A hair bib with a partial elastic band that works in combination with adjustable end tabs to modify pressure on the wearer of the hair bib. The hair bib is fabricated as a semi-rigid deformable front panel that holds its shape during use. The front flap may be bent to form a channel to guide water away from the face of the user toward the rear flap of the bib. Hook and loop strips allow the front panel to be split for easy attachment and detachment from a user, and for the securing pressure to be modified for comfort.
Figure 1

Prior Art
Figure 2

Prior Art
Figure 5
DRIPLLESS HAIR BIB

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to hair bibs used by beauticians in the treatment of an individual customer. In particular, it relates to a specialized hair bib with a semi-rigid front panel and fluid guide that prevents liquids from dripping onto the face or the front of the customer’s clothes by directing liquids toward the back of the hair bib. In addition, it includes a partial elastic band which works in combination with adjustable end tabs to control the tension applied to the wearer’s head and the manner in which the semi-rigid front panel is shaped to form a channel.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Hair bibs have been used extensively in beauty parlors for a number of years. Typically, they are secured to the customer’s head just below the hairline and provide a waterproof barrier to protect the back of the customer’s clothing from water and hair treatment fluids. Unfortunately, they are typically very flexible. The flexibility of existing hair bibs does not pose a problem for the extended length rear portion of the bib that protects the user’s back. However, the front portion of the hair bib does pose a problem for the customer. In particular, due to the flexible nature of the bibs, the short front strap that secures the bib tends to drape downward toward the user’s face. As a result, fluids can drip from the user’s hair downward on both the face of the user as well as the front of the user’s clothing. It would be desirable to have a hair bib that protects not only the rear of the user’s clothing, but also the user’s face and the front side of the user’s clothing.

[0003] Hair bibs also are difficult to secure to a user’s head such that they do not leak, but also are comfortable to wear. Often, they either leak, or when they do not leak, they are uncomfortable because they are too tight. This is caused in part by the use of a single elastic band that entirely circles the wearer’s head. In order to ensure that the bib does not leak, elastic band is often sized such that it is too snug. In turn, this leads to discomfort for the wearer. It would be desirable to have a hair bib which does not leak, but could also be comfortably worn.

[0004] While the prior art has produced a variety of hair bibs, it has failed to produce an adjustable hair bib that can be adjusted to secure to a wearer such that there are no leaks, but also to adjust the pressure on the wearer.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The present invention provides a hair bib with a partial elastic band that works in conjunction adjustable end tabs. The partial elastic band provides pressure around a substantial portion of the wearer’s head to prevent leaks, while he and hands are used to adjust pressure applied by the elastic band and to adjustably shape the front panel. In addition, a semi-rigid deformable front panel is used that holds its shape during use. The front flap may be bent to form a channel to guide water away from the face of the user toward the rear flap of the bib. Optional hook and loop strips allow the front panel to be split for easy attachment and detachment from a user. Alternate embodiments provide reinforcing struts to hold the shape of the front panel.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] FIG. 1 is a side view of a prior art hair bib.
[0007] FIG. 2 is a front view of a prior art hair bib.
[0008] FIG. 3 is a side view of a preferred embodiment of the hair bib which uses a semi-rigid front panel.
[0009] FIG. 4 is a front view of a preferred embodiment of the hair bib which uses a semi-rigid front panel. This view also illustrates an optional split front panel.
[0010] FIG. 5 is a side cutaway view of an alternative preferred embodiment of the hair bib which uses hook and loop material to secure adjacent segments of the front panel together.
[0011] FIG. 6 is a side cutaway view of an alternative preferred embodiment of the hair bib which uses a rigid support bracket to retain the shape of the front panel.
[0012] FIG. 7A is a top plan view of an alternative preferred embodiment of the invention which uses a partial elastic band to relieve pressure on the wearer’s forehead. This view is shown in the open configuration.
[0013] FIG. 7B is a top plan view of an alternative preferred embodiment of the invention which uses a partial elastic band to relieve pressure on the wearer’s forehead. This view is shown in the closed configuration.
[0014] FIG. 8 illustrates the alternative preferred embodiment of FIGS. 7A-B, with the hair bib secured to the wearer’s forehead.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0015] Prior to a detailed discussion of the figures, a general overview of the system will be presented. The invention provides a hair bib which has a front panel formed in the shape of a channel. The channel diverts water and hair treatment liquids away from the face of the user and toward the rear flap of the hair bib.

[0016] A preferred embodiment uses a front panel that is fabricated from semi-rigid deformable material. When secured to a user’s head, the front panel is deformed to create the channel.

[0017] Another alternative embodiment uses a front panel that is split to allow easy attachment to a user’s head. The front panel segments are secured together via any convenient method, such as hook and loop material.

[0018] Yet another embodiment uses rigid braces to form the channel in the front panel.

[0019] Having discussed the features and advantages of the invention in general, we turn now to a more detailed discussion of the figures.

