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PILLOW

BACKGROUND

[0001] Conventional pillows can be found in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, and are often adapted for supporting one or more body parts of a user.

[0002] Many pillows are constructed entirely or partially out of foam material. For example, polyurethane foam is commonly used in pillows of all types, and can be used alone or in combination with other types of cushion materials. In many cases, pillows are constructed entirely or partially of visco-elastic material, thereby providing the pillow with an increased ability to conform to a user and to thereby distribute the weight or other load of the user. Some visco-elastic materials are also temperature sensitive, thereby also enabling the pillow to change shape based at least in part upon the temperature of the supported body part.

[0003] Although the number and types of pillows constructed with visco-elastic materials continue to increase, the capabilities of such materials are often underutilized. In many cases, this underutilization is due to poor pillow design and/or the choice of material(s) used in the pillow.

[0004] Based at least in part upon the limitations of existing pillows containing visco-elastic material and the high consumer demand for improved pillows in a wide variety of applications, new pillows are welcome additions to the art.

SUMMARY

[0005] Some embodiments of the present invention provide a pillow comprising a core and a plurality of lobes extending from the core, wherein the core includes a top layer and a bottom layer between which is located granulated filler material, wherein the top layer, bottom layer, and/or granulated foam comprises visco-elastic foam. The sides of the core can be defined by highly porous material (such as a 3D textile material) in some embodiments. Also, the core can be enclosed within a cover having highly porous sides (e.g., made of a 3D textile material or a velour or stretch velour material) corresponding to and covering the sides of the core and/or a highly porous bottom (e.g., again, made of a 3D textile material or a velour or stretch velour

material) corresponding to and covering the bottom layer of the core. In some embodiments, the top of the cover can be less porous than the sides or bottom of the cover, whereas in other embodiments, the top and bottom of the cover are less porous than the sides of the cover. Examples of material that can be used for the top of the cover include a double jersey fabric, velour, or stretch velour. In some alternative embodiments, these same materials can be used for the bottom of the cover, such as in embodiments in which the top and bottom of the cover are both less porous than the sides of the cover.

[0006] Further aspects of the present invention, together with the organization and operation thereof, will become apparent from the following detailed description of the invention when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein like elements have like numerals throughout the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a pillow according to the present invention, shown with a portion of the cover removed to expose the core of the pillow.

[0008] FIG. 2 is a detail cross-sectional view of the pillow of FIG. 1.

[0009] Before the various embodiments of the present invention are explained in detail, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and the arrangements of components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or of being carried out in various ways. Also, terms such as "first", "second", and "third" are used herein and in the appended claims for purposes of description and are not intended to indicate or imply relative importance or significance. The use of "including," "comprising," or "having" and variations thereof herein is meant to encompass the items listed thereafter and equivalents thereof as well as additional items. Unless limited otherwise, the terms "connected," "coupled," and variations thereof herein are used broadly and encompass direct and indirect connections and couplings. In addition, the terms "collected" and "coupled" and variations thereof are not restricted to physical or mechanical connections or couplings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0010] A pillow 100 according to an embodiment of the present invention is illustrated in FIGS. 1-2. The pillow 100 comprises a core 110 having a plurality of lobes 120, 130 extending from a central portion of the core 110. In some embodiments, the lobes 120, 130 all have substantially the same size. However, in other embodiments (including that shown in FIG. 1), the lobes 120, 130 can have different sizes. In particular, two of the lobes 120 in the illustrated embodiment are smaller than the other two lobes 130. Any combination of lobes having the same size or different sizes is possible, and falls within the spirit and scope of the present invention. Also, in other embodiments, the core 110 can have three lobes, five lobes, or more lobes of the same or different size. In any case, the lobes 120, 130 can be equally or unequally spaced about the periphery of the pillow 100. The lobed shape of the pillow 100 provides a number of support surfaces for a user. For example, the lobed shapes can enhance breathing of a user resting his or her head against the pillow 100 (e.g., when sleeping on the user's side or stomach), and can also provide support for the shoulder and/or neck of the user when the user is sleeping on his or her side or back.

[0011] With continued reference to FIGS. 1 and 2, the core 110 of the illustrated pillow 100 includes a top layer 140, a bottom layer 150 opposite the top layer 140, and sidewalls 160 connecting the top layer 140 and the bottom layer 150. The top layer 140, bottom layer 150 and sidewalls 160 define a cavity 170 shaped to receive filler material 180. The pillow 100 can include a rib where the top layer 140 and sidewalls 160 meet and are joined, and/or a rib where the bottom layer 150 and the sidewalls 160 meet and are joined. The top layer 140, bottom layer 150 and sidewalls 160 can be secured to one another in any suitable manner, such as by adhesive or cohesive bonding material, by being bonded together during formation of the top layer 140, bottom layer 150, and sidewalls 160, by tape, hook and loop fastener material, or conventional fasteners, by stitches extending at least partially through the top layer 140, bottom layer 150, and sidewalls 160, or in any other suitable manner.

[0012] The top layer 140, bottom layer 150 and sidewalls 160 can have any thickness desired. By way of example only, in some embodiments the top layer 140, bottom layer 150,

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