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(54) **CONVERTIBLE HEAD AND NECK SUPPORTING APPAREL**

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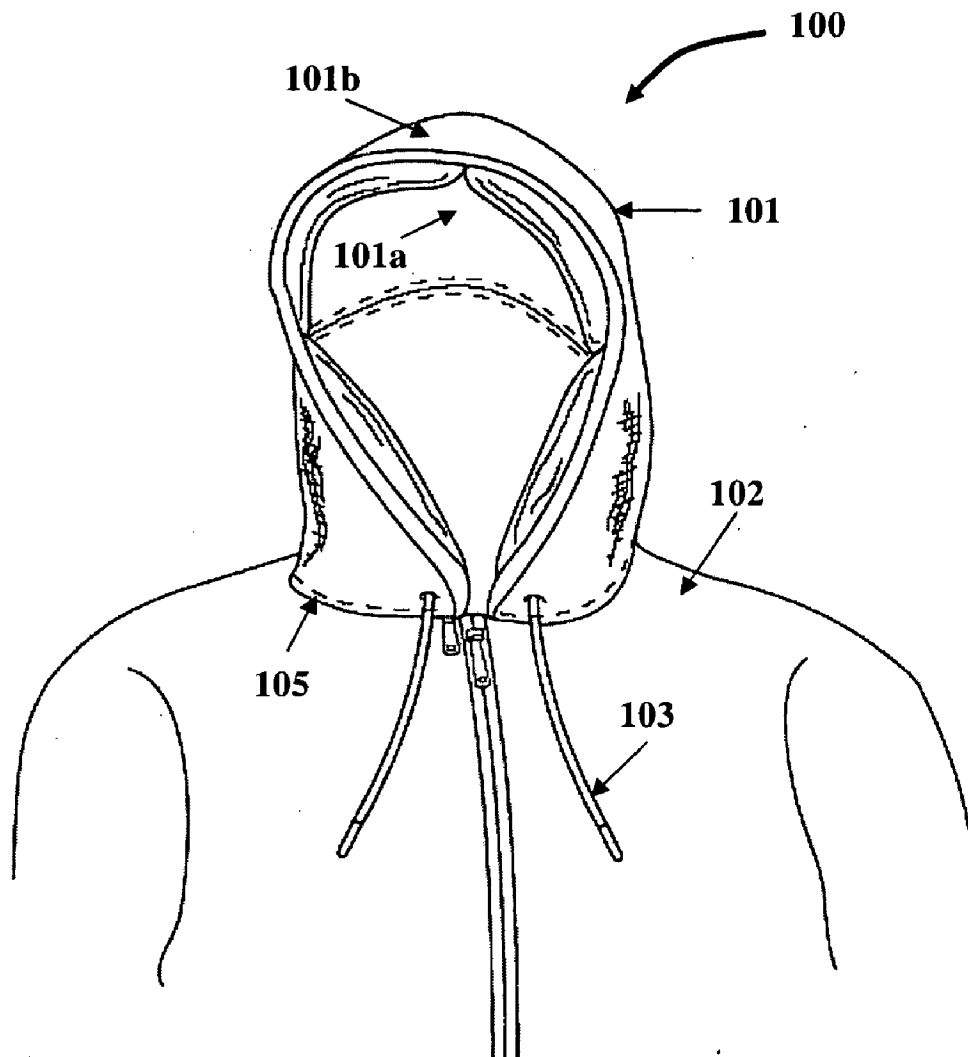
(57) **ABSTRACT**

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Disclosed herein is a convertible apparel for providing cushioned support for the head and neck of a wearer. The convertible apparel comprises a hood and a body portion. The hood is detachably attached to the body portion of the convertible apparel. The hood covers the head of the wearer. The hood comprises an inner layer and an outer layer. A cushion structure is detachably attached to the inner layer of the hood for supporting the head of the wearer. The hood is folded around the cushion structure to create a neck support for supporting the neck of the wearer. The hood with the cushion structure thereby provides support for the head and neck of the wearer.

