A positioning and support apparatus to secure an infant to an object is described. The object in which the infant is generally secured to is a pillow. The positioning and support apparatus aids in the safety of the infant while simultaneously aiding in the freedom of a caregiver.
METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR
POSITIONING AND SUPPORTING AN
INFANT

FIELD OF INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to the sup-
port of a person with respect to another object. Specifically, in
one embodiment, the invention is an apparatus and method of
securing an infant for positioning or support.

BACKGROUND OF THE ART

[0002] Positioning and supporting an infant has challenged
parents, particularly mothers, for a very long time. Even so,
there are still problems to be solved. One problem faced by
caregivers is the need to support an infant during feeding,
particularly breastfeeding. Further, related to that problem, a
caregiver, feeding or otherwise caring for an infant, can be
limited in their participation of other activities such as caring
for other needs of another infant. Accordingly, many caregivers
desire increased freedom, specifically, increased freedom in
the use of their hands. In other words, many caregivers
desire a second set of hands.

[0003] While apparatus aiding in the positioning and sup-
port of an infant has been longstanding, there have been
recent developments in this art. An example of such develop-
ments is a crescent shaped pillow, as depicted in U.S. Pat. No.
6,039,720, which is a continuation-in-part U.S. Pat. No.
5,661,861, and U.S. Pat. No. 5,261,134. The crescent shaped
pillow has become extremely popular among caregivers
because of its utility.

[0004] However, significant issues still persist with the
secure positioning and support of infants, even with the use of
this crescent shaped pillow. For example, the crescent shaped
pillow does not secure an infant. This lack of securing can
cause a multitude of issues, such as allowing an infant to fall
from the crescent pillow for an unknown distance, potentially
causing extreme harm.

[0005] Another issue is that while this crescent shaped pil-
low may provide support, it still requires significant assist-
ance from a caregiver when they are using the crescent
shaped pillow in conjunction with caring for an infant. Car-
egivers would prefer to have increased freedom in their activi-
ties, including increased freedom in the use of their hands for
other activities, for example, attending to another child’s
needs.

[0006] What is needed is an apparatus and method to
securely transport and support an infant while providing care-
giving services.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] Accordingly, the present invention is an infant posi-
tioning and support apparatus and method. The infant posi-
tioning and support apparatus comprises a two strap system.
Two straps are coupled together. The first strap encircles a
pillow, generally, a crescent shaped pillow. This first strap for
attachment to the pillow may be fixed or removable.

[0008] The second strap is used to secure the infant. Both
straps have ends and each contain a fastening system. The
fastening system is generally that of a hook and loop system.
This hook and loop system, such as Velcro, causes the infant
positioning and support apparatus to be easily removed from
both the infant and the pillow. Having the positioning and
support apparatus removable provides significant utility, such
as making it easily washable, among many other benefits.

[0009] The current invention provides a multitude of advan-
tages. For example, the caregiver has increased use of
their hands, because they no longer need to be directly hold-
ing the infant while providing care to it. Further, the infant is
secured to the support pillow by way of the apparatus and
method, so the infant’s safety is greatly increased.

[0010] In one embodiment, the crescent shaped pillow may
be positioned around the caregiver. This allows the caregiver
to use the infant support apparatus and method, as an
example, for feeding the infant. With the pillow positioned
appropriately the caregiver could breastfeed the infant and
continue to have the use of their hands, while all the time the
child is secured.

[0011] In another embodiment, multiple infant two strap
systems may encircle a single crescent shaped pillow allow-
ing multiple infants to be positioned and secured.

[0012] Thus, this positioning and support apparatus and
method solve longtime needs, increase safety, add flexibility
to the caregiver and leverage the popularity of the crescent
shaped support pillow.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the
current invention.

[0014] FIG. 2 is a top view of an embodiment of the current
invention.

[0015] FIG. 3 is a top view of an embodiment with fasteners
fastened.

[0016] FIG. 4 is a side view of an embodiment of the current
invention.

[0017] FIG. 5 is an illustration of an embodiment of the
current invention with an infant fastened.

