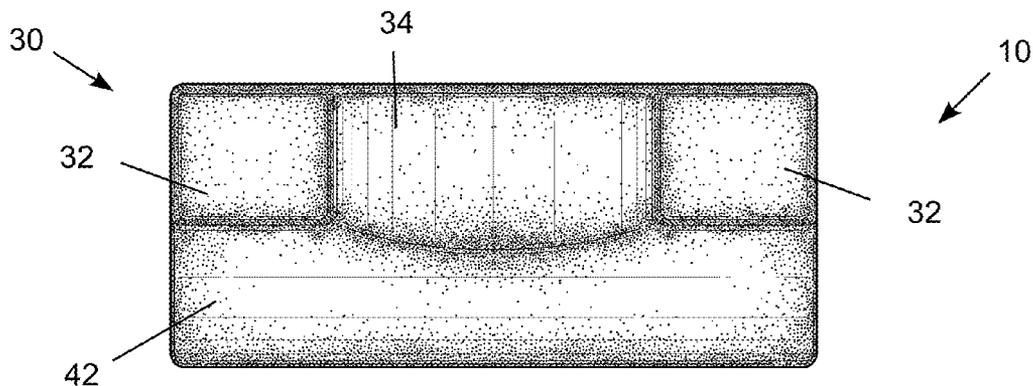


FIG. 5

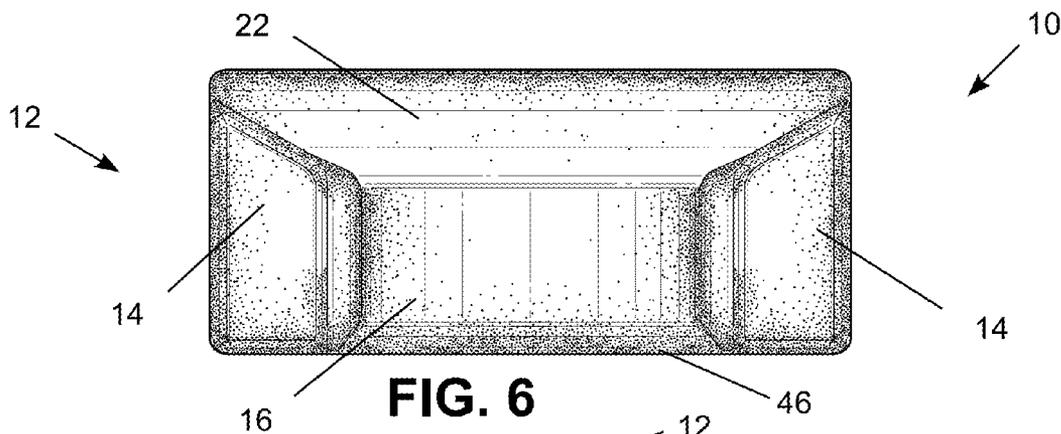


FIG. 6

