US 20150342263A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**

Taylor et al.

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2015/0342263 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Dec. 3, 2015**

(54) **ADJUSTABLE INFANT SWADDLE**

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(21) Appl. No.: **14/729,704**

(22) Filed: **Jun. 3, 2015**

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 62/007,169, filed on Jun. 3, 2014.

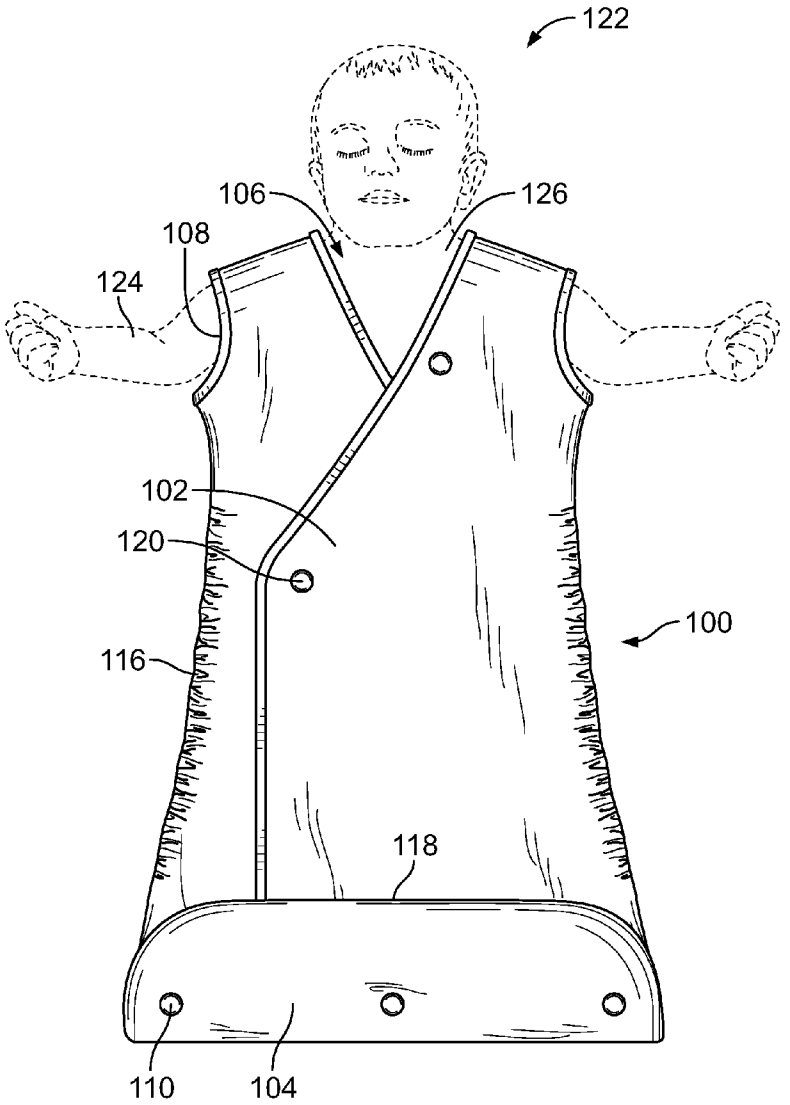
Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A41B 13/06 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***A41B 13/06*** (2013.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An adjustable swaddle for an infant is described. The adjustable swaddle is made from a lightweight, breathable, stretchable fabric. The swaddle has an adjustable chest flap that can be used to increase or decrease the pressure felt by the infant. An adjustable foot flap can be used to increase or decrease the length of the swaddle. The foot flap further has an opening which allows for diaper changes without removing the swaddle.



