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(54) **SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR
SNUGGLING A BABY**

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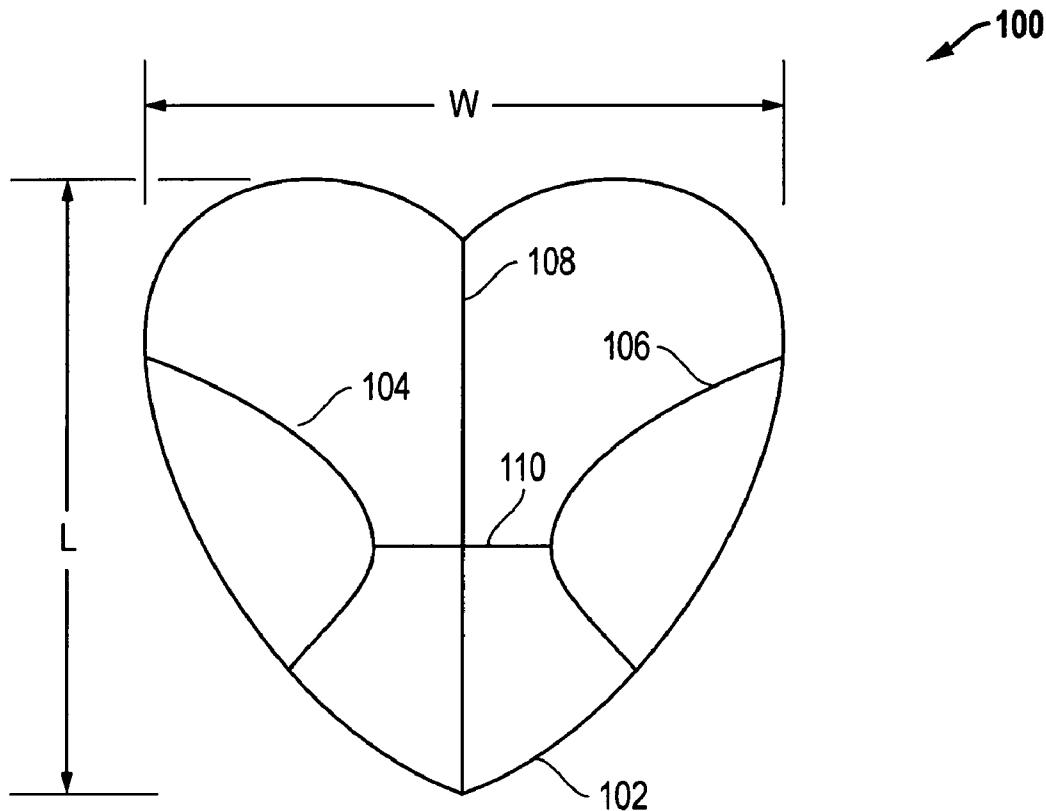
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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Systems, methods and media for snuggling a baby are disclosed. A soft, quilted, bean-bag structure is laid upon the baby to simulate the experience of being snuggled.

