Aug. 9, 1960 R. HORLAND 2,948,389

PILL DISPENSE UNITS

Filed May 7, 1958

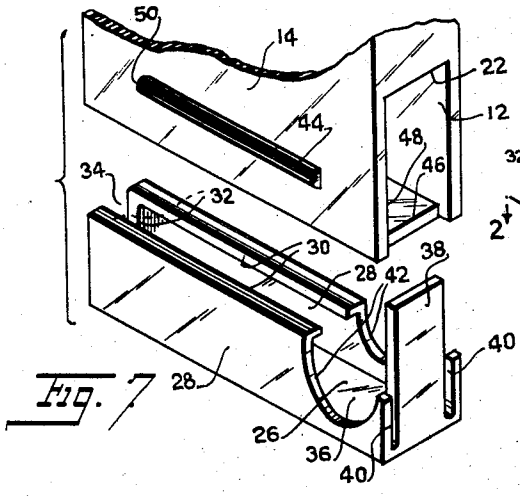

Fig. 7

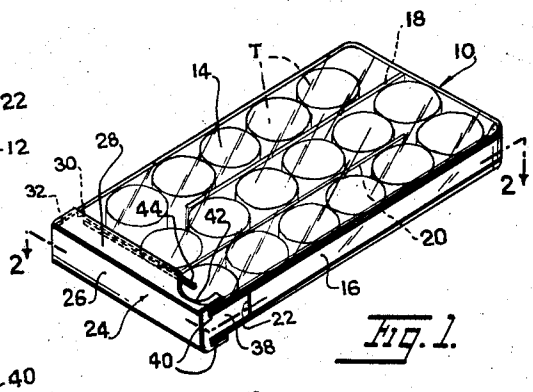

Fig. 1.

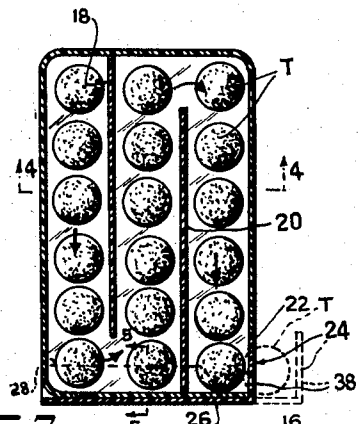

Fig. 2.

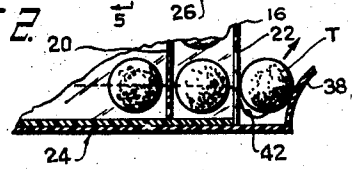

Fig. 3.

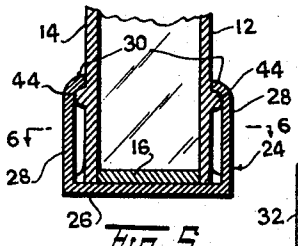

Fig. 5.

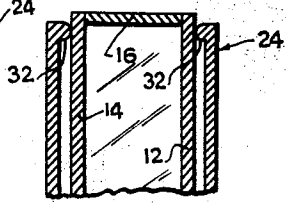

Fig. 6.

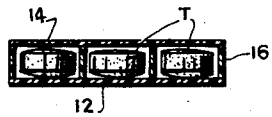

Fig. 4.

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PILL DISPENSE UNITS

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1 Claim. (Cl. 206—42)

This invention relates generally to dispensers, and more particularly to a dispenser for pills, tablets, etc.

One important object of the present invention is to provide a dispensing device for tablets, such as aspirins, etc., which device will be designed to facilitate the dispensing of an individual tablet, with a minimum amount of effort on the part of the user.

Heretofore, containers for aspirins and similar tablets have generally comprised, when designed to be carried about in the pocket, flat receptacles having lids, with said lids being hinged to swing to open position. When the lid is opened, all the tablets are exposed, and an accidental jarring or dropping of the container results in all the tablets therein being lost. Further, opening the lid is often very difficult, in view of the extreme flatness of the container, as a result of which it is hard to obtain a good grip upon the container.

The main object of the present invention, in view of the above, is to provide a generally improved container for tablets of the type described above. The container may be designed to be that in which the tablets are sold, being of the dispensing type and being so formed as to permit the dispensing of an individual tablet.

Another object is to insure that only one tablet will be exposed for dispensing, thus to eliminate any posibility of loss of the other tablets.

Another object is to provide a path of movement within the container for the tablets, which path will be tortuous, in a manner to continuously feed the tablets in a direction toward the dispensing opening of the container.

Another object is to permit full visibility of all tablets within the container, so that one can immediately observe the extent to which the contents of the container have been depleted.

A further object is to provide a dispensing device for tablets including a closure for the dispensing opening, which closure can be operated between its normally closed and its open positions by the hand that is grasping the container, thus to permit one-hand operation of the dispensing device so as to free the other hand for grasping a tablet when it has been moved into position ready to be taken out of the container.