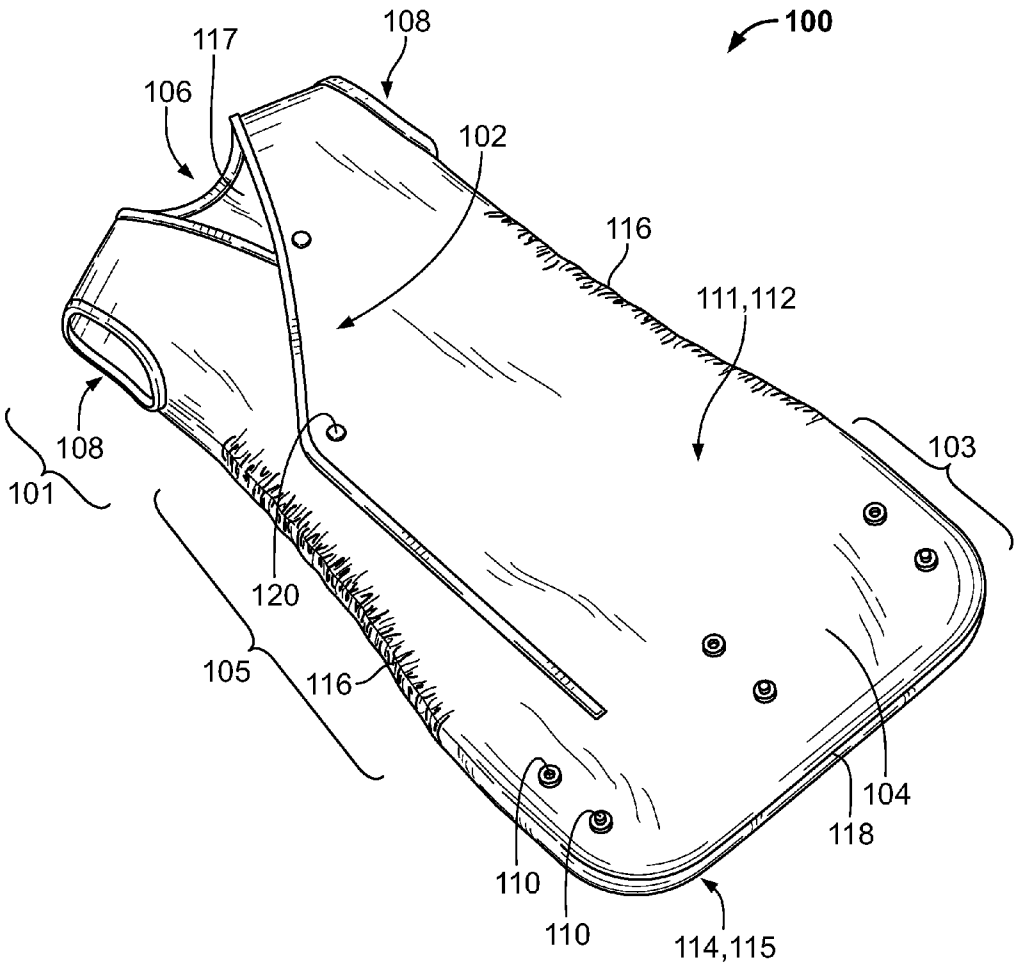

100
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FIG. 1

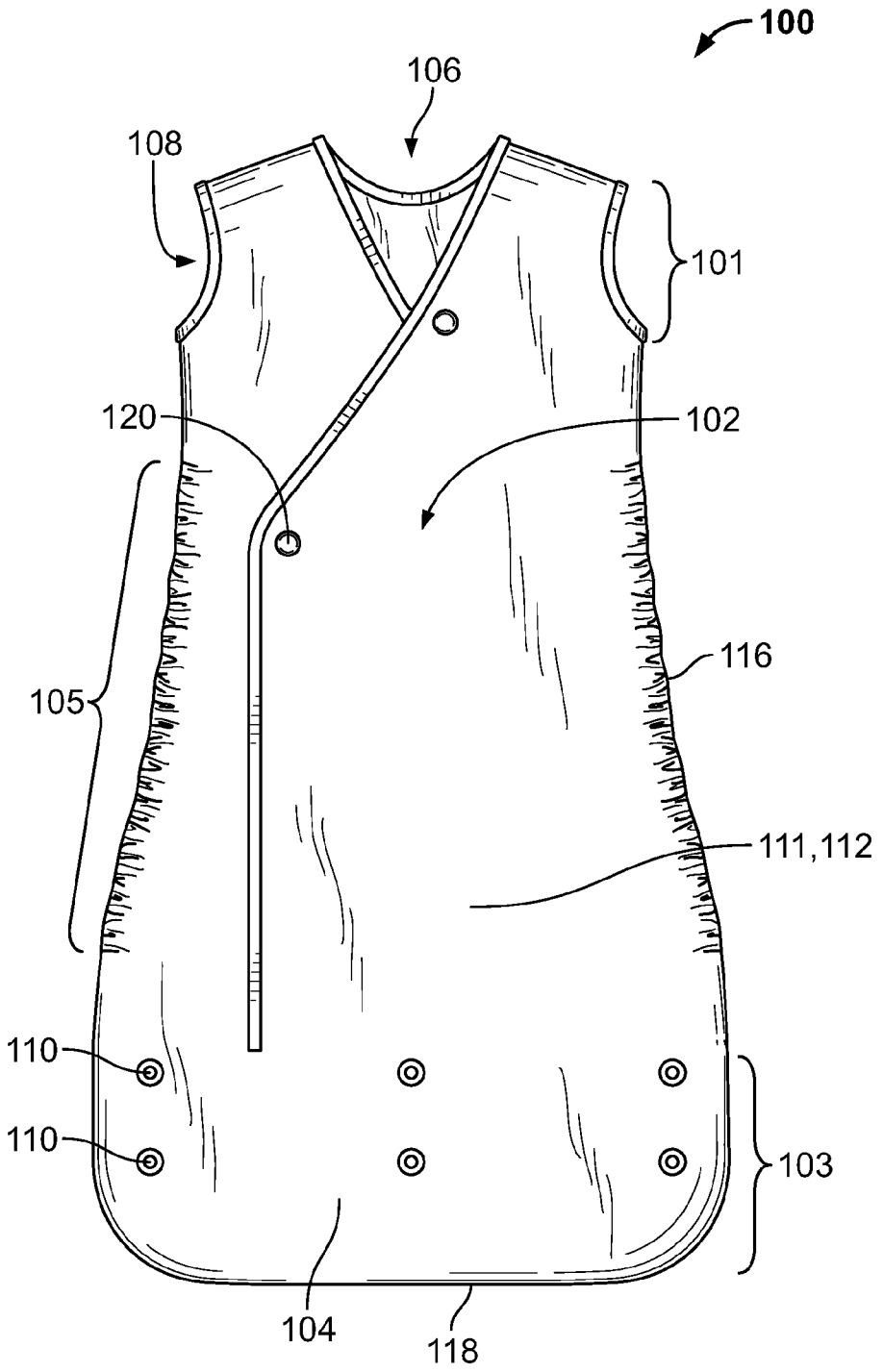


FIG. 2

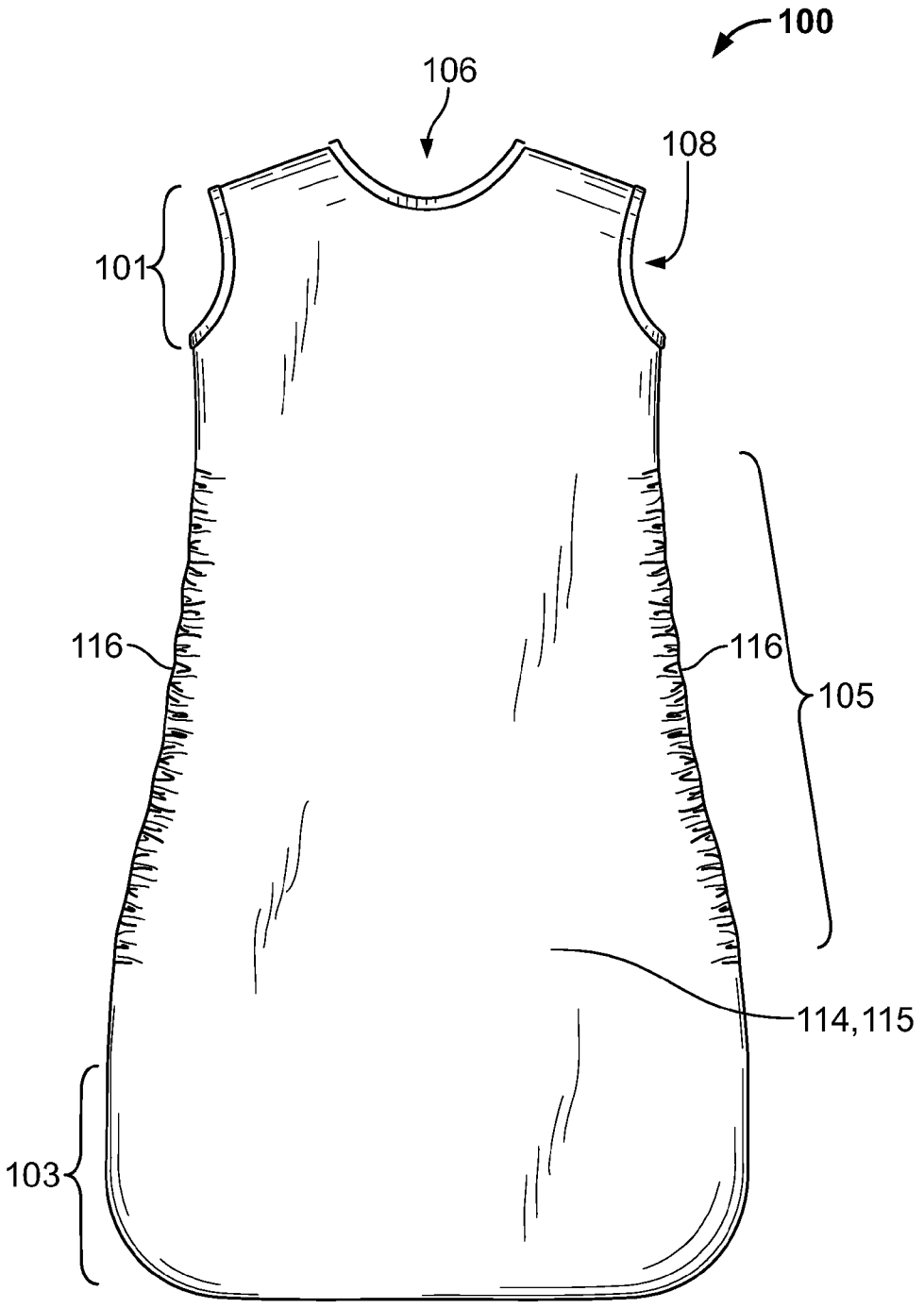


FIG. 3

