Oct. 8, 1968 M. B. PRENOVITZ 3,404,469

HYGIENIC AID

Filed May 10, 1966

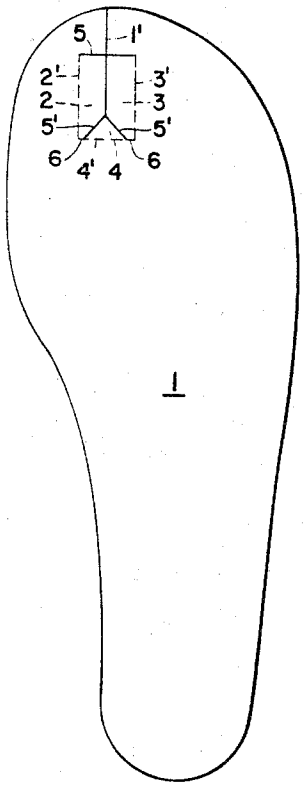


FIG. 1.

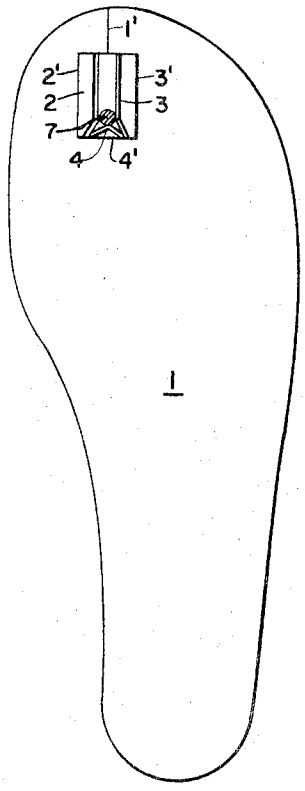


FIG. 2.

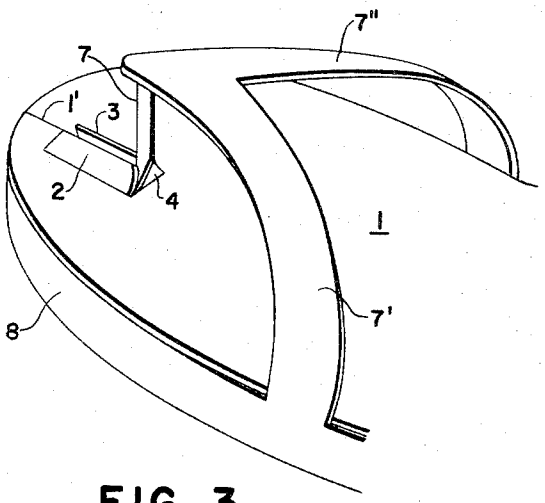


FIG. 3.

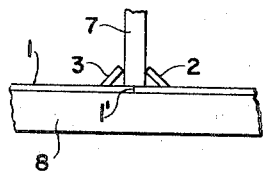


FIG. 4.

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HYGIENIC AID

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A disposable sanitary protector for use with thong sandals of the type having at least one thong projecting upwardly from the upper face of the sole within the edges of the sandal in position to be received between the wearer's toes, which protector includes at least one slit extending longitudinally inwardly from the toe end edge of the protector for a short distance to the position of the thong and a pair of slits extending transverse to the first-mentioned slit from the inner end thereof and in respectively opposite directions from the extension line of the first-mentioned slit.

The present invention relates to the field of hygienic aids and particularly to foot protectors.

Prior to purchasing footwear, it is the general practice for the customer to try on the pair of shoes in which he is interested. Such a trial is generally necessary because of the great variations between pairs of shoes of the same size, primarily because of the variation in shoe shapes from style to style. If the customer did not try on the shoes prior to purchasing them, there would be a great risk that they would not properly fit and would be uncomfortable, or even painful, to wear. It is also necessary to try on shoes simply in order to determine whether a particular style suits the wearer.

Since, over a period of time several customers may try on the same pair of shoes, the danger arises that infectious bacteria or germs can be transmitted from one customer to another by means of these shoes.