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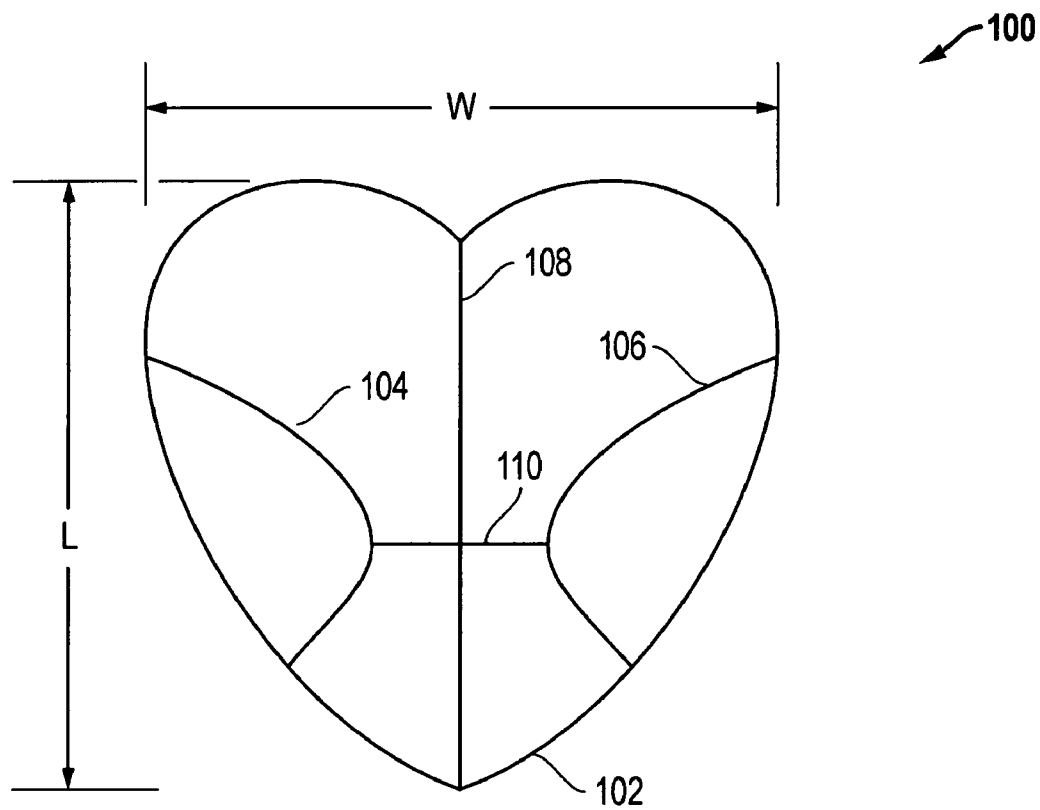


FIG. 1

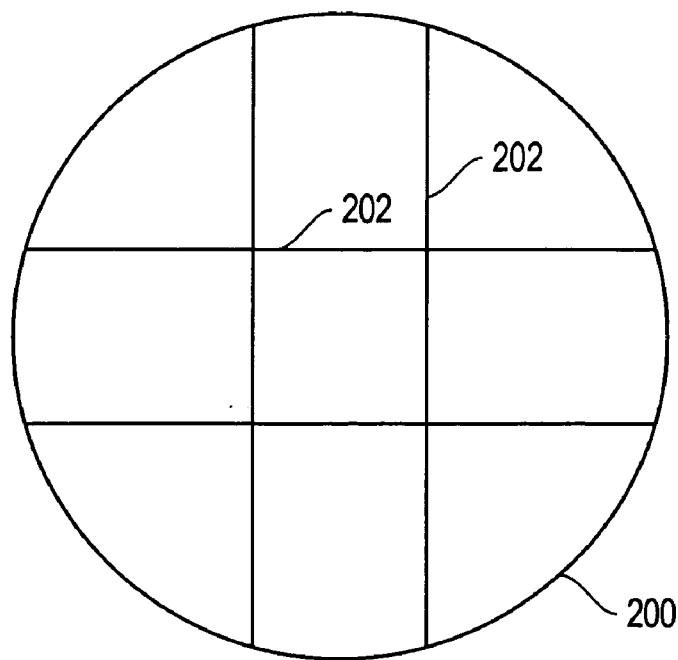


FIG. 2

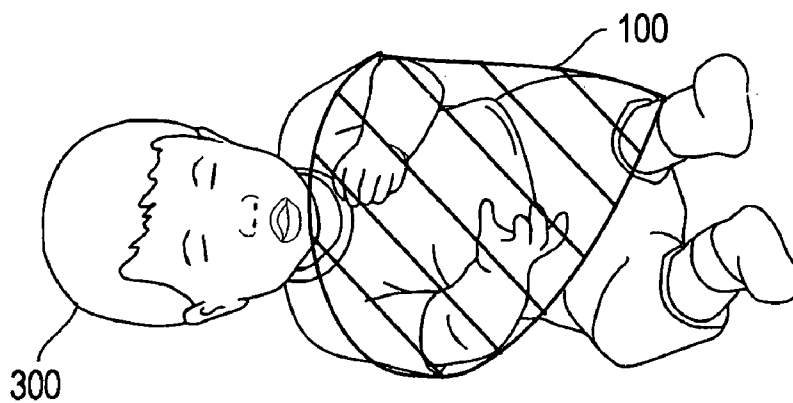


FIG. 3

SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR SNUDDLING A BABY

FIELD

[0001] The present invention is in the field of snuggling babies.