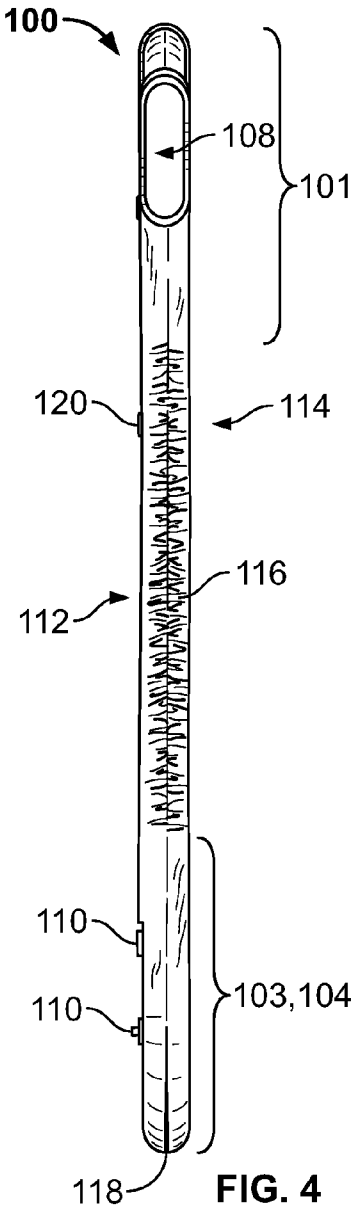


FIG. 4

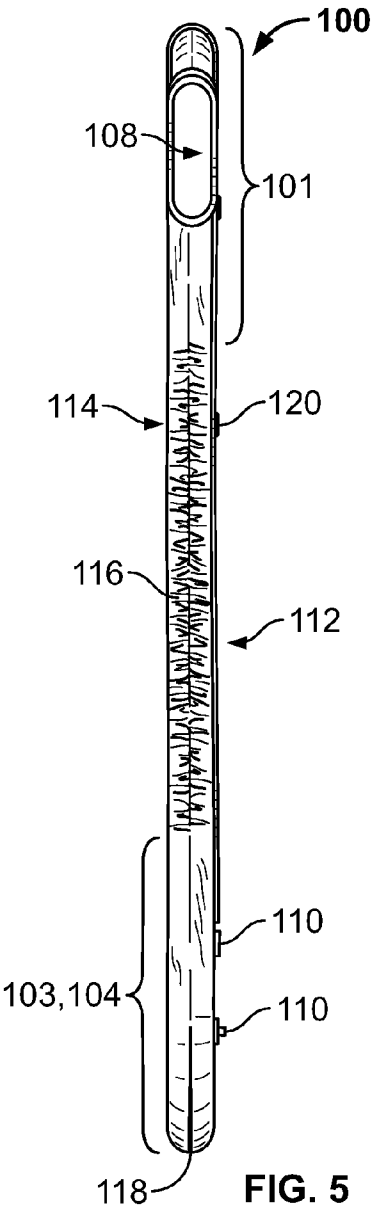


FIG. 5

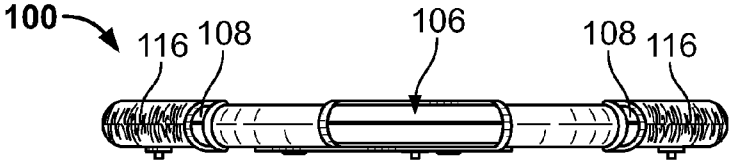


FIG. 6

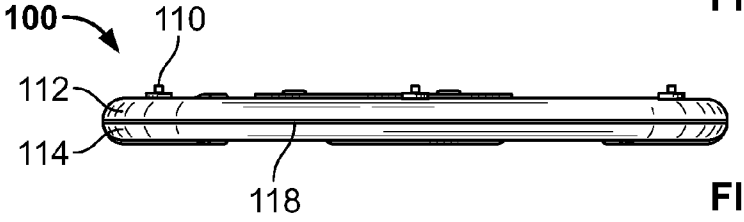
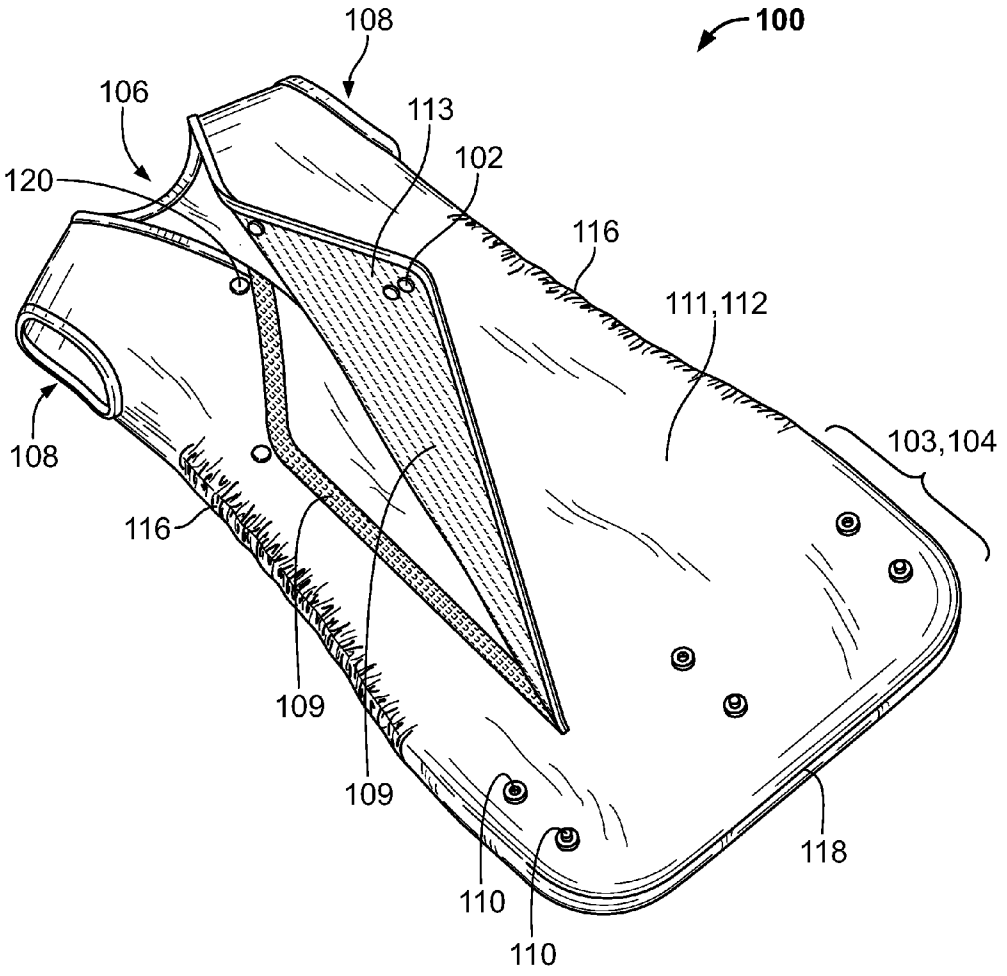


FIG. 7


100
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103,104
108
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118
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110