This danger is relatively minor with regard to most types of footwear because customers generally wear hose, i.e., stockings or socks, which prevent contact between their feet and the inside of the shoes. Moreover, in order to further diminish this danger, it has already been proposed to place a disposable insert or blank, in each shoe before the customer tries it on.

However, in the case of sandals provided with a thong which is intended to pass between two toes of the wearer's foot, the danger of the transmission of infections from one customer to another is considerably greater because footwear of this type can not properly be tried on by a person wearing hose. This is true because anyone wearing socks or stockings could not slide their toes around the thong. This danger can not be eliminated by means of disposable inserts of the type previously proposed because these known inserts are not capable of being fitted around the sandal thong.

It is a primary object of the present invention to overcome these drawbacks.

Another object of the present invention is to protect customers from infections which may be transmitted by sandals of the above-described type.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a disposable insert which is capable of completely covering the foot-supporting surface of a sandal having at least one thong arranged to extend between the wearer's toes.

These and other objects of the present invention are achieved by the provision of a novel form of sanitary protector for use with thong sandals of the type having at least one thong arranged to extend between the wearer's

toes. This protector is principally composed of a flexible insert or blank, in the form of a sheet having substantially the same shape as the foot-supporting surface of such sandals. This sheet is formed with at least one slit near the end thereof corresponding to the sandal toe for permitting the sheet to be positioned around such thong. When the sheet is properly placed in the sandal, any contact between the foot-supporting surface of such sandal and the wearer's foot is prevented.

It should be understood that the term "foot-supporting surface" employed herein is intended to define that surface of the sandal with which the wearer's foot normally comes into contact when no protector, or insert, is provided.

In accordance with a principal novel feature of the present invention, the sanitary protector is made of a highly flexible readily disposable material, such as paper, which is capable of being manufactured and stored under sterile conditions until the time of use.

Protectors according to the present invention are primarily intended to be used with women's sandals simply because sandals of this type are generally made in women's styles. However, it should be appreciated that the present invention can be used equally well with men's and children's sandals having a similar form of construction.

Additional objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent upon consideration of the following description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a protector or blank according to the present invention prior to its placement on a sandal.

FIGURE 2 is a view similar to that of FIGURE 1 showing the protector in position on the foot-supporting surface of a sandal of the type described above.

FIGURE 3 is a perspective, partial view of a sandal provided with a protector according to the present invention.

FIGURE 4 is an end view of a portion of the arrangement of FIGURE 3.

Referring first to FIGURE 1, there is shown a protector constituted by an insert, or blank, **1** preferably made of a flexible material, such as paper, and having an outline which conforms generally with that of the foot-supporting surface of a thong sandal.

In the toe end of the protector there is formed a slit **1'** which extends generally longitudinally of the insert **1** and which is positioned substantially in the region between the first and second toes of the wearer's foot, this being the region in which the sandal thong is disposed. The slit **1'** cooperates with lateral slits **5** and **6** and oblique slits **5'** to form two lateral tabs **2** and **3** and a rear tab **4** which can be folded along the fold lines **2'**, **3'** and **4'**, respectively, to form an opening for the sandal thong. The tabs **2** and **3** are made sufficiently long to accommodate the thongs of sandals of a wide variety of styles and sizes.

The provision of the slit **1'** and the tabs **2**, **3** and **4** permits the insert or blank **1** to be placed on the foot-supporting surface of the sandal and to fit around the sandal thong in such a way that the entire foot, including the toes, of the wearer will be prevented from contacting the foot-supporting surface of the sandal. Therefore, the entier foot of the wearer will be protected against any infection which might otherwise have been communicated by the sandal. In addition, subsequent wearers will be protected from any infections carried by the present wearer.

Referring now to FIGURE 2, there is shown the insert **1** of FIGURE 1 placed on the foot-supporting surface of a sandal with the sandal thong **7** extending through the opening defined by folded tabs **2**, **3** and **4**. It may clearly

be seen that the provision of the slit 1' and tabs 2, 3 and 4 permits the insert to be disposed over the entire foot-supporting surface of the sandal, this including the regions upon which the wearer's heel, sole, and toes would be disposed. Moreover, the upwardly folded tabs 2, 3 and 4 will at all times remain positioned between the wearer's toes and the portions of the thong 7 with which these toes would otherwise come into contact. Therefore, the protector according to the present invention not only protects the bottom of the wearer's foot from contact with the foot-supporting surface of the sandal, but also protects the wearer's toes from contact with the sandal thong.