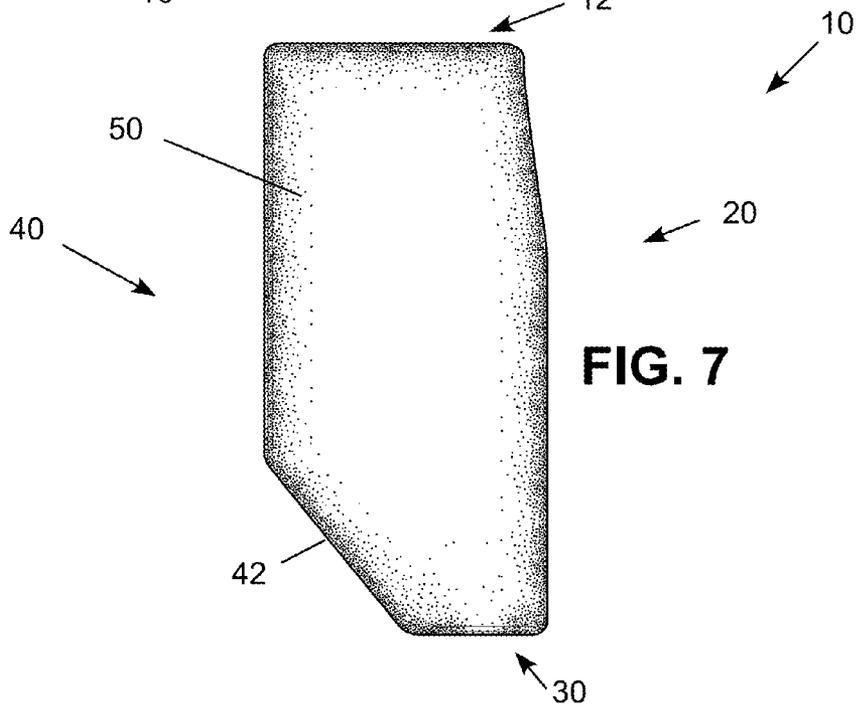
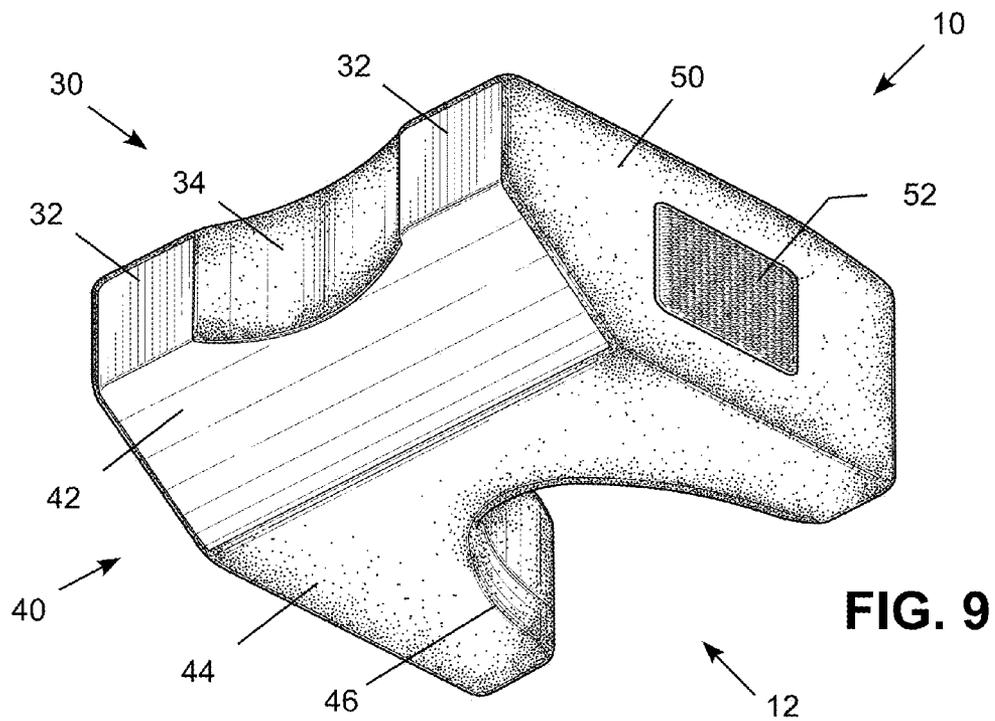
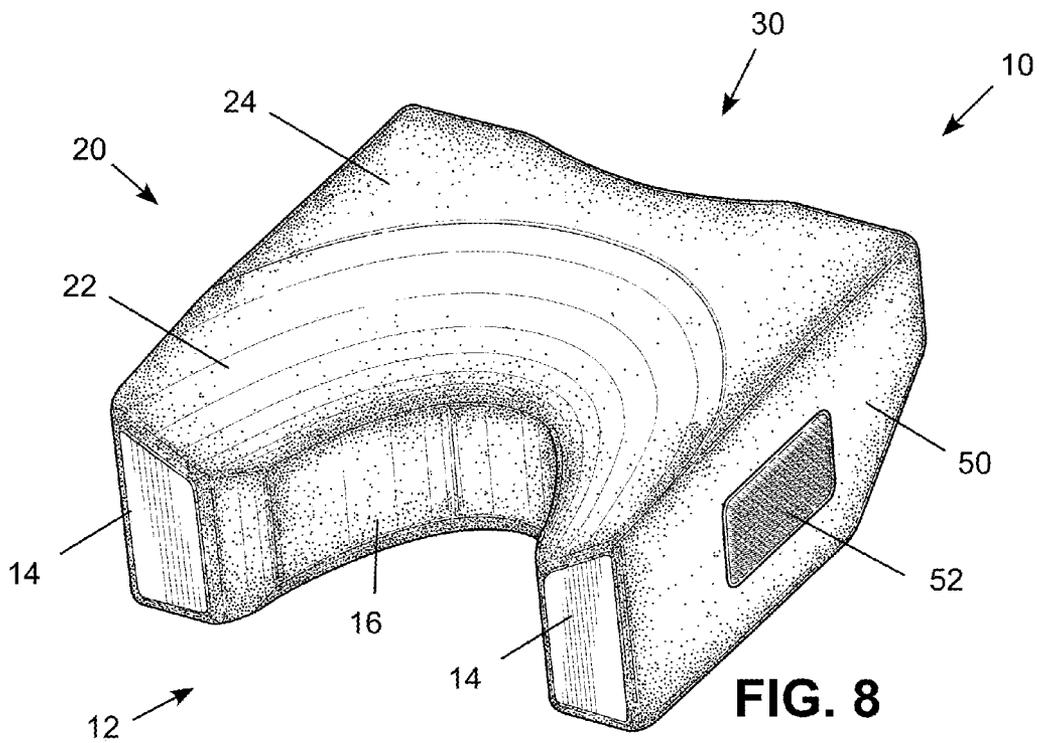