FIG. 8

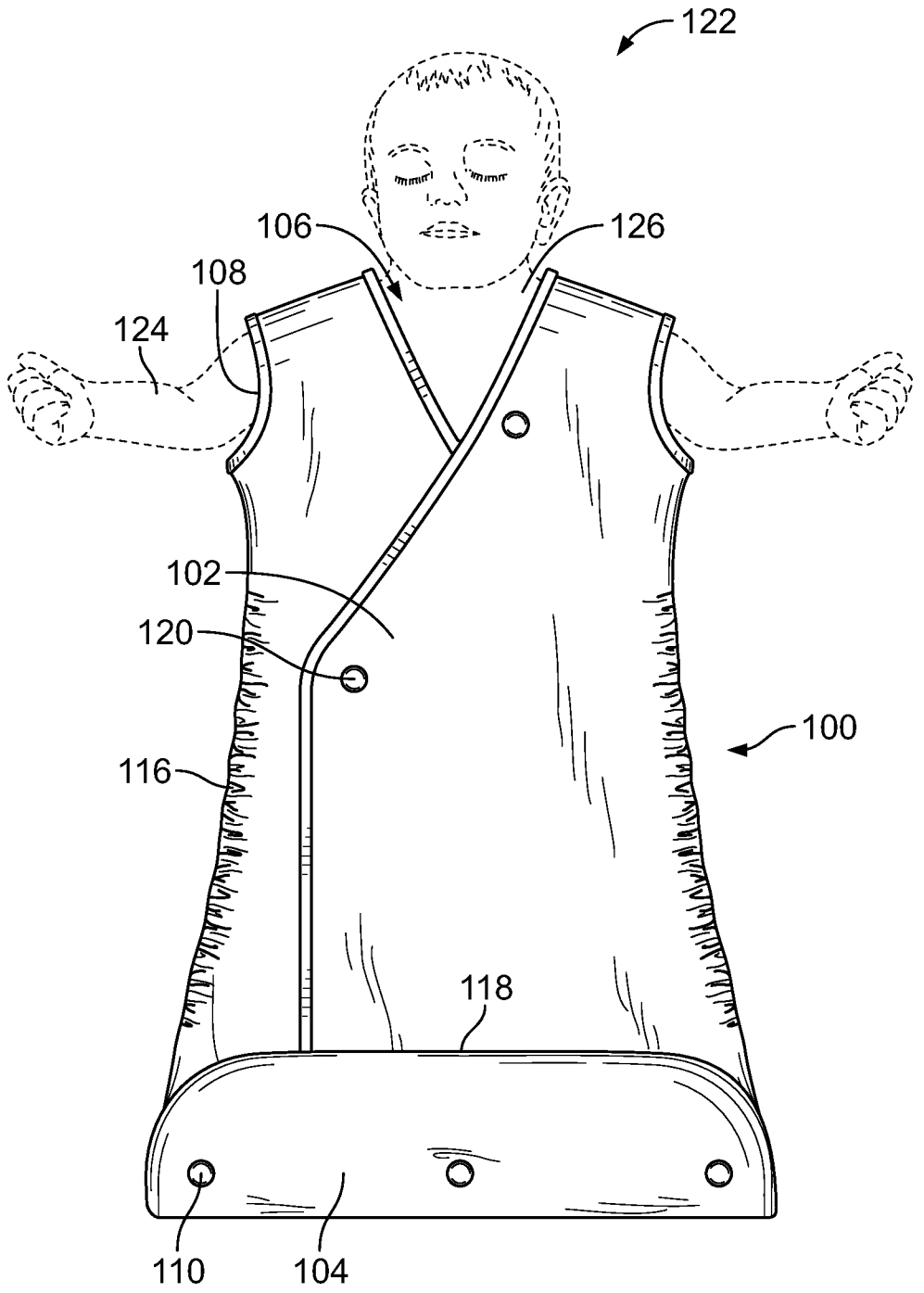

FIG. 9

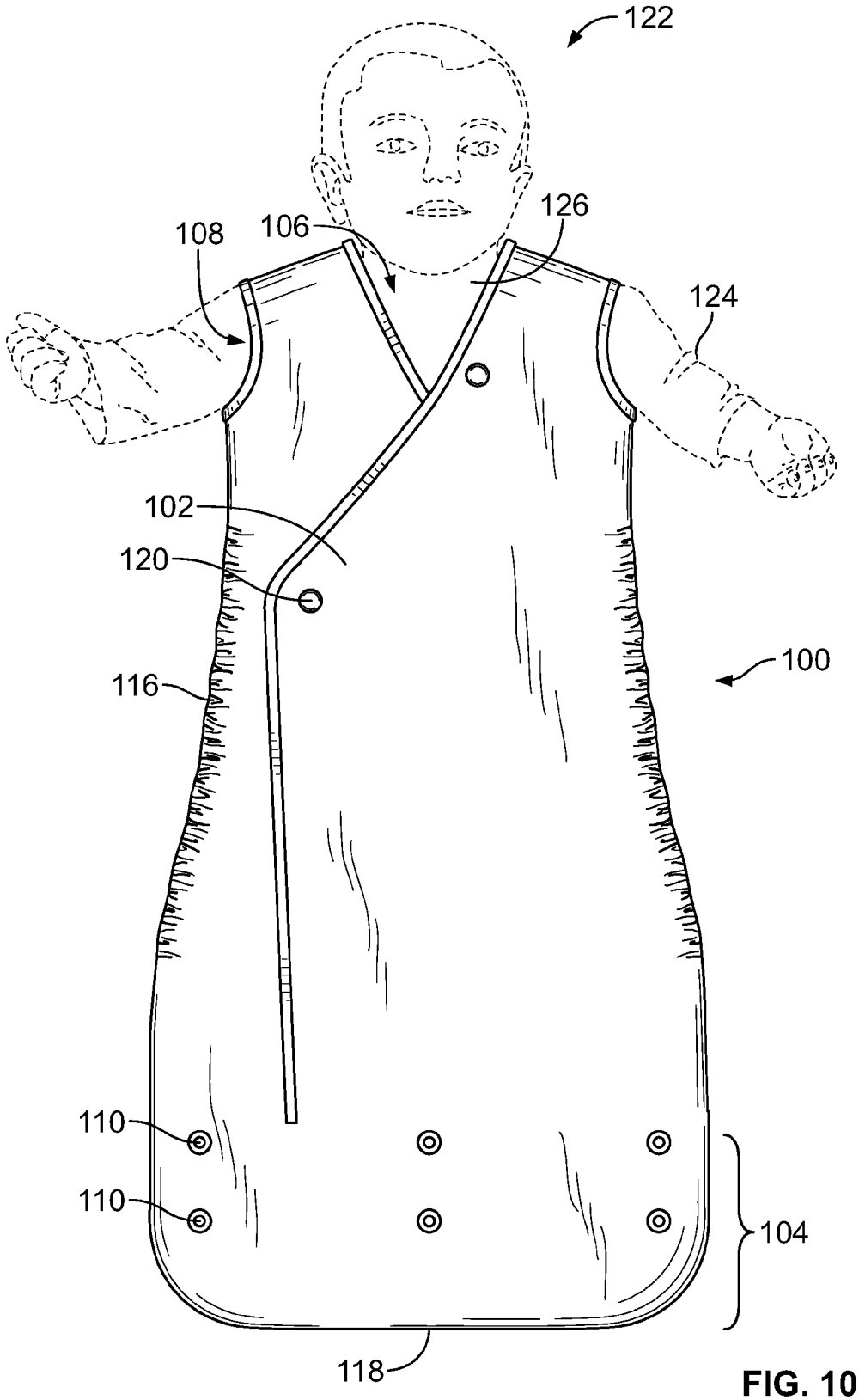

FIG. 10

ADJUSTABLE INFANT SWADDLE

CLAIM OF PRIORITY

[0001] This application claims the priority of U.S. Ser. No. 62/007,169 filed on Jun. 3, 2014, the contents of which are fully incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE EMBODIMENTS

[0002] This field of the invention and its embodiments relates to infant garments, namely garments that restrict an infant's movement. In particular, the present invention relates to form-fitting, adjustable garments that sooth, comfort, and protect an infant.

BACKGROUND OF THE EMBODIMENTS

[0003] The practice of tightly wrapping infants in cloths or bands, known as swaddling, is thought to be hundreds and maybe thousands of years old. It is postulated that the practice arose out of a belief that it was necessary for an infant to develop proper posture. Although swaddling was by and large abandoned in the 17^{th} century, the practice has found a resurgence as a result of a number of medical studies outlining the favorable benefits of the practice.

[0004] Such studies have shown that swaddling assists infants in remaining in restful sleep by preventing the moro reflex, a response characterized by an involuntary spreading/unspreading of the arms and crying. By restricting the movement of the feet and arms, the effects of the moro reflex can be limited thereby decreasing the chances of a sleeping infant waking. Additionally, it appears swaddling can reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome ("SIDS"). While the practice can be extremely beneficial, there are potential drawbacks to swaddling an infant.

[0005] For example, swaddling presents the risk that the infant will become overheated if the ambient temperature is too high or the swaddle material is too thick. This actually increases the risk of SIDS or cause hyperthermia. If looser, more breathable material is used for the swaddle, such loose wrappings may present a suffocation hazard by impeding the flow of air through the nose and mouth. As a result, proper swaddling techniques generally take a length of time, make diaper checks and changes more arduous, and increase the chance of completely waking a sleeping infant.

[0006] Further, swaddles typically come in three sizes: small, medium, or large. These sizes do not take into account children of atypical sizes where a small size swaddle may be too small and a medium size swaddle may be too large. Some infants also grow more quickly than others, in either height or weight, which makes a swaddle not fit correctly.

[0007] Thus, there is a need for a swaddle that can readily fit infants of varying sizes while providing a lightweight breathable material. The present invention and its embodiments meets and exceed these needs. Review of related technology:

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 8,607,364 pertains to an ergonomic garment for swaddling an infant with an elongate retractable fabric shell having an outer surface and inner surface defining an interior volume for receiving the arms, legs and trunk of an infant therein. Garments have a head end for receiving the arms of said infant, a foot end for receiving the legs of said infant, and a mid-section for receiving the trunk of said infant that is narrower than said head end and said foot end, and a neck opening at the head end for receiving a neck of said infant. The garment has an ergonomic peanut-like shape. The garments have a reversible closure means accessing said interior volume of said fabric shell extending longitudinally along the central axis of said fabric shell from said head end to said foot end, a chin protector closure means and optionally a means for accepting an automotive seat belt. Detachable arms and/or leggings and attached retractable arms and/or leggings garments are shown. Porous light-permeable and antimicrobial fabric embodiments are described.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 8,539,620 pertains to a baby swaddle apparatus comprising generally a torso portion, a blanket portion, and a pouch portion. The torso portion having a plurality of panels and containing a torso waist opening and neck opening to receive a baby inside of the torso portion. The front panel of the torso also comprising at least one fastener. The blanket portion coupled to the torso rear panel comprising of a blanket panel containing an exterior and interior side and at least one fastener. The pouch portion can contain a pouch opening which receives the baby's legs. The pouch comprising of a pouch front and rear panel and a pouch front panel which contains a plurality of fasteners which allow the pouch to be modified in a way to allow for at least one leg opening.