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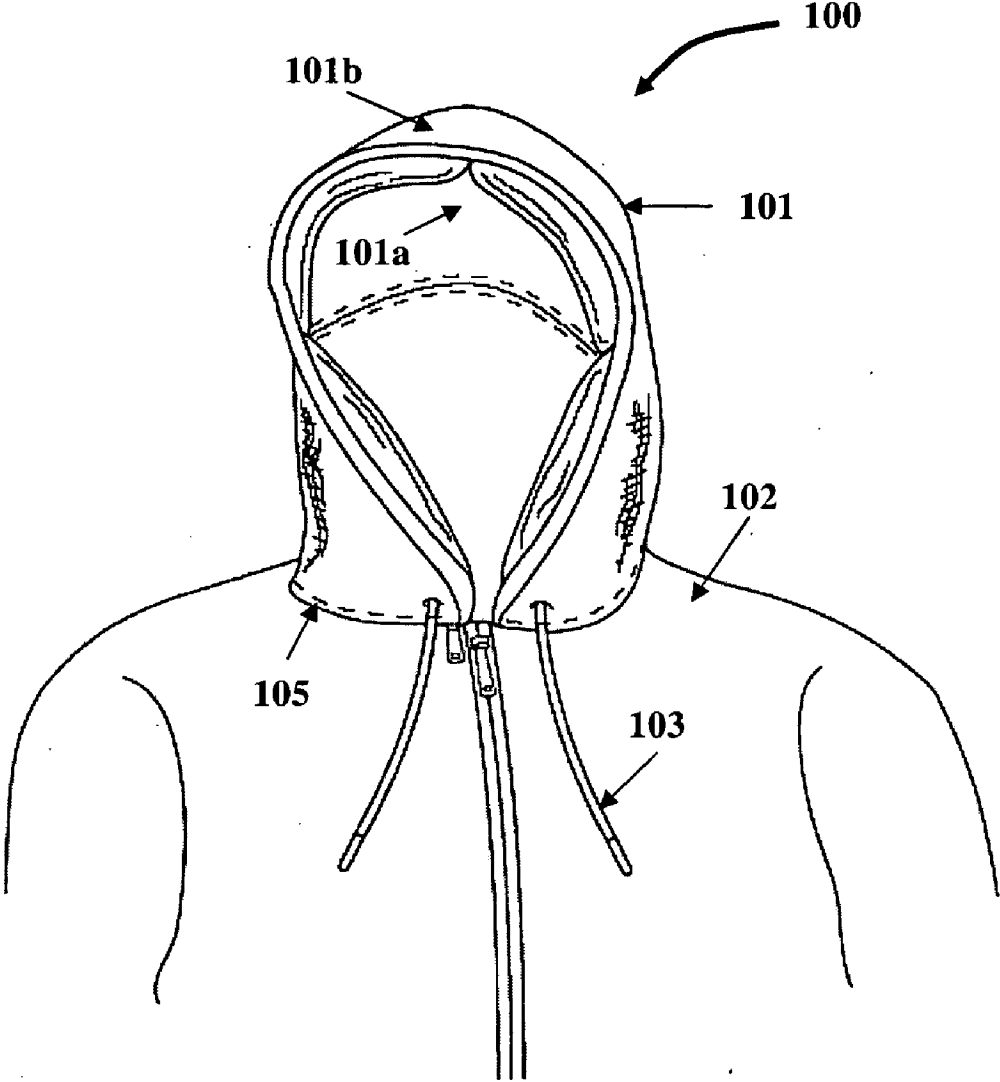