[0018] FIG. 6 is an illustration of an embodiment of the
current invention with an infant fastened to a pillow.

[0019] FIG. 7 is an illustration of a caregiver caring for an
infant utilizing an embodiment of the current invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED
EMBODIMENTS

[0020] The present invention is drawn to a positioning and
support apparatus and method to aid in the care of an infant.
This present invention significantly increases the safety of the
infant while simultaneously increasing the flexibility of a
caregiver.

[0021] As shown in FIG. 1-4, the positioning and support
apparatus 1 consists of straps 2 and 3. Strap 2 has ends 6 and
7. End 6 has fastener 10 attached thereto. End 7 has fastener
11 attached on the opposite surface of strap 2 as fastener 10
making fasteners 10 and 11 cooperating and thus able to form
connection 17. As cooperating fasteners, fasteners 10 and 11
include hook and loop material 16, such as Velcro, to secure
ends 6 and 7.

[0022] As shown in FIG. 1-4, strap 3 has ends 4 and 5. End
4 has fastener 8 attached thereto. End 5 has fastener 9 attached
on the opposite surface of strap 3 as fastener 8 making fas-
teners 8 and 9 cooperating and thus able to form connection
18. As cooperating fasteners, fasteners 8 and 9 include hook
and loop material 16, such as Velcro, to secure ends 4 and 5.

[0023] As shown in FIGS. 1-4, strap 3 and 4 are connected
via coupling 12. Coupling 12 may be temporary or permanent
and, further, may be stitched.
Generally, straps 2 and 3 may be constructed of cotton, or may also be made of another flexible or nonflexible material. The use of cotton or another flexible material, in addition to the flexibility supplied by the use of a wide hook and loop material 16 area, allows for varying sizes of infant 14 and pillow 13 while still being sufficiently flexible. The infant 14 continues to increase in size as they age, further necessitating the need to accommodate varying sizes. Next, the infant 14 must be positioned and supported securely while at the same time not in discomfort, increasing the need for flexibility. Finally, the pillow 13 may vary in size or may use a cover which varies the size of the pillow. Regardless of the varying sizes of pillow 13 and infant 14, connections 19 and 20 may be used.

As shown in FIG. 6-7, strap 2 is generally connected to a pillow 13. Generally, pillow 13 is a crescent shaped pillow similar to the crescent shaped pillow described in U.S. Pat. No. 6,036,723, U.S. Pat. No. 5,661,861, and U.S. Pat. No. 5,261,134. Crescent shaped pillow 13 has body 24, ends 22 and 23 and cavity 21. Connection 19 is formed by engaging cooperating fasteners 16, 18 and 17 of the present invention.

As shown in FIG. 5-7, strap 3 is generally connected to an infant 14. Connection 20 is formed by engaging cooperating fasteners 8 and 9 of strap 3. Then strap 3 is connected to infant 14.

As shown in FIG. 6-7, when strap 2 is connected to the crescent shaped pillow and strap 3 is connected to infant 14, the infant is secured. A caregiver 25 can provide care giving services, such as breastfeeding, while having freedom of use of their hands. Further, positioning and support apparatus 1 secures infant 14 keeping them from dangers should they not be secured.

Next, as is commonly the case, items used in conjunction with infants generally need to be washed or otherwise cared for. The use of cotton for straps 2 and 3, along with hook and loop material 16, allows coupled 12 straps 2 and 3 to be machine washable. Further, making straps 2 and 3 removable aids in their ability to be washed, among the many other benefits of removability. All of such further increase apparatus 1’s utility.

Further, caregiver 25 may partially encircle themselves, as shown in FIG. 7, with crescent shaped pillow 13, by placing pillow 13’s ends 22 and 23 around said caregiver 25 and engaging cavity 21. When caregiver 25 engages cavity 21, pillow 13 may be placed in front of caregiver 25. Strap 2 may then be connected 19 to pillow 13. Next, strap 3 coupled 12 to strap 2 may then be connected 20 to infant 14. This then places the infant 14 in front of caregiver 25. Caregiver 25 may then provide care to the infant 14, for example, with or without use of caregiver’s 25 hands while breastfeeding.