[0010] U.S. Pat. No. 7,774,875 pertains to a swaddling blanket and pouch combination (SBPC) that allows an infant to be comfortably and easily swaddled. The blanket is comprised of a right blanket flap and a left blanket flap and includes a designated area to which is removably attached the pouch. The pouch features a lower end which includes an opening and closing means that allows an infant's soiled diaper to be easily removed and replaced or to take a rectal temperature. The SBPC is used by first placing the left blanket flap over the pouch, which is then followed by placing the right blanket flap over the pouch. The right and left blanket flaps as well as the pouch are preferably held in place by hook and loop fasteners.

[0011] U.S. Patent Application 2012/0125347 pertains to a garment for selective swaddling of an infant that includes an upper body portion for enclosing the torso region of the infant, a pair of sleeves extending outward from the upper body portion and crotch portion. Each of the outwardly extending sleeves is selectively closable such that a respective arm of the infant is precluded from passage therethrough and the crotch portion is selectively openable such that access is thereby provided to the interior of the garment. The upper body portion is provided with a selectively closable vertical opening extending downward from a collar of the upper body portion across a front portion of the upper body portion, thereby providing access into the upper body portion for tucking the infant's arms therein. A zipper is provided for selective opening and closing of the vertical opening. Snaps are provided for selective closure of the sleeves and selective opening of the crotch portion.

[0012] Various devices are known in the art. However, their structure and means of operation are substantially different from the present disclosure. The other inventions fail to solve all the problems taught by the present disclosure. The present invention and its embodiments provide for an adjustable swaddle that limits the amount of fabric employed and is shaped to provide natural restriction to an infant. Further, the fabric has elastomeric properties enabling the fabric to provide natural pressure rather than having to apply artificial pressures by heavy wrapping. At least one embodiment of this invention is presented in the drawings below and will be described in more detail herein.

SUMMARY OF THE EMBODIMENTS

[0013] A garment for swaddling an infant is described and taught having a first panel and a second panel, wherein the first panel and the second panel form the swaddle body, wherein the first panel is coupled to the second panel forming a body receiving area therebetween, a chest flap having at least one chest flap fastening mechanism, wherein the chest flap longitudedly crosses the midline of the swaddle body; a foot flap having at least one foot flap fastening mechanism, wherein the foot flap changes the overall length of the swaddle body, wherein the swaddle body has a top, a bottom, and elastomeric sides.

[0014] The garment is generally constructed from a lightweight, breathable, stretchable material. This provides warmth without overheating an infant. The garment may further have a foot flap opening, and at least one other opening to receive arms and head/neck therethrough. The openings may be resealable via snaps, latches, buttons, hook and loop fasteners and the like or any combination thereof. The foot flap opening provides access to the body receiving area, or the internal area that receives the torso and legs of the infant.

[0015] The particular shape of the swaddle body is important because it takes a number of measures into account in order to ensure the health and safety of the infant while providing the beneficial aspects of a swaddle. There is an opening at the top of the swaddle body that provides for a variable V-shape. This V-shaped opening allows for adjustable tightness of the swaddle body while preventing an impingement of the chin area of the infant. Further, the elastomeric sides provide extra compression and give the swaddle a form fitting, yet expandable quality. The elastomeric properties provide for a more natural pressure and prevent too great a pressure from being exerted on an infant due to careless wrapping.

[0016] Overall, the swaddle body has a flared shape with the top area of the swaddle body being narrower (lateral diameter) than the bottom area of the swaddle body. The sides of the swaddle body have a slightly concave design which begins just below the arm area and ends at about the position of the infant's hips. At the infant's hips, the swaddle body flares outwards to provide excess space for the legs of the infant. The foot flap provides a rounded bottom to the swaddle body.

[0017] In general, the present invention succeeds in conferring the following, and others not mentioned, benefits and objectives.

[0018] It is an object of the present invention to provide a garment that forms to an infant's body.

[0019] It is an object of the present invention to provide a garment that has an adjustable sizing component.

[0020] It is an object of the present invention to provide a garment that is made of a lightweight, breathable, stretchable fabric.

[0021] It is an object of the present invention to provide a garment that provides soothing pressure for an infant.

[0022] It is an object of the present invention to provide a garment that is shaped to accommodate the hips and legs of an infant.

[0023] It is an object of the present invention to provide a garment that does not cover the infant's mouth or nasal area.

[0024] It is an object of the present invention to provide a garment that does not use zippers or other fastening mechanisms which may injure an infant.

[0025] It is an object of the present invention to provide a garment that provides warmth to an infant.

[0026] It is another object of the present invention to provide a garment that is adaptable to be worn by infants of varying sizes.

[0027] It is another object of the present invention to provide a garment that minimizes fabric while maintaining the warmth of an infant.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0028] FIG. **1** is a front perspective view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention with the chest flap in a closed position.

[0029] FIG. **2** is a front view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0030] FIG. **3** is a back view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0031] FIG. **4** is a side view taken from the left side of a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0032] FIG. **5** is a side view taken from the right side of a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0033] FIG. **6** is a top view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0034] FIG. **7** is a bottom view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0035] FIG. **8** is a front perspective view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention with the chest flap in an open position.

[0036] FIG. **9** is a front view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention with a baby contained therein and the chest flap and foot flap closed.

[0037] FIG. **10** is a front view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention with a baby contained therein and the chest flap closed with the foot flap open.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0038] The preferred embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the drawings. Identical elements in the various figures are identified with the same reference numerals. Reference will now be made in detail to each embodiment of the present invention. Such embodiments are provided by way of explanation of the present invention, which is not intended to be limited thereto. In fact, those of ordinary skill in the art may appreciate upon reading the present specification and viewing the present drawings that various modifications and variations can be made thereto.

[0039] Referring now to FIG. **1**, there is an adjustable swaddle **100** with a first panel **112** and a second panel **114**. The two panels **112**, **114** are adhered to one another with stitching or other comparable adherence mechanisms. In some instances, the first panel **112** and the second panel **114** are a unitary element formed from a contiguous piece of fabric. The first panel **112** has a first panel upper surface **111** and a first panel lower surface **113** (see FIG. **8**). The second panel **114** has a second panel upper surface **115** and a second panel lower surface **117**. In some embodiments, there is a central layer between the upper and lower surfaces of each of the panels that may be used for padding or insulation.

[0040] The adjustable swaddle **100** generally has a top area **101**, middle area **105**, and a bottom area **103**. The top area **101** is oriented to be located where the head and arms of the infant

protrude, the middle area **105** extends from just below the arm openings **108** to about the end of the elastomeric sides **116**, and the bottom area **103** comprises the remaining material and is located where the infant's legs and feet would preferably be situated.