[0020] In FIG. 1, a prior art hair bib 1 is illustrated. The hair bib 1 has an elastic band 2 that secures the hair bib 1 to the user’s head. The elastic band 2 provides a firm seal that prevents leakage during use. The hair bib 1 has a rear panel 3 that drapes over the user’s shoulders. Water flowing over the rear panel 3 drains into the hair dresser’s sink (not shown) without getting the user wet.
[0021] The disadvantage to prior art bib 1 is that it is typically fabricated from thin, flexible material. As a result, the front panel 4 droops downward as shown. This results in hair treatments liquids 5 dripping off of front panel 4 onto the wearer’s face and clothing.

[0022] FIG. 2 illustrates a front view of prior art bib 1. As can be seen from this view, front panel 4 droops downward on the forehead of the user. Because of this drooping, hair treatment liquids 5 are able to drip off of the front panel 4 onto the user’s face and clothing.

[0023] FIG. 3 illustrates a preferred embodiment of a hair bib 6 in which a semi-rigid deformable front panel 7 is bent to form a hair treatment liquid channel 8. The channel 8 diverts hair treatment liquids 8 away from the user’s face and toward rear panel 3 where it is drained into the hair dresser’s sink.

[0024] In the preferred embodiment the hair bib 6 is approximately 25 inches long and 20 inches wide. Further, the preferred embodiment envisions the hair bib 6 being fabricated from 30 gauge plastic. Those skilled in the art will recognize that changes in size can be made without departing from the invention. Likewise, the thickness of the hair bib 6 can vary, as well as the material used to fabricate it, so long as it is still able to perform its intended function. For example, the panel can be made from a variety of materials, such as plastic, polyethylene, polypropylene, etc.

[0025] In addition to the foregoing, the hair bib 6 uses an elastic band 2 to secure itself to the user’s neck. In the preferred embodiment, the elastic band 2 is 0.25 inch wide polyester. As was the case above, the size, width, and material used to fabricate the hair bib 6 can vary so long as the intended function of the device is not impaired.

[0026] FIG. 4 shows a front view of hair bib 6. As can be seen from this view, the front panel 7 is raised to form a channel that prevents hair treatment fluids from dripping onto the face or clothing of the user.

[0027] Also shown in this figure is a seam 9. This figure also illustrates an option configuration in which the front panel is split into two segments 10-11 which are joined at seam 9. The advantage of using opposing front panel segments 10-11 is that it allows the hair bib 6 to be more conveniently and comfortably secured to a user’s head. Preferably, the front panel segments 10-11 are secured together with hook and loop material. However, those skilled in the art will recognize that any suitable method of securing the front panels 10-11 together can be used.

[0028] FIG. 5 is a side cutaway view of the optional split front panel configuration shown in FIG. 4. This figure illustrates the two segments 10-11 overlaying one another. They are secured at layer 12. In the preferred embodiment, hook and loop material is used. However, as noted above, any suitable material can be used.

[0029] In FIG. 6, an alternative preferred embodiment is shown. In this embodiment, rigid braces 13 are used to form the front panel 7 into a channel. The rigid braces 13 are secured to the front panel 7 via hook and loop material, but can also be secured via alternative methods, such as snaps, adhesives, etc.

[0030] FIG. 7A is a top plan view of an alternative preferred embodiment of the hair bib 6 which uses a partial elastic band 15 to prevent leaks and to relieve pressure on the wearer’s head. This view is shown in the open configuration. In this configuration, overlapping end tabs 17, 18 are shown separated from one another. Also shown this figure are associated hook and loop segments 16 that are secured to overlapping end tabs 17, 18.

[0031] A disadvantage of prior art hair bibs is that they use a continuous strip of elastic to secure the hair bib to the wearer’s head. One problem associated with this is that depending on the size of the wearer’s head, the elastic may be too loose or too tight. If it is too loose, the bib will leak. Likewise, if it is too tight, it will be uncomfortable. The partial elastic band 15 overcomes this problem. The partial elastic band in the invention works in conjunction with overlapping end tabs 17, 18 to adjust the hair bib 6 such that it is snugly secured, but not so tight as to cause irritation or discomfort.

[0032] When the hair bib 6 is secured to the wearer’s head, the hook and loop material 16 on the overlapping end tabs 17, 18 are positioned to maintain a secure seal, with a minimum amount of pressure on the user. This is done by adjusting the position of the associated hook and loop segments 16 in relation to one another.

[0033] Another advantage of this embodiment is that the hook and loop segments 16 can be adjusted independently to allow the shape of the channel 8 to be adjusted.

[0034] FIG. 7B is a top plan view of the alternative preferred embodiment of FIG. 7A, but is shown in the closed configuration. This figure illustrates the end tabs 17, 18 secured together by hook and loop segments 16.