For further comprehension of the invention, and of the objects and advantages thereof, reference will be had to the following description and accompanying drawings, and to the appended claim in which the various novel features of the invention are more particularly set forth.

In the accompanying drawings forming a material part of this disclosure:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of one form of tablet dispenser according to the present invention, tablets being shown therein.

Fig. 2 is a sectional view substantially on line 2—2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary sectional view on the same cutting plane as Fig. 2, the closure being manipulated to a position permitting removal of a tablet or pill.

Fig. 4 is a transverse section on line 4—4 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 5 is an enlarged, detail sectional view on line 5—5 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 6 is a detail sectional view substantially on line 6—6 of Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is an enlarged, fragmentary, exploded perspective view of the dispensing end of the container together with the closure.

In Figs. 1–7, the dispenser **10** constituting the present invention includes a flat, transparent, generally rectangular container having an elongated bottom wall **12** spaced from a correspondingly shaped top wall **14** by means of a peripheral wall **16**. A plurality of tablets T are disposed between the bottom and top walls, and within the container are caused to follow a tortuous path by means of longitudinal partitions **18**, **20**. These are spaced transversely of one another within the container in parallel relation to the longitudinal edges of the dispenser. The partitions extend in opposite directions from opposite ends of the container and terminate, in each instance, short of the other end of the container. Thus, a tortuous path is provided, along which the tablets travel in the direction shown by the arrows in Fig. 2, to a dispensing opening **22** normally closed by a closure generally designated **24**.

The closure extends fully across one end of the container, and slides in a direction transversely of the container between the full and dotted line positions shown in Fig. 2.

The closure is shown to particular advantage in Fig. 7 and includes a channel member **26** having side walls **28** formed along their top edges with confronting longitudinal flanges **30** integral at one end with end flanges of abutments **32**, the channel member **26** being open at this end as shown at **34** in Fig. 7.

The web portion **36** of the closure is integrally formed, at the other end of the closure member, with an upstanding spring tongue **38**. This projects above the side walls **28**, which are spaced outwardly from the opposite sides of the spring tongue by narrow spaces **40**. Immediately adjacent the spring tongue, the side walls are deeply recessed or indented at **42** to provide clearance for one's thumb and finger when a tablet T is to be removed.

Integrally formed upon the outer surfaces of the top and bottom walls are guide ribs **44**, terminating short of the opposite sides of the dispensing container. Formed in one side of the container is a shallow recess **46** communicating with the opening **22** to provide clearance for the tongue **38**. The recess **46** is adapted to receive the edge portions **48** of the top and bottom walls disposed at opposite sides of the opening **22**. Tongue **38** fits snugly in the opening **22** as clearly seen in Fig. 2, when the closure is in its normal, closed position.

The closure embraceably engages the adjacent end of the container, with the ribs **44** being slidably engaged with the undersides of the flanges **30**.

In use, the closure is moved to its closed position, and is limited against movement to the left in Fig. 2 beyond its closed position by engagement of the tongue **38** against the edge wall of the recess **46**. When a tablet is to be dispensed, the closure is manually shifted to the right in Fig. 2 to the dotted line position, sliding upon the ribs **44** until flanges **32** engage the left-hand end **50** of the ribs **44**. At this time, the closure will be in the dotted line position of Fig. 2. The foremost tablet T may now roll outwardly upon the closure through opening **22**, but cannot be completely removed until one grasps both sides of the tablet, and exerts a positive upward force thereon as in Fig. 3. This flexes the spring tongue **38** upwardly, providing sufficient room for the tablet to be moved outwardly.

The purpose of this arrangement is to prevent accidental dropping of a tablet. Normally, the closure when

in open position is so located that the tongue is spaced from the adjacent wall of the dispensing container a distance less than the diameter of the tablet. This may be readily noted by reference to Fig. 2. Only when the tongue is flexed against the inherent spring tension thereof can the tablet be removed.

While I have illustrated and described the preferred embodiment of my invention, it is to be understood that I do not limit myself to the precise constructions herein disclosed and that various changes and modifications may be made within the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claim.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by United States Letters Patent is:

A dispenser for tablets and the like comprising a rectangular flat container having partitions defining a tortuous path for movement of the tablets therethrough and having a dispensing opening at one corner thereof, a closure device for said opening slidably mounted on one end of the container, ribs along the outer surfaces of said one end of the container, said closure device including an elongated channel-shaped member having a web portion, side walls and inwardly extending flanges at the free

ends of the side walls for riding on said ribs, a spring closure tongue at one end of the channel-shaped member, said closure tongue extending above the free ends of the side walls and adapted to close the dispensing opening in the container, said side walls having recesses adjacent the closure tongue, said closure tongue adapted to prevent rolling of the contents of the container off of the web portion of the closure device, said side walls having recesses adjacent the closure tongue whereby the contents dispensed through the dispensing opening and held by the closure tongue may be grasped by the fingers of the user and removed.

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