[0041] Preferably, the adjustable swaddle has a number of openings to accommodate appendages and provide ease of access to the infant in the swaddle. There are two arm openings **108** and a head/neck opening **106** located in the top area **101** of the adjustable swaddle **100**. Further, there is a foot flap opening **118** in the foot flap **104** of the adjustable swaddle **100**. The foot flap opening **118** is preferably resealable as necessary with a hook and loop fastener. The foot flap opening **118** provides access to the interior of the adjustable swaddle **100** without having to have first removed the infant from the adjustable swaddle **100**. This can be especially useful with the changing of the infant's diapers or to check on the status of the infant's diaper without waking them if they are sleeping.

[0042] The chest flap **102** is positioned to provide adjustable pressure to the infant contained within the swaddle **100**. The chest flap **102** may have any number of chest flap fastening mechanisms **120** which may include but are not limited to buttons, snaps, clasps, hook and loop fasteners, and the like or any combination thereof. On an under side of the chest flap **102**, which is the same as the first panel lower surface **113** (see FIG. **8**) there may be additional fastening mechanism(s). The chest flap **102** is designed to cross the longitudedly cross the midline of the swaddle **100**. The chest flap does so on a diagonal and then preferably, after crossing the midline, continues lengthwise down the swaddle **100**.

[0043] The positioning and shape of the chest flap **102** provides for adjustable pressure or compression to be placed on an infant. Additionally, the chest flap **102** forms a V-shape with the first panel **112**. This shape prevents the pinching of skin on or beneath the chin area of a child as is the case with many types of swaddles. The lack of a zipper or other fastening mechanism that may pinch, along with the provided shape formed by the chest flap **102** provides a much more preferable structure for a swaddle.

[0044] The elastomeric sides **116** help to provide a form fitting swaddle **100**. The elastomeric sides **116** have a rutching type pattern that causes the sides to compress inwards thereby holding the material more closely to the infant's skin. This also is a key factor in the distinctive shape of the swaddle **100**. The elastomeric sides **116** provide a "natural" pressure on the infant, as opposed to the artificial pressures employed on a typical swaddle when an infant is tightly wrapped. The elastomeric sides **116** may provide for a lengthwise (2-way) compression or lengthwise and widthwise compression (4-way). The elastomeric nature of the present invention prevents heavy wrapping thereby decreasing the layers of fabric and the chance of injury caused by careless wrapping.

[0045] The swaddle **100** ends with a foot flap **104**. The foot flap **104** generally comprises the bottom area **103** of the swaddle **100**. The foot flap **104** has any number of foot flap fastening mechanisms **110**. By employing the foot flap fastening mechanisms **110**, one can change the length of the swaddle **100**. The foot flap **104** is folded upwards in order to bring the male and female fasteners together. Once secured, the length of the swaddle **100** has been shortened by the distance between the fastening mechanisms. One swaddle **100** may have varying levels by which the foot flap fastening mechanisms **110** can be attached thereby resulting in varying levels of length of comfort.

[0046] The swaddle **100** is shown from a front view in FIG. **2**. Here, the shape of the swaddle **100** is evident. The top area **101**, middle area **105**, and the bottom area **103** form a shape reminiscent of a teardrop with a flattened top and bottom. In the bottom area **103**, is the foot flap **104** and foot flap opening **118**.

[0047] The swaddle **100** has the chest flap **102** closed and coupled to the chest flap fastening mechanism **120** across the midline of the swaddle **100**. The foot flap fastening mechanisms **110** are shown in two distinct rows. There is an upper row and a lower row. The foot flap fastening mechanism **110** in each column couples to the other in the column. In some instances, there may be more than two rows giving more flexibility in terms of length adjustments.

[0048] Further, the shape of the head/neck opening **106** is more delineated in this view. The rear of the head/neck opening **106** follows area between the infant's neck and back, whereas the front of the opening has a pronounced V-shape. Further, there may be a chest flap fastening mechanism **120** located at the terminal point of the juncture thereby preventing any slippage of the fabric from this shape. This prevents the fabric from shifting to a position over the mouth and from pinching the head/neck area as the infant moves about.

[0049] In FIG. **3** the swaddle **100** is shown from the back. The top area **101** is shown having the arm openings **108** and head/neck opening **106**. The middle area **105** has the elastomeric sides **116** and the bottom area **103** has the foot flap (see FIG. **2**). The second panel **114** and namely the second panel upper surface **115** are visible. The second panel **114** is a continuous panel of fabric to provide comfort when an infant is laying on their back as there is no seams, fastening mechanisms, or the like to press into the infant's skin and cause discomfort.

[0050] Referring now to FIGS. **4** and **5**, the swaddle **100** is shown from a side view. In FIG. **4** the view is taken from the left side placing the first panel **112** on the left of the drawing and in FIG. **5** the view is taken from the right side placing the first panel **112** on the right side of the drawing. The first panel **112** and the second panel **114** are shown coming together forming the swaddle **100**. At the terminal end, or bottom area **103**, of the swaddle **100** there is a foot flap opening **118**. The foot flap opening **118** preferably is sized to provide access to the infant without the need for removal of the swaddle **100**.

[0051] Each of the arm openings **108** are shown to be virtually symmetrical and identical to one another. The arm openings **108** are preferably rounded to conform to the infant's arms. The arm openings **108** may have some elastic qualities to cling to dimensions of the infant's arm. Additionally, the arm openings **108** may be adjustable to provide increased or decreased amounts of tension on the infant. The elastic sides **116** is preferably uniform as well in order to provide an even amount of tension to each side of the garment thereby properly securing the garment in place. The chest flap fastening mechanisms **120** and the foot flap fastening mechanism **100** round out the design.

[0052] In FIGS. **6** and **7**, there is a top view (FIG. **6**) and a bottom view (FIG. **7**) of the swaddle **100**. The foot flap fastening mechanisms **110**, foot flap opening **118**, and first panel **112** and second panel **114** are visible, as is the arm openings **108** and the head/neck opening **106**. Additionally, in FIG. **6** the shape of the swaddle **100** is shown. From this "top-down"

view, the elastic sides **116** is clearly visible as the swaddle **100** flares outwards to accommodate the infant, namely the infant's hips. This shape of the swaddle **100** helps to prevent injuries or cause afflictions related to the restrictive nature of the material.

[0053] Referring now to FIG. **8**, there is a perspective view of the swaddle **100** with the chest flap **102** opened exposing the first panel lower surface **113** and hook and loop fastener **109** disposed thereon. Visible are the elements named and described at least above in FIG. **1**.

