Oct. 6, 1970 H. SAFALOW 3,531,814

TOE CLEANING DEVICE

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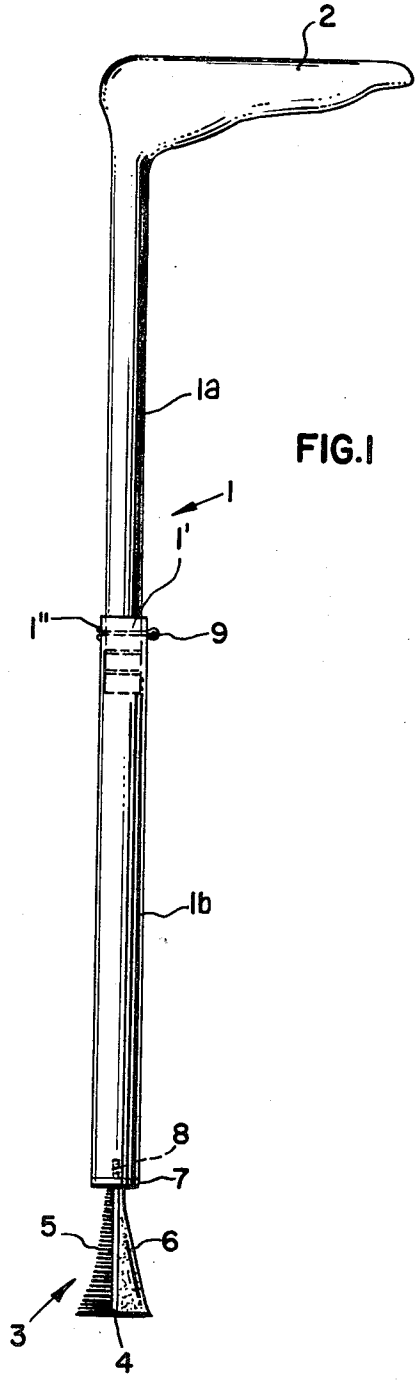


FIG.1

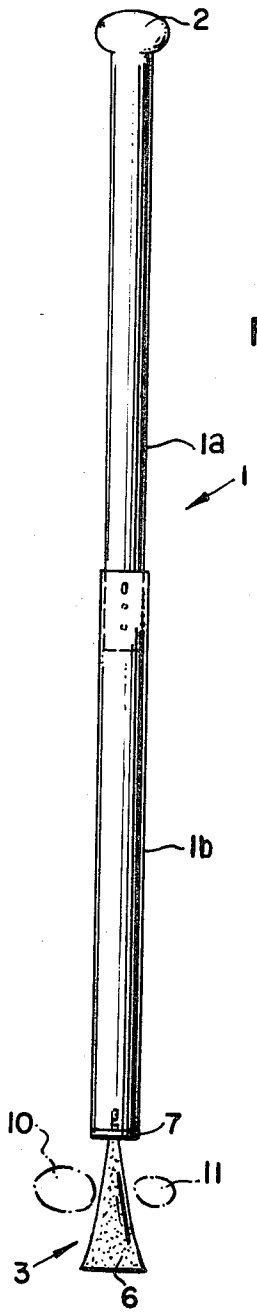


FIG.3

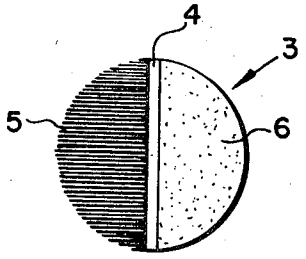


FIG.2

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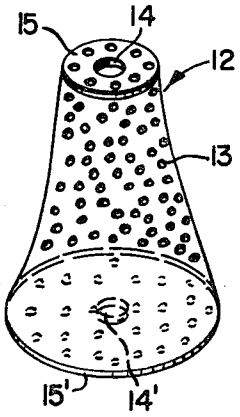
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TOE CLEANING DEVICE

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FIG.4



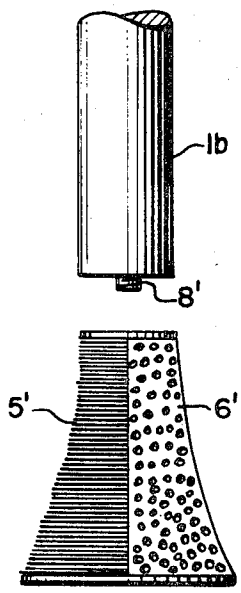


FIG.5

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3,531,814
Patented Oct. 6, 1970

3,531,814

TOE CLEANING DEVICE

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Continuation-in-part of application Ser. No. 777,807, Nov. 21, 1968. This application Apr. 16, 1969, Ser. No. 820,875

Int. Cl. A47k 7/04

U.S. Cl. 15—114

8 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A conically shaped toe cleaning member, which is half brush and half sponge, is mounted on a rod for insertion between adjacent toes. This enables the user to maintain an upright position instead of having to bend for cleaning the web spaces between toes.