FIG. 1A

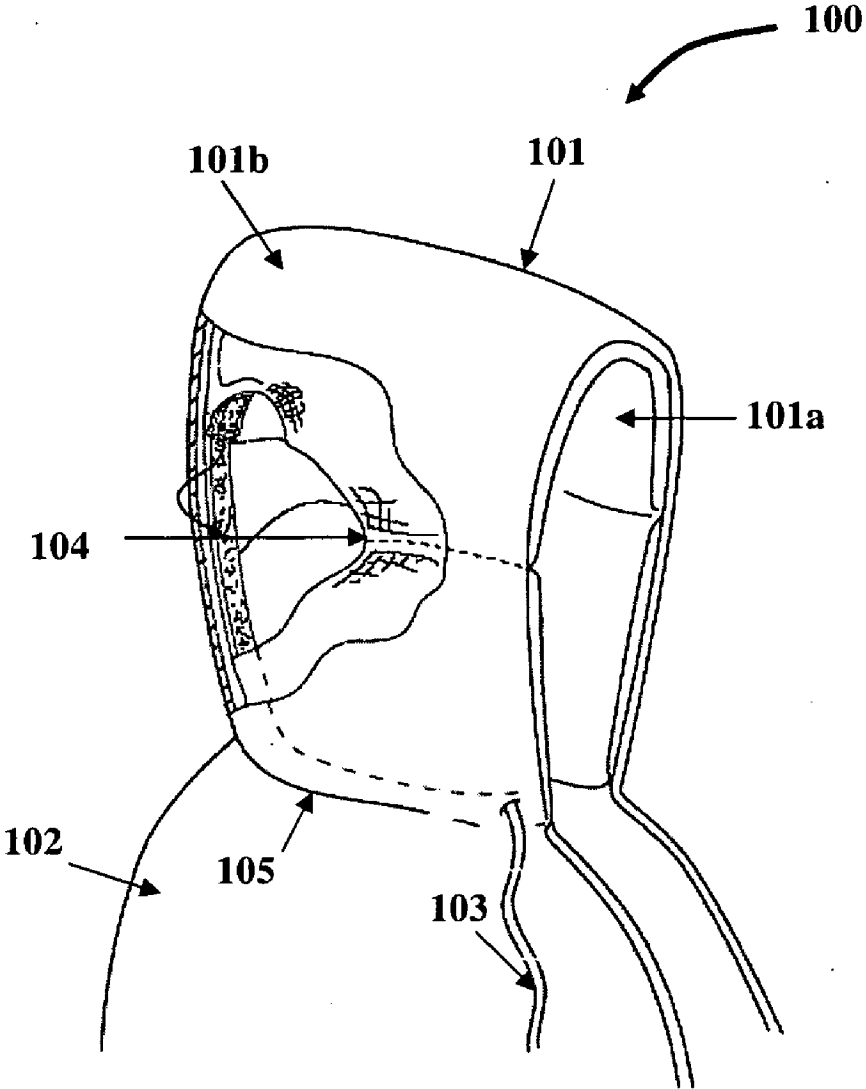


FIG. 1B

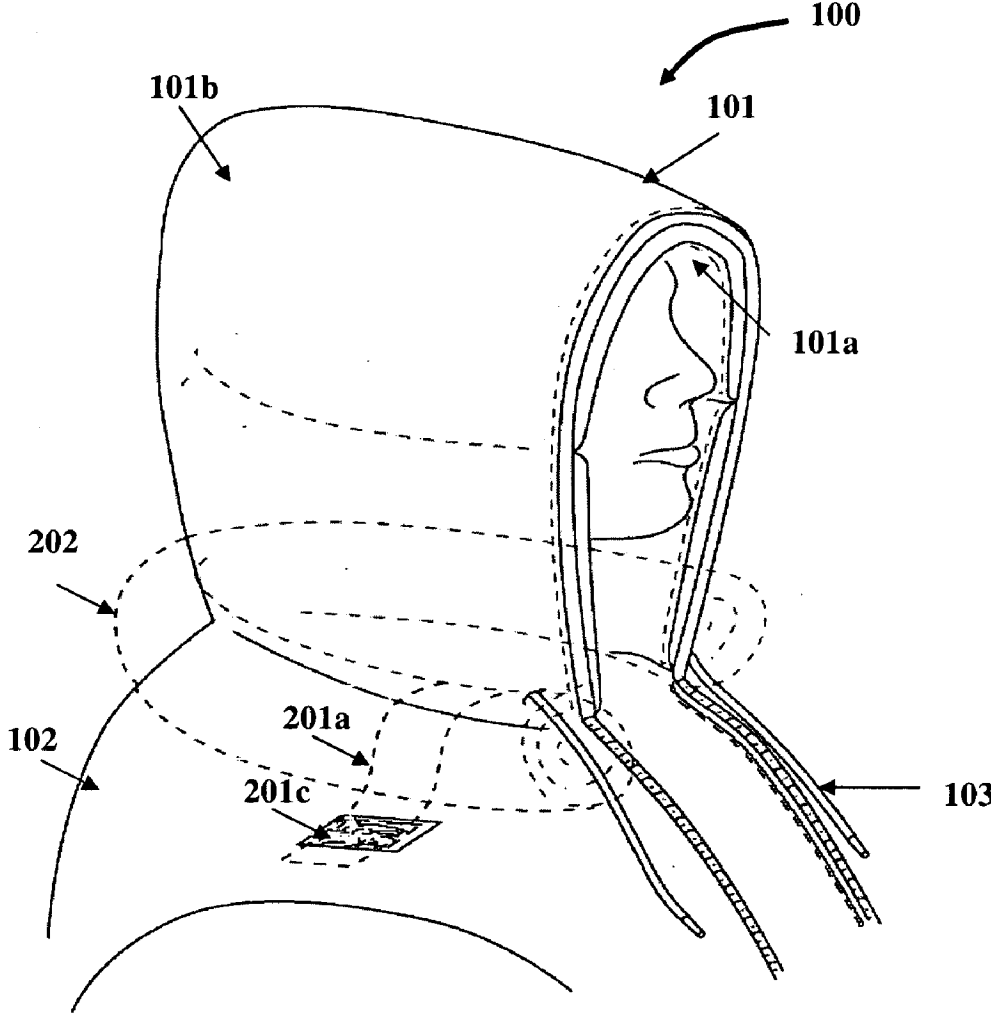


FIG.2A

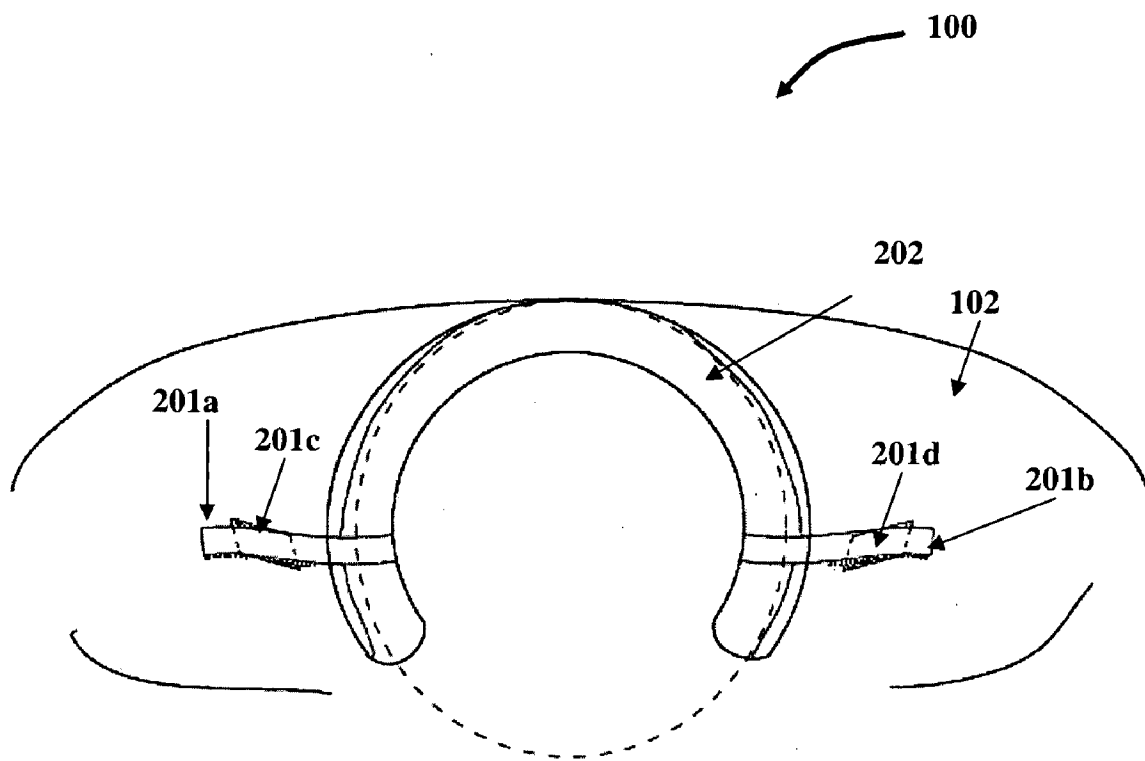


FIG. 2B

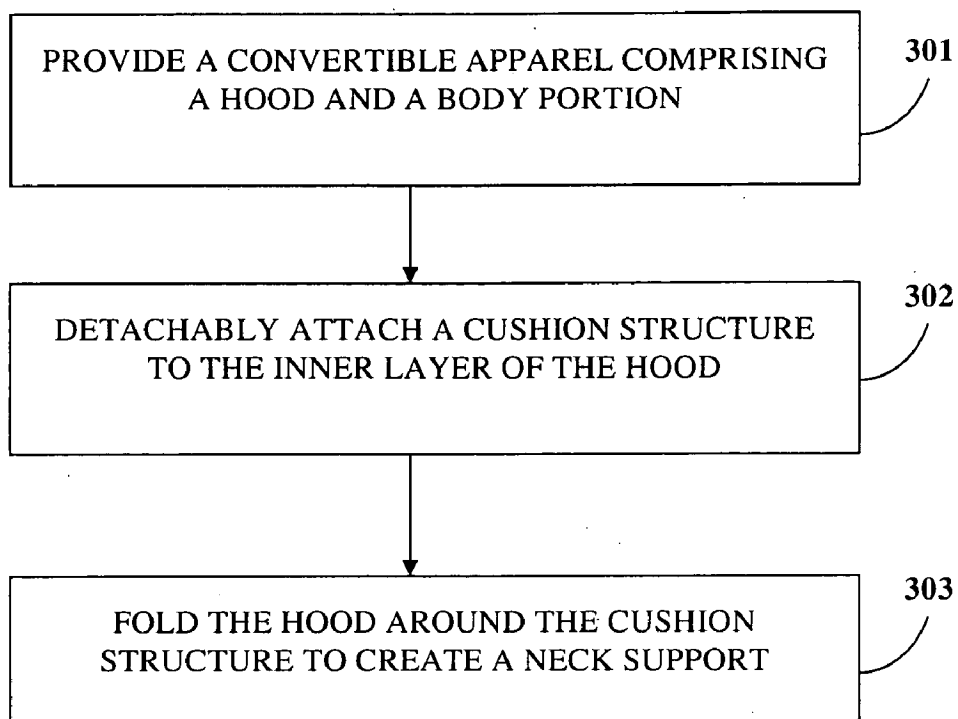


FIG. 3

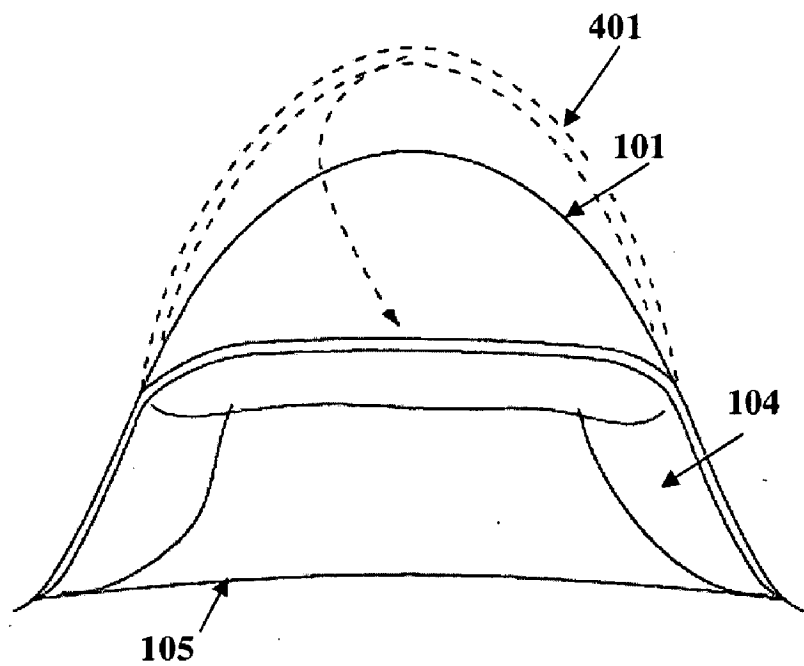


FIG. 4A

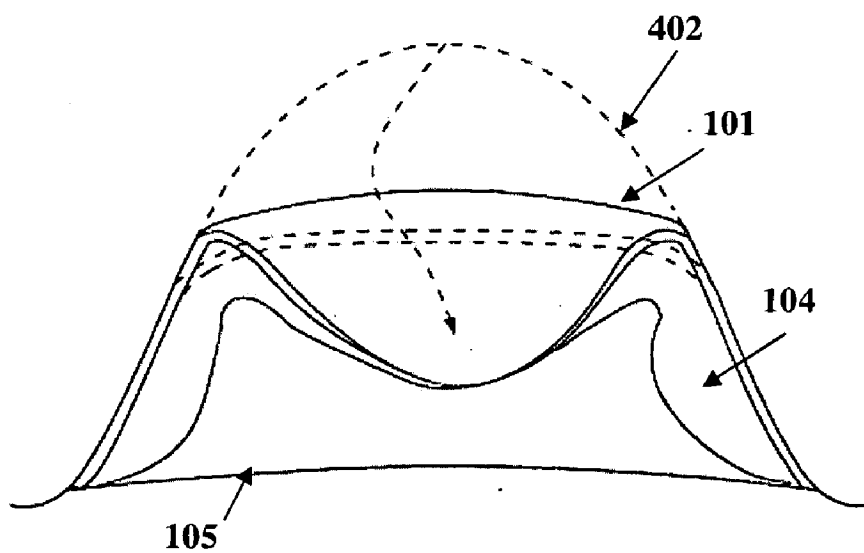


FIG. 4B

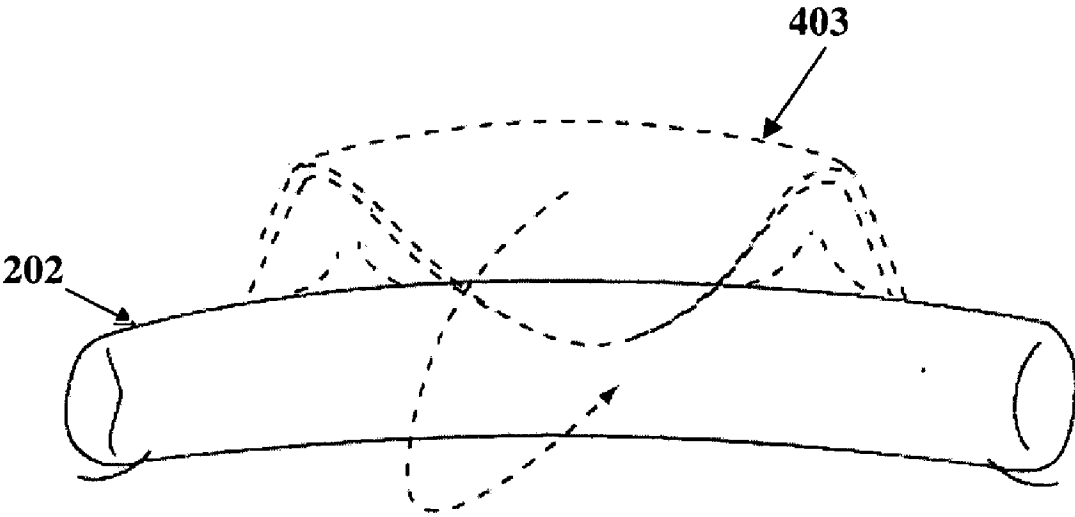


FIG. 4C

CONVERTIBLE HEAD AND NECK SUPPORTING APPAREL

BACKGROUND

[0001] This invention, in general, refers to hooded apparels. More particularly, this invention relates to a convertible apparel with a hood for providing cushioned support for the head and neck of a wearer.

[0002] Conventional hooded apparels comprise hoods made of moderately thick fabrics. The hoods act as a protective covering to the head of the wearer but do not provide support for the head or the neck of the wearer. Travelers, typically, need hooded apparels which also provide support for the head or the neck, so that additional cushioned supports need not be carried along during travel.