[0054] Further, the structure of the chest flap **102** is shown. The chest flap **102** is essentially a split in the fabric of the first panel **112** rather than making the first panel **112** a contiguous piece. This makes the chest flap **102** ideal for increasing or decreasing the pressure or accommodating the size of the infant.

[0055] As shown, the chest flap **102** has a number of chest flap fastening mechanisms **120**. The arrangement of the chest flap fastening mechanisms **120** may vary and may include chest flap fastening mechanisms located in proximity to one another on the first panel lower surface **113** of the chest flap **102**. This enables fixed fastening mechanisms such as snaps or buttons to be incrementally tightened or loosened depending on one's needs. Additionally, there is a hook and loop fastener **109** which comprises a portion of the first panel lower surface **113** and the first panel upper surface **111**. On the first panel upper surface **111**, there is preferably a strip that can be used for adherence and on the underside of the chest flap **102**, or the first panel lower surface **113**, there is a hook and loop fastener **109** covering the surface. This, in turn, provides greater flexibility in adjustments rather than the having individual strips of such a fastener.

[0056] In FIGS. **9** and **10**, an infant **122** is shown positioned within and wearing the swaddle **100**. In each instance, the infant's head/neck **126** is positioned and placed through the head/neck opening **106**. Additionally, the arms **124** are positioned and placed through the arm openings **108**. The chest flap **102** has been secured via the chest flap fastening mechanisms **120** and potentially the hook and loop fastener **109** (see FIG. **8**). The elastomeric sides **116** are shown lightly constricting on the infant's body. In FIG. **9**, the foot flap **104** has been secured to the foot flap fastening mechanisms **110**, whereas in FIG. **10**, the foot flap **104** is unsecured tot eh foot flap fastening mechanism(s) **110**. This can be used to change the length of the swaddle **100** or to constrict the movements of the infant **122**. If the foot flap **104** is secured to the foot flap fastening mechanisms **110**, then access to the foot flap opening **118** may be obscured. As a result, the foot flap **104** may be unsecured and then the foot flap opening **118** may be properly accessed.

[0057] The swaddle as described in FIGS. **1-10** can comprise a number of materials including but not limited to woven or unwoven fabric, cloth, terrycloth, woven or woven fibers of wool, flax, cotton, and/or yarn, mineral textiles, and synthetic textile including but not limited to nylon, polyester, and/or acrylic, or any combinations thereof. Preferably, the materials selected provide a natural compression on the infant's body as opposed to requiring the swaddle **100** to be tightly wrapped around them. Materials exhibiting compression properties may further be used for the elastomeric sides **116** such as spandex and spandex in combination with other fibers including those named above. This reduces the chance for bodily injury from improper swaddling, as well as allows the fabric to conform to the infant thereby reducing the amount of fabric required. By limiting the amount of fabric, the likelihood of material obstructing the infant's airways and chances of overheating are greatly diminished.

[0058] Overall the dimensions of the swaddle **100** can vary with the particular sizing for an infant but should range from about 38 cm (15 inch) to about 76 cm (30 inch) in length to accommodate an infant up to the age of about 4-5 months and about 9 kg (20 lbs.). The foot flap **104** may have foot flap fastening mechanisms **110** variably positioned to change the overall length of the swaddle **100** by about 2.5 cm (1 inch) to about 13 cm (5 inch).

[0059] Although this invention has been described with a certain degree of particularity, it is to be understood that the present disclosure has been made only by way of illustration and that numerous changes in the details of construction and arrangement of parts may be resorted to without departing from the spirit and the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An adjustable garment for swaddling an infant comprising:
- a first panel and a second panel,
  - wherein the first panel and the second panel form a swaddle body,
  - wherein the first panel is coupled to the second panel forming a body receiving area therebetween,
- a chest flap having a plurality of adjustable chest flap fastening mechanisms,
  - wherein the chest flap longitudedly crosses the midline of the swaddle body
  - wherein the plurality of adjustable chest flap fastening mechanisms are variably positioned thereby allowing for a width adjustment of the adjustable garment;
- a foot flap having a plurality of adjustable foot flap fastening mechanisms,
  - wherein the foot flap changes the overall length of the swaddle body,
  - wherein the plurality of adjustable foot flap fastening mechanisms are variably positioned thereby allowing for a length adjustment of the adjustable garment; and
- wherein the swaddle body has elastomeric sides.

2. The adjustable garment of claim **1** further comprising a foot flap opening;
- wherein the foot flap opening provides access to the body receiving area.

3. The adjustable garment of claim **1** further comprising at least one opening in the top of the swaddle body,
- wherein the at least one opening is contoured to receive appendages therethrough.

4. The adjustable garment of claim **3** wherein there are two openings on each of the elastomeric sides and one opening at a top of the swaddle body.

5. The adjustable garment of claim **4** wherein the opening at the top of the swaddle body forms a V-shape between the first panel and the chest flap, when the chest flap is closed.

6. The adjustable garment of claim **1** wherein the elastomeric sides compress the swaddle body lengthwise and inwards.

7. A garment for swaddling an infant comprising:
- a first panel having a first inside surface and a first outside surface and a second
- panel with a second inside surface and a second outside surface,
  - wherein the first panel and the second panel form a swaddle body,

wherein the swaddle body has a top, bottom, and two sides and a plurality of openings,

wherein there are two arm openings and a neck opening for

receiving arms and a head therethrough respectively,

wherein the first panel is coupled to the second panel forming a body receiving area therebetween,

a chest flap having at least one chest flap fastening mechanism, wherein the chest flap longitudedly crosses the midline of the swaddle body and couples to the chest flap fastening mechanism; and

a foot flap having at least one foot flap fastening mechanism, wherein the foot flap fastening mechanism is located above the position of the foot flap, where coupling the foot flap to the foot flap mechanism changes the overall length of the swaddle body.

8. The garment of claim **7** wherein the first panel and the second panel are made from a breathable lightweight, material.

9. The garment of claim **7** wherein the sides are stretchable.

10. The garment of claim **7** wherein the swaddle body has a flared shape with the top being narrower than the bottom and the sides possessing a concave quality.

11. The garment of claim **10** wherein the swaddle body flares outwards at the position of the infant's hips.

12. The garment of claim of **7** wherein the neck opening has a variable dimensioned V-shape depending on the position of the chest flap.

13. The garment of claim **7** wherein the two arm openings are disposed one each on each side of the medial plane of the swaddle body and each arm opening has a concave structure.

14. The garment of claim **7** further comprising a foot flap opening,

wherein the foot flap opening is resealable via a hook and loop fastener.

15. The garment of claim **14** wherein the foot flap opening provides access to the body receiving area.

16. The garment of claim **15** wherein the foot flap provides a rounded bottom to the swaddle body.

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