Cross reference to related application

This application is a continuation-in-part of my copending application Ser. No. 777,807, filed Nov. 21, 1968, now abandoned.

Background and summary of the invention

The present invention relates to a combined sponge and brush toe cleaning device.

Dirt readily accumulates in the spaces between the toes, often leading to infections, unwanted odors and the like. It is not always simple to reach these spaces for purposes of cleaning, particularly for people who have difficulty bending. If infections, scratches or skin breaks are present in the web spaces between the toes, a soft brush will cleanse the area by removing any debris or bacteria present and thus aid in the revitalization of the tissues. If event the soft brush proves too harsh, a sponge may be advantageously used for this purpose.

It is the primary object of this invention to provide a handy toe cleaning device which meets all requirements for thoroughly cleansing the spaces between the toes.

This object is accomplished in accordance with the invention by mounting a substantially conical or bell-shaped toe cleaning member on the lower end of a rod whose upper end forms a handle capable of being grasped by a hand of a user. The length of the rod is such that the lower end thereof reaches the toes of the user when the user grasps the handle and without requiring the user to bend substantially. The toe cleaning member has a wide and a narrow end, and the toe cleaning surface of the toe member tapers from the wide to the narrow end thereof. One half of the toe cleaning surface is constituted by bristles forming a brush and the other half of the toe cleaning surface is constituted by a sponge, each half extending from the wide to the narrow end of the toe cleaning member. The member is of a size to fit between adjacent toes.

According to one feature of the present invention, the handle extends substantially perpendicularly from the rod and may have the shape of a human foot, which shape is especially fitting for being firmly held in a hand for properly guiding the toe cleaning member into the spaces between the toes and moving the member within these spaces during the cleaning operation.

In accordance with another feature of this invention, the length of rod is adjustable so that the device may be used by people of different height, enabling them to clean the spaces between their toes without bending.

The toe cleaning member is preferably detachably mounted on the rod, with means on each end thereof for attaching it to the lower end of the rod either with the wide or the narrow end adjacent the rod. In this manner, the

toe cleaning member also may be readily cleaned or replaced.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, a conical or bell-shaped carrier is provided for supporting the brush bristles and sponge. This carrier consists of two end plates interconnected by a side wall tapering from one plate to the other. Each end plate has a centrally positioned threaded socket into with a screw at the end of the rod may be threadedly fastened for detachable mounting of the toe cleaning member on the rod. The end plates and side wall of the carrier are perforated. In this manner, when the user stands in a pool of water while cleaning his toes, a vertical reciprocating cleaning motion will cause water to enter through the lower end plate into the interior of the carrier and to spurt out of the holes in the side wall thereof in what amounts to a plurality of forceful jets, which will considerably aid in the removal of dirt and debris from between the toes.

Brief description of drawing

The above and other objects, advantages and features of this invention will become more apparent in the following detailed description of two embodiments thereof, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing wherein

FIG. 1 is a side view of a toe cleaning device according to one embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a bottom view thereof;

FIG. 3 shows the device in operative position;

FIG. 4 shows an enlarged perspective view of a preferred carrier for the brush bristles and sponge of the toe cleaning member; and

FIG. 5 shows an exploded view of the toe cleaning member with the carrier of FIG. 4 about to be attached to a rod.

Detailed description

The illustrated device consists of rod **1** which is quite similar to a walking stick and has an upper end which forms a handle **2** which extends perpendicularly from the rod and has the shape of a human foot. Such a handle is not only very easy to hold firmly in the palm of a hand, with the fingers grasped about the foot-shaped handle, but it will also serve as a ready reminder of the purpose of the device. The rod may be of circular cross section having a diameter of one inch, for example, and may be of wood or any other suitable material. The length of the rod may be 30 inches although other gages and lengths may be found useful.

In the preferred embodiment shown herein, the rod consists of two telescoping rod sections **1***a* and **1***b* so that the length of the rod may be adjusted to the height of the user. The rod sections are tubular, for instance plastic tubes, and each rod section defines a series of pairs of registering holes **1'** and **1''** adjacent one of their respective ends. A suitable fastening element, such as a cotter pin **9**, is used to attach the two rod sections together, the length of the rod depending on the holes used. When a length adjustment of the rod is desired, the cotter pin is removed, the two rod sections are moved in relation to each other until different pairs of holes in the two rod sections are in registry, and the cotter pin is re-inserted.

Mounted on the lower end of rod **1** is a frusto-conical or bell-shaped toe cleaning member **3**. As shown, the wide base of member **3** is remote from the lower rod end and its apex or narrow end is adjacent thereto. In this position, when the toe cleaning member is inserted into a space between two adjacent toes **10**, **11**, see FIG. 3, by laterally moving the member into this space (in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the drawing). It will be held between the toes by the wide base even when the member is vertically reciprocated in the space for cleaning purposes. In other words, the wide base below the toes serves

as a retainer of the toe cleaning member between the toes during the cleaning operation.