FIG. 7



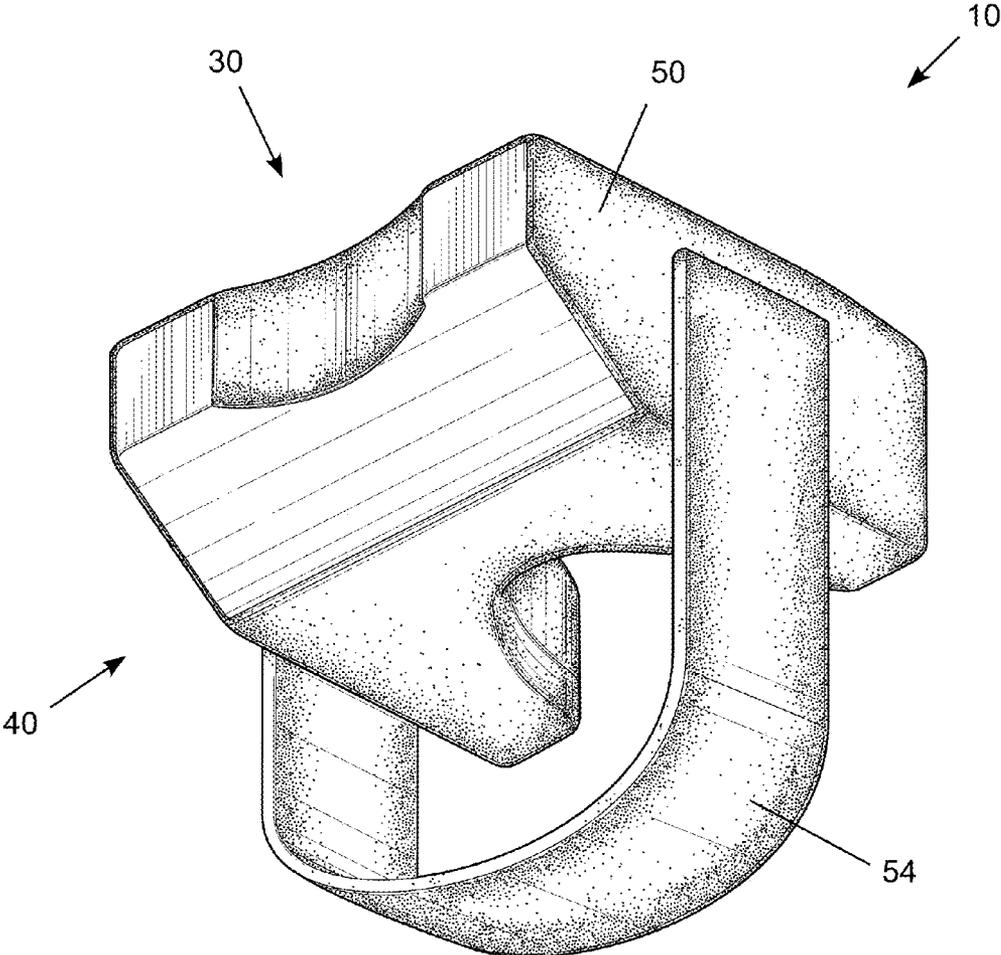


FIG. 10

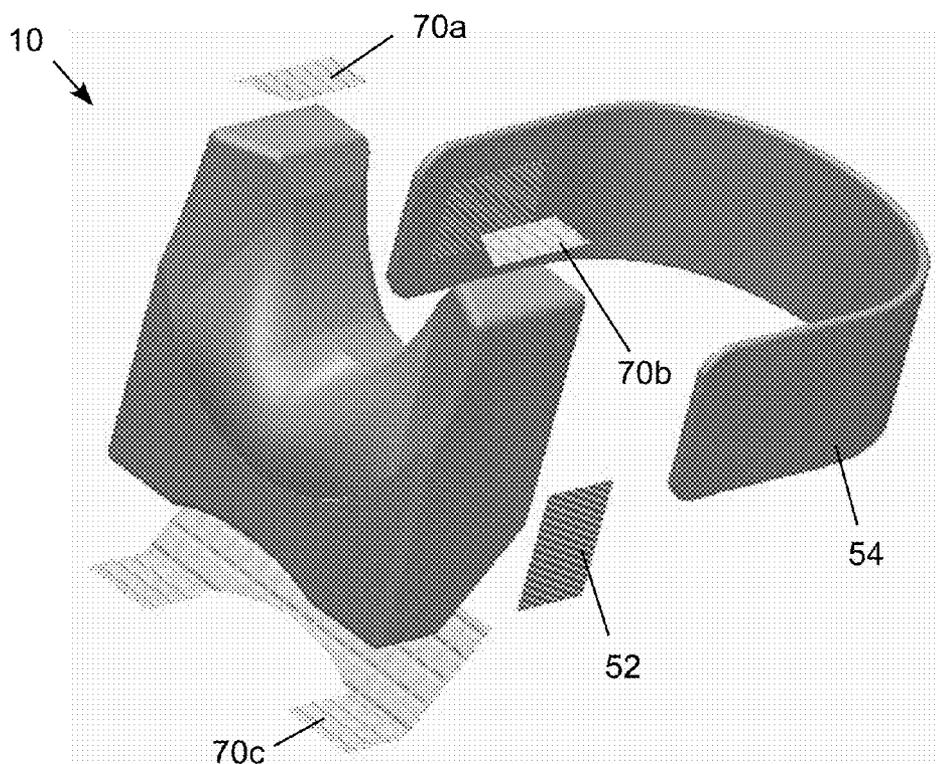


FIG. 11

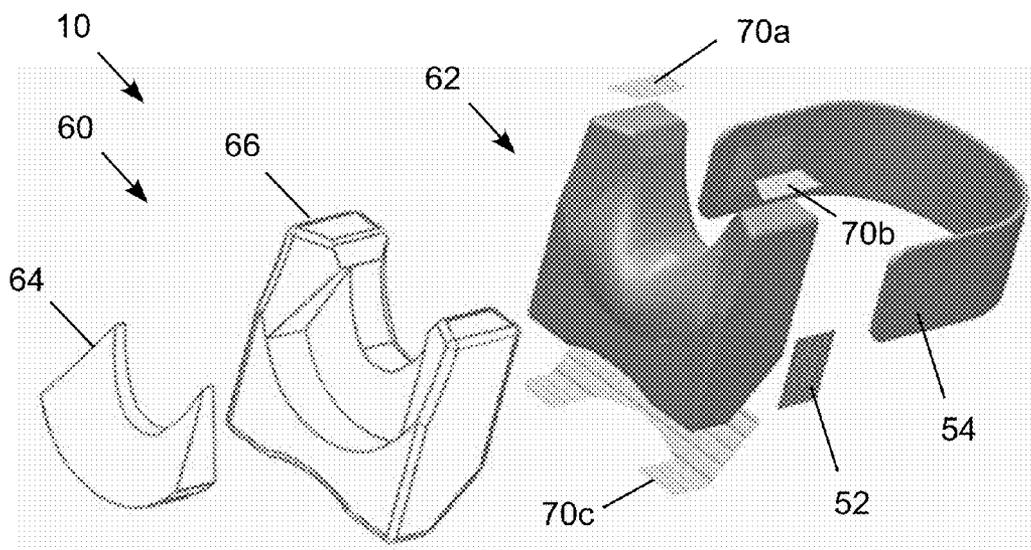


FIG. 12

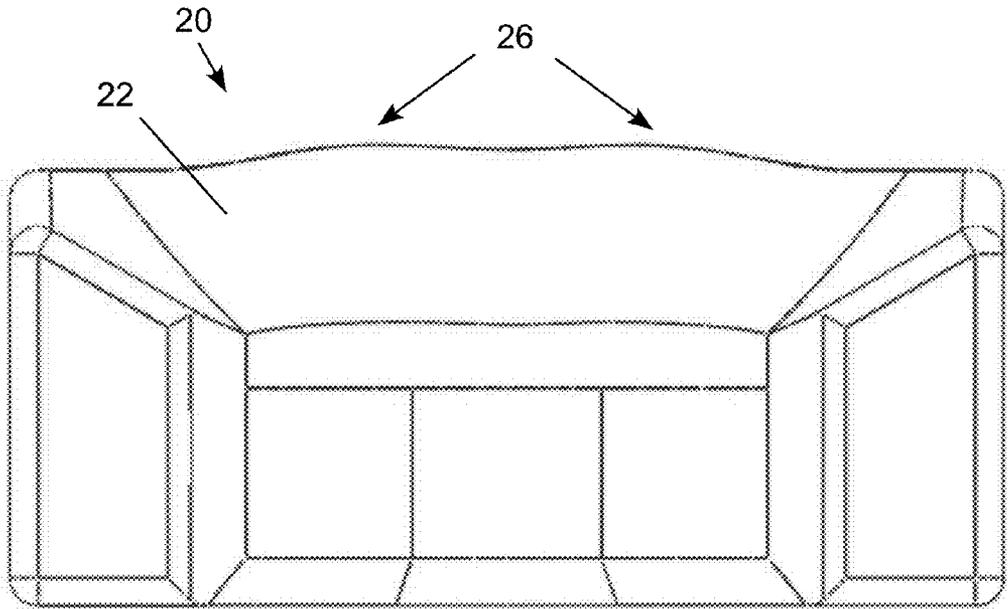


FIG. 13

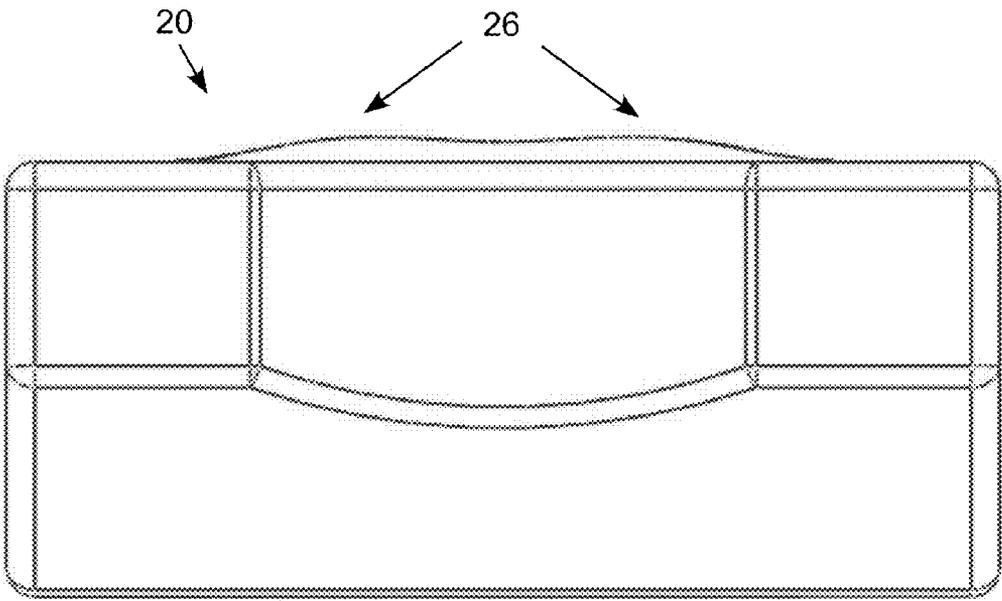


FIG. 14

MULTI-POSITION TRAVEL PILLOW

REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 61/609,819 entitled “Multi-Position Travel Pillow” filed Mar. 12, 2012, which is incorporated by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present invention is directed to travel pillows and, more particularly, to a travel pillow configured to support a person’s head and/or neck in multiple positions to accommodate sleeping while traveling.

BACKGROUND

[0003] A common problem when traveling long distances by airplane or automobile is not being able to sleep in the head-forward position. This is an important concern as sleeping with one’s head tilted back can be uncomfortable and may even lead to irritating sinus drainage while trying to sleep. Additionally, even those for whom sleeping with their head tilted back is comfortable, there is still the desire to change positions occasionally to prevent soreness and discomfort that can arise from maintaining a single position for an extended