[0003] Hence, there is a need for a convertible apparel that provides protection as well as support for the head and neck of the wearer.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] This summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that are further described in the detailed description of the invention. This summary is not intended to identify key or essential inventive concepts of the claimed subject matter, nor is it intended for determining the scope of the claimed subject matter.

[0005] The convertible apparel disclosed herein addresses the above stated need for providing cushioned support for the head and neck of the wearer. The convertible apparel comprises a hood and a body portion. The hood covers the head of the wearer. The hood is detachably attached to the body portion of the convertible apparel. The hood may be detachably attached to the body portion of the convertible apparel using Velcro®, buttons, zipper, magnets, etc. The hood comprises an inner layer and an outer layer made of different materials.

[0006] The convertible apparel further comprises a cushion structure detachably attached to the inner layer of the hood. The cushion structure may be a single cushion structure or may be broken up into two or three cushion structures. The cushion structure may be made of hypo allergenic materials, for example cotton, micro fiber, feather down, etc. The convertible apparel further comprises a neck support. The neck support comprises the hood folded around the cushion structure to support the neck of the wearer. The hood further comprises a cord used for tightening the hood to the head of the wearer and also to ease the method of folding the hood around the cushion structure to create the neck support. The convertible apparel disclosed herein further comprises holders attached to shoulder section of the body portion for holding the neck support onto the body portion.