[0035] FIG. 8 illustrates the alternative preferred embodiment of FIGS. 7A-B, with the hair bib secured to the wearer’s forehead. As can be seen in this figure, the partial elastic band 15 secures the hair bib 6 to the user, but the tension is controlled by the position of the end tabs 17, 18.

[0036] The invention provides a hair bib 6 with a liquid channel 8 that prevents hair treatment liquids from dripping on the face and clothing of the user. As discussed above, it is important to form the channel 8 such that it retains its intended shape. This can be done with a panel fabricated from material that is sufficiently rigid to maintain its shape, or by more flexible material that is supported by brackets 13. The semi-rigid material provides an improvement over the prior art that protects the user and the user’s clothing. Further, the partial elastic band 15 has its tension adjusted by adjusting the position of the end tabs 17, 18. This provides a secure seal, but without discomfort caused by excessive tension.

[0037] While the invention has been described with respect to a preferred embodiment thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes in detail may be made therein without departing from the spirit, scope, and teaching of the invention. For example, the material used to construct the hair bib 6 may be anything suitable for its purpose, the size and shape of the hair bib 6 and the front panel 7 can vary. The type and number of braces 13 can vary. The material used can vary, etc. Accordingly, the invention herein disclosed is to be limited only as specified in the following claims.
I claim:

1. A hair bib, further comprising:
   a flat panel having a rear panel segment, a front panel segment and means to secure the hair bib to an individual’s neck;
   the front panel segment further comprises end tabs and means to secure the end tabs together;
   the flat panel further comprises, when the end tabs are secured together, an aperture for securing the hair bib to an individual’s head;
   a partial elastic band, having first and second ends, that extends substantially around the aperture, but does not extend to the end tabs such that when the end tabs are secured together, the partial elastic band extends partially around the individual’s head with a gap between the first and second ends of the partial elastic band that extends at least a portion of the length of the end tabs when the end tabs are secured together;
   the means to secure the tabs together are adjustable such that pressure placed on the individual’s head can be adjusted by extending or shortening the gap between the first and second ends of the partial elastic band.

2. A hair bib, as in claim 1, wherein:
   the front panel is fabricated from semi rigid, deformable material which, when deformed into the shape of a channel, will retain its shape.

3. A hair bib, as in claim 2, wherein:
   the front panel is fabricated from 30 gauge plastic.

4. A hair bib, as in claim 2, wherein:
   the front panel is fabricated from polyethylene.

5. A hair bib, as in claim 2, wherein:
   the front panel is fabricated from polypropylene.

6. A hair bib, as in claim 1, further comprising:
   at least one curved bracket, secured to the front panel, the bracket having sufficient rigidity to hold the front panel in a configuration that forms a channel.

7. A hair bib, as in claim 6, wherein:
   the front panel is fabricated from 30 gauge plastic.

8. A hair bib, as in claim 6, wherein:
   the front panel is fabricated from polyethylene.

9. A hair bib, as in claim 6, wherein:
   the front panel is fabricated from polypropylene.

10. A hair bib, as in claim 1, wherein:
    the front panel is split into two segments, the segments having means to one another such that the front panel forms a single liquid channel.

11. A hair bib, as in claim 10, wherein:
    the two segments are secured together with hook and loop material.

12. A hair bib, as in claim 11, wherein:
    the pressure exerted by the elastic band when secured to the individual’s neck is adjusted by positioning the hook and loop material that secures the two segments.

13. A hair bib, as in claim 12, wherein:
    the partial elastic band is does not extend onto the end tabs.

14. A method of directing fluids away from the face of an individual with a hair bib, including the steps of:
    in a flat panel having a rear panel segment, a front panel segment having first and second sides that removably secure together by end tabs such that when the end tabs are secured together, a central aperture sized to fit around the head of an individual is formed and means to form a liquid channel in the front panel to direct fluids toward the rear panel;
    the flat panel having a partial elastic band, with first and second ends, that extends substantially around the periphery of the aperture, but does not extend over the length of the end tabs such that when the end tabs are secured together, there remains a gap between the ends of the partial elastic band; and
    adjusting the pressure of the hair bib on the individual by extending or shortening a gap between the ends of a partial elastic band by adjusting the position of the end tabs when they are secured together;
    whereby the pressure of the hair bib on the individual is adjusted by changing the length of the gap between the first and second ends of the partial elastic band.

15. A method, as in claim 14, including the additional step of:
    fabricating the front panel from semi rigid, deformable material.

16. A method, as in claim 15, including the additional step of:
    fabricating the front panel from 30 gauge plastic.

17. A method, as in claim 15, including the additional step of:
    fabricating the front panel from polyethylene.

18. A method, as in claim 15, including the additional step of:
    fabricating the front panel from polypropylene.

19. A method, as in claim 14, including the additional step of:
    using at least one bracket having to hold the front panel in a configuration that forms a channel.

20. A method, as in claim 14, including the additional step of:
    splitting the front panel into two opposing segments that attach to one another to form the liquid channel.

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