period of time. Further, there are numerous other situations, such as waiting for hours at the airport for a delayed flight, where the lack of headrests on the seats make resting comfortably a near impossibility.

[0004] Note that “head-forward” sleeping can vary from a slight chin drop to leaning ones entire torso forward to more of a sleeping-on-your-stomach kind of effect that is more comfortable for many people. There are a variety of products currently on the market that attempt to address this concern. One such product is a large, inflatable wedge designed to be placed on top of an airplane tray table and leaned forward against for support of the upper torso. Besides being bulky and awkward in appearance, is terribly inconvenient for other than the actual sleeping part of one’s travel. It has to be inflated/deflated for meals, movies and such. It is remarkably unwieldy to manage for such basic activities as getting up to go to the restroom or stretch. It is also crowding for fellow passengers. This product also is limited to a single user position. These drawbacks are too significant for such a product to gain mass acceptance.

[0005] Several collar-type products currently available would do a good job keeping your head from falling forward, though in only a single, very upright position. They can be too bulky around the back of the neck, not allowing the shoulders to go back against the rest. This puts unnecessary, uncomfortable pressure on the nerves and muscles in the back of the neck. Many users may find the size and wrap-around shape to be too confining, awkward and even hot. Trimmer collar designs offer better appearance and reduced bulk, but also only provide a single head position. These smaller collars do not provide the lateral support of the larger collars. As with the larger collar, users may not like the feeling of having a large item wrapped around their neck.

[0006] A tube shaped inflatable pillow on the market provides for an alternate, side-leaning sleeping position. However, it does not allow forward support or even use behind the head in an upright sleeping position. Those drawbacks, combined with its large size and awkward shape greatly limit this product’s acceptance in the market.

[0007] The classic “C” shaped travel pillow is the most common in the market. This pillow provides no support for head-forward positions, and is too low on the sides to provide useful lateral support. The bulk behind the neck places excess pressure on the muscles and nerves in the neck.