However, in certain cleaning operations, particularly where small spaces are to be cleaned, it will be advantageous to reverse the position of the toe cleaning member on the rod so that the narrow end points downwardly, thus facilitating entering into narrow spaces beween the toes.

In the embodiment of FIGS. 1 to 3, the toe cleaning member **3** consists of a flat carrier plate **4** extending transversely or diametrically of the rod, one face of which carries brush bristles **5** and whose other face carries the sponge **6**. The bristles may be of animal origin or synthetic, such as nylon. The sponge may be of any suitable porous resilient material, such as sponge rubber or natural sponge.

The carrier plate **4** may be integral with the rod but, preferably, the toe cleaning member is detachably mounted on the rod end. For this purpose, the carrier plate **4** may be integral with, or mounted on, an attachment plate **7** so that the toe cleaning member forms a detachable unit. This unit may be detachably secured to the rod end in any suitable manner, the illustrated attachment means consisting of a screw **8** projecting from attachment plate **7**. A corresponding threaded bore in the rod end enables the toe cleaning unit to be screwed into and out of the rod end. In this manner, it is possible readily to clean the brush and sponge, when needed, and to replace the entire unit when the brush and/or sponge are worn out.

When the toe cleaning member is inserted in the space between two adjacent toes, the brush side will be turned inwardly when strong scrubbing is desired. If the skin between the toes is broken and gentle cleaning is preferred, the sponge side will be turned inwardly towards the foot. Cleaning is then effected by rapidly moving the brush or sponge up and down, and the toe cleaning member will be prevented from slipping upwardly out of the space between the toes during this cleaning motion when the wide base thereof retains the member in the space.

The conical or bell-shaped shape of the toe cleaning member also makes it possible readily to use the same in the different sized spaces between different toes of the foot. Thus, in the relatively large space between the first and second toes, the toe cleaning member will be inserted in the space with the bottoms of the toes near the wide base. In the smaller spaces between other toes, it will be inserted in the space with the bottoms of the toes nearer the apex, i.e. at a higher point along the axis of the toe cleaning member, where the circumference of the member is smaller. In this manner, the device is equally useful for all spaces between the toes.

Useful dimensions for the toe cleaning member will be a length from end to end of three to five inches, for instance four inches, and a diameter at the base of about 1½ to 2½ inches.

In the embodiment of FIGS. 4 and 5, a carrier **12** of rigid plastic or the like is provided for supporting the brush bristles **5'** and the sponge **6'** of the toe cleaning member. The carrier consists of wide end plate **15'** and narrow end plate **15** interconnected by a tapering or flaring side wall which imparts a bell-shaped configuration to the carrier. Each end plate has a centrally positioned threaded socket **14**, **14'** for selective threaded engagement with a screw **8'** projecting from the lower end of rod section **1***b*, whereby the toe cleaning member may be detachably fastened on the rod. As shown at **13**, the end plates and side wall of the carrier **12** are perforated to provide a water jet action during reciprocation of the device in a water pool in which the user may be standing while cleaning his toes.

The bristles and sponge are mounted on the carrier in any suitable and conventional manner well known in the production of brushes and cleaning sponges.

I claim:

1. A toe cleaning device comprising

(1) a rod having an upper end and a lower end,

(a) the upper end forming a handle capable of being grasped by a hand of a user and

(b) the length of the rod being such that the lower end thereof reaches the toes of the user when the user grasps the handle and without requiring the user to bend substantially; and

(2) a substantially bell-shaped or conical toe cleaning member mounted on the lower end of the rod,

(c) the toe cleaning member having a wide end and a narrow end, and a toe cleaning surface tapering from one end to the other,

(d) one half of the toe cleaning surface being constituted by bristles forming a brush and the other half of the toe cleaning surface being constituted by a sponge, each half extending from one end to the other, and

(e) the toe cleaning member being of a size to fit between adjacent toes.

2. The toe cleaning device of claim **1**, wherein said handle extends substantially perpendicularly from the rod.

3. The toe cleaning device of claim **2**, wherein the perpendicularly extending handle has the shape of a human foot.

4. The toe cleaning device of claim **1**, wherein the length of the rod is adjustable, the rod consisting of two telescoping sections.

5. The toe cleaning device of claim **1**, wherein the toe cleaning member constitutes a unit detachably mounted on the lower rod end.

6. The toe cleaning device of claim **1**, wherein the wide end of the toe cleaning member is remote from the lower rod end and the narrow end is adjacent thereto.

7. The toe cleaning device of claim **1**, wherein the toe cleaning member comprises a bell-shaped or conical carrier for the brush bristles and the sponge, the carrier consisting of two end plates interconnected by a side wall tapering from one end plate to the other, each end plate having a centrally positioned threaded socket for selective threaded engagement with a screw at the lower rod end for detachably mounting the toe cleaning member on the rod.

8. The toe cleaning device of claim **7**, wherein the end plates and side wall of the toe cleaning member carrier are perforated.

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DANIEL BLUM, Primary Examiner

U.S. Cl. X.R.

15—144, 160; 401—11, 24