BACKGROUND

[0002] When a baby sleeps, his or her caretaker will commonly cover the baby with a blanket. However, as is well known, when a baby sleeps, his or her arms will occasionally flail if not swaddled. To prevent this, and to make the baby feel more secure when sleeping, a baby is commonly swaddled by wrapping the baby with a blanket. Swaddling protects an infant from the surrounding environment, allows a caregiver to handle and carry an infant more easily, and has long been thought to comfort and quiet an infant. The key to effective swaddling appears to reside in a combination of factors. Loosely-swaddled infants tend to be more restless than snugly-swaddled infants, but overly tight swaddling may inhibit breathing. An infant is comforted by having her arms held snugly against her midsection and by having even pressure applied around her torso. Too loose a wrap may provide inadequate restraint, but too tight a wrap may overheat and overly constrain the baby.

[0003] Thus, there is a need for an infant comforter for snuggling an infant that overcomes the deficiencies of the prior art.

SUMMARY

[0004] The problems identified above are in large part addressed by an apparatus and method to snuggle a baby. One embodiment comprises a quilted enclosure. Pellets are inserted into the enclosure and sealed therein. The pellets are divided among sections of the quilted enclosure to distribute weight of the pellets among the sections of the quilted enclosure.

[0005] Another embodiment is a method for making a baby snuggler. The method comprises inserting pellets into a bag formed by sewing together an outer periphery of one or more pieces of soft material. The pellets are divided among two or more sections of the bag formed by one or more quilt seams sewn into the bag. One or more quilt seams are sewn into the bag to separate the divided pellets among the two or more sections.

[0006] Another embodiment is a quilted cloth enclosure divided into sections by quilt seams. Pellets are inserted into sections of the enclosure to form a quilted bean-bag that conforms to the body of a baby.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent upon reading the following detailed description and upon reference to the accompanying drawings in which, like references may indicate similar elements:

[0008] FIG. 1 depicts an embodiment of a baby snuggler.

[0009] FIG. 2 depicts a different embodiment of a baby snuggler.

[0010] FIG. 3 depicts a baby snuggler laid upon a baby.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

[0011] The following is a detailed description of example embodiments of the invention depicted in the accompanying drawings. The example embodiments are in such detail as to clearly communicate the invention. However, the amount of detail offered is not intended to limit the anticipated variations of embodiments; but, on the contrary, the intention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims. The detailed descriptions below are designed to make such embodiments obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

[0012] Systems, methods and media for snuggling a baby are disclosed. A soft, quilted, bean-bag structure is laid upon the baby to simulate the experience of being snuggled.

[0013] FIG. 1 shows an embodiment 100 of a baby comforter for snuggling a baby. Two generally heart-shaped pieces of cloth material 102—cotton for example—are sewn together about the outer periphery so that the seam is internal. In the alternative to a hidden seam, an outward seam can be hidden by a ruffle trim around the periphery of the embodiment. Nominally, the object will have a dimension L of about 11 inches, and a dimension W of about 13 V₂ inches. The exact dimensions are not critical, but can be chosen to optimally give comfort to the baby. Note that the embodiment 100 comprises two pieces of cloth sewn together, but a person of skill in the art of sewing will recognize that a cloth enclosure may comprise a single piece of cloth cut so that when folded, an enclosure can be formed. Or more than two pieces of cloth can be sewn together to form an enclosure.

[0014] Before the outer periphery seam is completely closed, pellets—either organic, such as soy beans, or synthetic, such as plastic pellets—are stuffed into the enclosure formed between the two pieces of cloth material 120. When a sufficient amount of pellets have been inserted, the outer periphery seam is closed to form a sealed enclosure with the pellets enclosed therein. Next, the pellets are divided approximately in half, one half on one side of the generally heart shaped enclosure, and the other half on the opposite side of the enclosure. Then, a quilt seam 108, running generally along the center line of the heart shaped cloths 120, is sewn into the pieces of cloth 120. Additional quilt seams 104, 106 and 110 are also sewn, with the pellets distributed proportionally within each section of the quilt so formed. The weight of the completed unit is about a pound. This weight can be distributed among the sections of the quilted structure formed by the seams so that optimal comfort is provided to the baby.