[0008] There is, therefore, a continuing need for an improved travel pillow and, more specifically, a travel pillow configured to adequately supports a person’s head or neck in multiple different positions.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The invention meets the needs described above in a travel pillow that includes a number of shaped surfaces configured to support a user’s head and/or neck in different positions to accommodate sleeping while traveling. Generally, the travel pillow includes a multi-position front side having a U-shaped front surface configured to be selectively positioned as a support around a portion of a person’s neck, under the person’s chin, or against the person’s forehead. A top side of the travel pillow includes a chamfered neck support surface configured to receive and provide side-to-side support for the person’s the head when the U-shaped front surface is positioned around a portion of a person’s neck with the chamfered neck support positioned adjacent to the person’s head. A bottom side of the travel pillow includes a beveled support surface for supporting the travel pillow between the person’s chest and head when the U-shaped front surface is positioned under the person’s chin. In addition, a rear side of the travel pillow includes a support surface for placement against a generally horizontal surface to support the travel pillow between the horizontal surface and the person’s forehead when the U-shaped front surface is positioned against the person’s forehead while the person leans forward above the horizontal surface from a seated position.

[0010] The travel pillow of claim typically includes a resilient foam core providing at least about nine inches of support between the rear side and the U-shaped front surface when positioned between the horizontal surface and the person’s forehead. The foam core may also include a memory foam portion forming the chamfered neck support surface. The foam core may be covered by a soft cover carry one or more high friction surfaces to help prevent the pillow from slipping while supporting the person’s head or neck in various support position. For example, a high friction surface may be located on the beveled support surface.

[0011] To provide yet another support position, the rear surface may further include a rounded support surface configured for placement against a person’s forehead with the front surface placed against the generally horizontal surface to provide a second support position for supporting the person’s head while the person leans forward above the horizontal surface from a seated position. The chamfered neck support surface may further include a pair of humps configured to provide additional side-to-side support to the person’s head when the U-shaped front surface is positioned around a portion of a person’s neck with the chamfered neck support positioned adjacent to the person’s head. In addition, the front side may further include a pair of beveled front faces, which may carry friction surfaces.

[0012] The specific techniques for accomplishing the advantages described above will become apparent from the following detailed description of the embodiments and the appended drawings and claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- [0013] FIG. 1 is a perspective top view of the travel pillow.
 [0014] FIG. 2 is a perspective bottom view of the travel pillow.
 [0015] FIG. 3 is a top view of the travel pillow.
 [0016] FIG. 4 is a bottom view of the travel pillow.
 [0017] FIG. 5 is a rear view of the travel pillow.
 [0018] FIG. 6 is a front view of the travel pillow.
 [0019] FIG. 7 is a side view of the travel pillow.
 [0020] FIG. 8 is a perspective top view of the travel pillow showing an additional hook-and-loop fastener for attaching a strap.
 [0021] FIG. 9 is a perspective bottom view of the travel pillow showing the additional hook-and-loop fastener for attaching the strap.
 [0022] FIG. 10 is a perspective bottom view of the travel pillow showing with the strap attached.
 [0023] FIG. 11 is a perspective assembly view of the travel pillow.
 [0024] FIG. 12 is a perspective assembly view of the travel pillow showing a two-part foam core.
 [0025] FIG. 13 is a front view of the travel pillow showing head support humps in the chamfered surface on the top side.
 [0026] FIG. 14 is a rear view of the travel pillow showing the head support humps in the chamfered surface on the top side.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

[0027] The invention may be embodied in a travel pillow that includes a number of shaped surfaces configured to support a user's head and/or neck in different positions. In an illustrative embodiment, the top side includes a chamfered neck support surface and may also include a substantially flat top surface. The chamfered neck support surface may further include a pair of humps configured to provide additional side-to-side support for the head. The rear side includes a rounded forehead support surface and may also include two substantially flat rear surfaces. The bottom side includes a beveled support surface and may further include a flat connector surface and a slight chamfer surface for comfort against the neck. The travel pillow may also carry a hook-and-loop fastener for removably attaching a head strap to the pillow, which can be used for holding the pillow to the user in various support configurations, for binding the pillow in a compressed state, and as a blindfold to aid in sleeping.

[0028] The travel pillow typically includes a foam core and a soft cover. The foam core may include a soft, preferably memory foam neck support section and a firmer body section. The cover may carry one or more high friction surfaces to help prevent the pillow from slipping while supporting the user's head or neck in various support position. It will be appreciated that the pillow has been specifically designed to adequately support a person's head or neck in a number of different positions, which makes it more versatile and convenient than any of the prior travel pillows.