Turning now to FIGURE 3, there is shown the front portion of a sandal 8 having a thong 7 extending upward from the foot-supporting surface of the sandal. Thong 7 is formed with extensions 7' and 7'' which form loops terminating at the sides of the sandal sole, extension 7' forming a loop for enclosing the wearer's large toe and extension 7'' forming a loop for enclosing the remaining toes. The foot-supporting surface of sandal 8 is covered by a protector 1 with the protector tabs 2, 3 and 4 being folded upwardly and encasing the lower end of thong 7.

FIGURE 4 is an end view, looking toward the rear of sandal 8, showing the upwardly folded lateral tabs 2 and 3 lying against the sides of thong 7.

Protectors according to the present invention may be fabricated in a wide variety of different sizes and shapes to conform with the various sizes and styles in which sandals of this type are manufactured. Protectors according to the present invention can also be made in a single standard size to fit a wide variety of sandal sizes and styles. In the latter case, it is only necessary to give the opening for the passage of the thong 7 adequate dimensions to accommodate the thongs of sandals having a wide variety of sizes and styles. For example, the opening shown in FIGURE 2 is capable of receiving the thongs of sandals having a large size range and having a great variety of styles.

When protectors according to the present invention are employed for protecting the feet of customers trying on such sandals, it is anticipated that a fresh pair of protectors will be placed in the sandals for each new customer and will be thrown away as soon as the customer has finished trying on the particular pair.

While protectors according to the present invention have been described herein particularly for use in shoe stores during the trying-on of sandals, it should be appreciated that protectors of this type could be sold commercially also to individuals who wish to use them during normal wearing in order to keep the foot-supporting surfaces of their sandals fresh and free from perspiration. For such use, protectors according to the present invention may be made of colorless or white material or may be made in various colors to match the color of the sandals.

It should also be noted that protectors according to the present invention can all be manufactured from a single pattern because each insert can be used either for the left or right foot merely by turning the protector over.

It will be understood that the above description of the present invention is susceptible to various modifications, changes, and adaptations, and the same are intended to be comprehended within the meaning and range of equivalents of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A disposable sanitary sole protector for use with thong sandals of the type having at least one thong projecting upwardly from the upper face of the sandal sole within the edges of the sandal in position to be received between the wearer's toes, comprising a blank in the form of a flexible sheet having substantially the same shape as the foot-supporting surface of such sandal and being formed with a first slit extending longitudinally inwardly from the toe end edge of said blank for a short distance to the position of such thong, and a first pair of additional slits transverse to said first slit and extending obliquely from the inner end of said first slit in respectively opposite directions from the extension line of said first slit to form between them a triangular tab, said first slit and additional slits permitting said sheet to be positioned around such thong, whereby the placing of said sheet on such sandal prevents contact between the foot-supporting surface of such sandal and the wearer's foot.

2. An article as defined in claim 1 wherein said first slit is positioned substantially in the region between the large toe and second toe of the wearer's foot.

3. An arrangement as defined in claim 1 wherein said blank is further formed with a second pair of additional slits extending transversely in opposite directions from an intermediate point along the length of said first slit, a pair of tabs being formed on opposite sides of said first slit by said pairs of slits, the tabs being foldable to surround such upstanding thong.

4. An arrangement as defined in claim 3 wherein said tabs are upwardly foldable for preventing any direct contact between the toes of the wearer's foot and such thong.

5. An arrangement as defined in claim 3 wherein said first pair of tabs are foldable along lines parallel to said first slit and said further tab is foldable along a line transverse to said first slit.

6. An arrangement as defined in claim 5 wherein all of said tabs are foldable to define a rectangular opening which is symmetrically disposed with respect to said one slit.

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