[0015] The embodiment has the weight necessary to simulate the pressures experienced by the baby when held snugly in the mother's arms. The heart-shaped object may be constructed of a fabric of woven material stitched so that the pellets can be distributed among sections of an enclosure formed by the stitched fabric. The pellets may be evenly divided or divided proportionally among the sections to create a balance of weight when placed upon a baby as the baby lies on its side or abdomen. The shape of the object allows room for the head and unobstructed breathing space. The length of the object is chosen to cover and snuggle the baby with the balance pressure from the weight of the pellets. The embodiment provides to the baby the security

and freedom to fall asleep. As is well known, a baby may feel as if he or she is falling if not snuggled. This experience may startle the child. However, when an embodiment is placed on the child, the child feels snuggled and will sleep without being startled by a sensation of falling. Embodiments provide the experience of being in utero. The device is a sleeping aid for babies of any age, even up to six or eight months or older, long after the need for swaddling is passed.

[0016] FIG. 2 shows another embodiment made similarly to way the embodiment of FIG. 1 is made. In FIG. 2, the shape of the embodiment 200 is oval and the quilt seams 202 are placed differently than shown in FIG. 1, with the pellets distributed proportionally among the sections of the quilt so formed. Thus, the shape and quilt seams of the embodiment can be optimized to give maximum comfort to the baby. For example, the contour and placement of quilt seams may be chosen to optimize the ability of the embodiment to conform to the body of the baby. Clearly, one or more quilt seams may be implemented to divide the quilted enclosure into sections that are about equal in size and/or shape or into sections of unequal size and shape.

[0017] FIG. 3 shows an embodiment 100 placed on a baby 300 lying in a fetal position. The embodiment drapes over the sides of the baby with about equal weight distributed on each side. The embodiment gently weighs down and inward, gently enfolding upon the baby's arms and torso. This simulates for the baby the experience of being held by his or her mother. Importantly, embodiments apply comforting, gentle weight against the arms of the baby to resist flailing of the baby's arms. The embodiment provides a soft, yet firm, snuggle, that does not squeeze or overly confine the baby. Advantageously, the baby does not need to be swaddled. The present invention can be applied without disturbing the baby. This is good for both the baby and the mother. Also, an embodiment of the invention can easily be used in conjunction with a blanket to keep the baby warm. But an embodiment can be sized and weighted so that it will not of itself overheat the baby.

[0018] Although the present invention and some of its advantages have been described in detail for some embodiments, it should be understood that various changes, substitutions and alterations can be made herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims. Although an embodiment of the invention may achieve multiple objectives, not every embodiment falling within the scope of the attached claims will achieve every objective. Moreover, the scope of the present application is not intended to be limited to the particular embodiments of the process, machine, manufacture, composition of matter, means, methods and steps described in the specification. As one of ordinary skill in the art will readily appreciate from the disclosure of the present invention, processes, machines, manufacture, compositions of matter, means, methods, or steps, presently existing or later to be

developed that perform substantially the same function or achieve substantially the same result as the corresponding embodiments described herein may be utilized according to the present invention. Accordingly, the appended claims are intended to include within their scope such processes, machines, manufacture, compositions of matter, means, methods, or steps.

1. A baby snuggling apparatus, comprising:

a quilted enclosure of a shape and size to substantially cover the torso and arms of a baby in a fetal position by laying the enclosure upon the baby; and

pellets inserted into the enclosure and sealed therein, with the pellets divided among sections of the quilted enclosure to distribute weight of the pellets among the sections of the quilted enclosure so that gravity weighs down the quilted enclosure to surround and secure the arms of the baby close to the torso of the baby.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein one or more quilt seams divide the quilted enclosure into sections that are about equal in size.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein quilt seams divide the enclosure into sections that conform to the shape of a baby's body.

4. A method for making a baby snuggler, comprising:

inserting pellets into a bag formed by sewing together an outer periphery of one or more pieces of soft material;

dividing the pellets among two or more sections of the bag formed by one or more quilt seams sewn into the bag; and

sewing one or more quilt seams to separate the divided pellets among the two or more sections.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the quilt seams are positioned to create sections that conform to a baby's body.

6. A baby comforter, comprising:

a quilted cloth enclosure divided into sections by quilt seams, the enclosure being of a shape and size to substantially cover the torso and arms of a baby in a fetal position by laying the enclosure upon the baby; and

pellets inserted into sections of the enclosure to form a quilted bean-bag that conforms to the body of a baby enclosure so that gravity weighs down the quilted enclosure to surround and secure the arms of the baby close to the torso of the baby.

7. The comforter of claim 6, wherein one or more quilt seams divide the quilted enclosure into sections that are about equal in size.

8. The comforter of claim 6, wherein the pellets are inorganic.

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