[0029] Referring to FIGS. 1-7, an illustrative embodiment of the travel pillow is shown with a suitable configuration for supporting a person's head in multiple different positions. More specifically, the improved travel pillow includes a number of shaped surfaces configured to support the user's head and/or neck in different positions. This particular example of a travel pillow 10 includes a front side 12, a top side 20, a rear

side 30, a bottom side 40, and lateral sides 50. The front side 12 includes two beveled front faces 14, and a front surface 16. The top side 20 includes a chamfered neck support surface 22 and a flat top surface 24. The chamfered neck support surface 22 further includes a pair of humps 26 providing additional side-to-side support for the head. The rear side 30 includes two flat rear surfaces 32 and a rounded forehead support surface 34. The bottom side 40 includes a beveled support surface 42 and a flat connector surface 44 and a slight chamfer surface 46 for comfort against the neck. The lateral sides 50 are generally flat.

[0030] Referring to FIGS. 8-10, each side 50 of the travel pillow may carry a hook-and-loop fastener 52 for removably attaching a head strap 54 to the pillow. The head strap is used for holding the pillow to the user in various support configurations. The head strap can also be used to bind the pillow in a compressed state for storage and transport, and as a blindfold to aid in sleeping.

[0031] Referring to the exploded views FIGS. 11 and 12, the travel pillow 10 typically includes a foam core 60 and a soft cover 62. The foam core 60 may include a soft, preferably memory foam neck support section 64 and a firmer body section 66. The cover 62 may carry one or more high friction surfaces 70a-c to help prevent the pillow from slipping while supporting the user's head or neck in various support position.

[0032] Referring to FIGS. 11-12, the improved travel pillow 10 may be formed from a foam core 60 a fabric cover 62 and a neck strap/transport strap 54. The preferred embodiment of the foam core 60 is a two part assembly with a high density resilient foam base 66 for structural strength and a medium density foam insert 64 for user comfort, which may be formed of memory foam. Other embodiments may include fewer or more materials and densities to achieve similar results. The overall, varied geometries of the foam surfaces provide a multitude of comfortable, supportive resting positions for the user's head. These positioning options are important for both variation of resting position on long trips and also to accommodate various body shapes and sizes.

[0033] Referring again to FIGS. 1-10, the front side 12 of the pillow includes a "U" shaped cutout area 16 which can be oriented around the user's neck in a multitude of positions, including vertically underneath the chin and horizontally from the front, back or sides of the neck. This cutout area is shaped to provide cradling support. The top side 20 includes a chamfered surface 22 for clearance from the neck or face. The bottom side 40 also has a slight chamfer surface 46 for comfort against the neck, while the top surface 20 offers the much larger, generally chamfered area 22 supported by a memory foam insert 64 (see FIG. 12) to conform to and cradle the head or face. Further, as can be seen in FIG. 12, the memory foam insert 64 is contoured to provide the chamfered surface 22 with a pair of humps 26 for additional cradling support and relief for the neck when the pillow is used behind the head. The contour also provides slightly greater loft so that the compression of the memory foam will result in an approximately continuous planar surface with the non-memory foam portion of the chamfered surface.

[0034] The bottom side 40 of the pillow includes a flat area 44 which can be used to rest the side of the head as is done with a standard bed pillow. Below the flat area 44 is a large beveled surface 42 which is angled to provide support against the chest when the pillow is used vertically underneath the

chin, or to rest against a surface around the user's head when pillow is used around the neck.

[0035] The front **12** of the pillow includes ends **32** and bottom **40** includes the beveled surface **42** flat can serve as feet to stabilize the pillow in various vertical positions. Additionally, the rear **30** contains a relief area **34** which may serve to cradle the user's forehead when resting it on the pillow in the inverted vertical position.

[0036] Referring to FIG. **12**, the cover **62** of the pillow is fabricated primarily of a soft fabric, such as fleece or cotton. Other materials may be used depending upon environmental considerations or user preference. In the preferred embodiment, the flat areas **32** of the rear side and large beveled area **42** of the bottom of the pillow extending over to the ends surfaces **32** on the rear of the pillow, and the end surfaces **14** on the front side **12** of the pillow may carry high-friction pads **70a-c** to enhance positioning control when using the pillow on slippery surfaces. These high-friction areas may be achieved through use of a separate fabric, rubber, or a coating applied to the primary fabric in those areas specifically. Further, the cover may be fabricated without the high-friction surfaces entirely. The sides **50** of the cover include hook-and-loop patches **52** for attachment of an optional retaining strap **54**. These patches also serve as attachment points for the retaining strap **54** when it is used as a compression wrap for transport.

[0037] FIG. **10** shows the retaining strap **54**, which may be fabricated in the same soft fabric as the main body of the cover. The retaining strap includes lengthy hook-and-loop patches to enable attachment to the pillow at varying lengths and in varying orientations. The retaining strap may also serve as a compression wrap for the pillow when it is wrapped around the pillow and secured to the mating hook-and-loop patches **52** on the cover. Further, the retaining strap may be used alone, typically with a half-twist, around the user's head to provide an effective room darkening sleep mask. It will be appreciated that the pillow has been specifically designed to provide at least the following key benefits by accommodate at least the positions described below, which makes it more versatile and convenient than any of the prior travel pillows.