In another embodiment, a plurality coupled 12 straps 2 and 3 may be attached to a single pillow 13, allowing for a plurality of infant’s 14 to be secured during positioning and support.

While the present invention will aid in the positioning and support of infant 14 by securing said infant 14, there is no guarantee that any infant will be secured adequately to protect against harm or falling. Further, inherent in the use of a hook and loop system, the coupling may not be adequate to appropriately secure all infants. Further, because of the securing of infant 14, caregiver 25 should not leave infant 14 unsupervised.

Information as herein shown and described in detail is fully capable of attaining the above-described object of the invention, and is, thus, representative of the subject matter which is broadly contemplated by the present invention. The scope of the present invention fully encompasses other embodiments which may become obvious to those skilled in the art, and is to be limited, accordingly, by nothing other than the appended claims, in which reference to an element in the singular is not intended to mean “one and only one” unless explicitly so stated, but rather “one or more.”

All structural and functional equivalents to and combinations of the elements of the above-described preferred embodiment and additional embodiments that are known to those of ordinary skill in the art are hereby expressly incorporated by reference and are intended to be encompassed by the present claims. However, it should be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that various changes and modifications in form, apparatus, material, and fabrication material detail may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the appended claims.

Moreover, no requirement exists for a device or method to address each and every problem sought to be resolved by the present invention, for such to be encompassed by the present claims. Further, no element, component, or method step in the present disclosure is intended to be dedicated to the public regardless of whether the element, component, or method step is explicitly recited in the claims. No claim herein is to be construed under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. §112, sixth paragraph, unless the element is expressly recited using the phrase “means for.”

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

The current invention is applicable to the positioning and securing infant for the infants safety and increased freedom of the caregiver.

1. An apparatus for positioning and support of an infant comprising:
a first strap with a first end and a second end;
said first end and said second end containing cooperating fasteners;
a second strap with a third end and a forth end; said third end and said forth end containing cooperating fasteners;
said first strap coupled to said second strap;
an elongated sleeve filled with filler material;
said third end and said fourth end of said second strap removably fastened to encircle said elongated sleeve.
2. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
a plurality of the coupled first straps and second straps removably fastened to encircle said elongated sleeve.
3. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein elongated sleeve is crescent shaped.
4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein:
said first strap is cotton;
said second strap is cotton.
5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said first strap and said second strap are removably fastened to encircle an infant.
6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said first end and said second end of said first strap are fastened to encircle an infant.
7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said first strap encircling said infant is configured to position said infant for feeding.
8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said elongated sleeve is crescent shaped.
9. (canceled)
10. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said first strap and said second strap are composed of a washable material.
11. A method for positioning and supporting an infant comprising:
coupling a first strap having a first end and second end, said first end and second end containing cooperating fasteners, to a second strap having a third end and fourth end, said third end and fourth end containing cooperating fasteners;
encircling an elongated sleeve filled with filler material with said second strap.
12. The method of claim 11 wherein said first strap and said second strap are composed of a washable material.
13. The method of claim 11 wherein said coupling is permanent.
14. The method of claim 11 wherein said elongated sleeve is crescent shaped.
15. The method of claim 14 further comprising the step: engaging an operator with said crescent shaped elongated sleeve’s cavity.
16. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step: feeding said infant by said operator.
17. The method of claim 11 further comprising the step: encircling said elongated sleeve with a plurality of coupled first and second straps.
18. The method of claim 11 further comprising the step: washing said coupled first and second straps.
19. The method of claim 11 wherein said first and second straps are composed of cotton.
20. An apparatus for feeding an infant comprising: a first strap with a first end and a second end; said first end and said second end containing cooperating fasteners; a second strap with a third end and a forth end; said third end and said forth end containing cooperating fasteners; said first strap coupled to said second strap; a crescent shaped elongated sleeve filled with filler material; said third end and said fourth end are fastened to encircle said crescent shaped elongated sleeve.

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