[0038] 1) Comfortably supports head in multiple different positions, which allows variation of positions over longer travel.

[0039] 2) Can be placed under the chin (3 different orientations) to provide support of hanging head. While supporting chin/head, it does not go around the back of the head/neck, therefore the head can go back fully to rest against the headrest if desired. The non-slip surfaces and optional-use retaining strap aid in keeping the pillow in place under the chin when the user is wearing slippery clothing or simply desires extra security.

[0040] 3) The angular geometries vary with each surface, allowing great variation in positioning to adjust for different size users and preferences for level/position of support. The angles and curves also serve to cradle the chin/face, which is not only comfortable, but also prevents side-to-side tipping. Since this is not a collar, it will be less awkward/restrictive feeling. Its comparatively small/narrow profile also does not stick out visibly around the head like some others.

[0041] 4) The larger "dished" side of the pillow has a contoured "memory foam" insert which both cradles the head/face and provides an added degree of softness for comfort.

Because the memory foam is provided as an insert, the rest of the pillow can retain its resiliency as required for several other usage positions.

[0042] 5) For sleeping in a more forward position, the pillow can be placed either on the users arms resting across his knees (it has sufficient height and rigidity) or on a tray table (such as on an airplane). For either placement, the pillow can be positioned in one of several orientations to vary the height and support per user preference. Several positions offer face-perimeter support (such as on a massage table face pad) so that the user can sleep face down without suffocating/mashing their face into the pillow. There is also a useful orientation for simply sleeping with the head turned to the side.

[0043] 6) In addition to the above-listed head-forward positions, this pillow also allows a variety of very comfortable, highly supportive head-back orientations. Each orientation cradles the head in a slightly different way, and at slightly different amounts of tilt to-fro, to meet user preference. Because of the high degree of flexibility in positioning, this pillow feels more comfortable for these head-back positions than even other pillows which were designed specifically for head-back support.

[0044] 7) This pillow is small (approx 9"x9"x4") compared to many pillows. It is lightweight, soft, and compressible. The included retaining strap doubles as a compression wrap for minimum size during transport.

[0045] 8) The included retaining strap may also be used as a sleep mask.

[0046] 9) This pillow is made of high-density foam, which allows it to be supportive, yet soft. It also does not have to be inflated and deflated with each use and has no risk of developing leaks.

[0047] 10) The pillow has an ultra-soft covering which is removable for washing. Color options are available to suit user preference.

[0048] 11) Because of the simple, common materials and manufacturing processes, the pillow can be made available at a very attractive, affordable price for consumers.

[0049] It will be further understood that the foregoing describes a preferred embodiment of the invention and that many adjustments and alterations will be apparent to those skilled in the art within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

The invention claimed is:

1. A travel pillow configured to support a person's head and neck in a number positions to accommodate sleeping while traveling, comprising:

- a front side having a U-shaped front surface configured to be selectively positioned as a support around a portion of a person's neck, under the person's chin, or against the person's forehead;
- a top side including a chamfered neck support surface configured to receive and provide side-to-side support for the person's the head when the U-shaped front surface is positioned around a portion of a person's neck with the chamfered neck support positioned adjacent to the person's head;
- a bottom side including a beveled support surface for supporting the travel pillow between the person's chest and head when the U-shaped front surface is positioned under the person's chin;
- a rear side including a support surface for placement against a generally horizontal surface to support the travel pillow between the horizontal surface and the

person's forehead when the U-shaped front surface is positioned against the person's forehead while the person leans forward above the horizontal surface from a seated position.

2. The travel pillow of claim 1, further comprising a resilient foam core providing at least about nine inches of support between the rear side and the U-shaped front surface when positioned between the horizontal surface and the person's forehead.

3. The travel pillow of claim 2, wherein the resilient foam core further comprises a memory foam portion forming the chamfered neck support surface.

4. The travel pillow of claim 1, further comprising a soft cover carry one or more high friction surfaces to help prevent the pillow from slipping while supporting the person's head or neck in various support position.

5. The travel pillow of claim 4, wherein high friction surfaces include a high friction surface located on the beveled support surface.

6. The travel pillow of claim 1, wherein the rear surface further comprises a rounded support surface configured for placement against a person's forehead with the front surface placed against the generally horizontal surface to provide a second support position for supporting the person's head while the person leans forward above the horizontal surface from a seated position.

7. The travel pillow of claim 1, wherein the chamfered neck support surface further comprises a pair of humps configured to provide additional side-to-side support to the person's head when the U-shaped front surface is positioned around a portion of a person's neck with the chamfered neck support positioned adjacent to the person's head.

8. The travel pillow of claim 1, wherein the front side further comprises a pair of beveled front faces.

9. The travel pillow of claim 9, further comprising high friction surfaces located on the beveled front faces.

* * * * *