[0007] The convertible apparel provides travelers, campus students, commuters, hunters, hikers, etc., cushioned support as they may use the hood with the cushion structure to support their heads or fold the hood around the cushion structure to create the neck support for supporting their necks.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] The foregoing summary, as well as the following detailed description of the invention, is better understood when read in conjunction with the appended drawings. For the purpose of illustrating the invention, exemplary constructions of the invention are shown in the drawings. However, the invention is not limited to the specific methods and instrumentalities disclosed herein.

[0009] FIG. 1A illustrates a front view of a convertible apparel.

[0010] FIG. 1B illustrates a side view of the convertible apparel.

[0011] FIG. 2A illustrates a side view of the convertible apparel outlining a neck support.

[0012] FIG. 2B illustrates a top view of the convertible apparel with the hood folded into a neck support.

[0013] FIG. 3 illustrates a method of providing cushioned support for the head and neck of a wearer.

[0014] FIGS. 4A-4C exemplarily illustrate a method of folding the hood of the convertible apparel into the neck support.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0015] FIG. 1A illustrates a front view of a convertible apparel **100** for providing cushioned support for the head and neck of the wearer. The convertible apparel **100** may be, for example, a hooded sweat shirt, a hooded jacket, etc. The convertible apparel **100** referred to hereafter as “apparel” comprises a hood **101** and a body portion **102**. The body portion **102** is a section extending to the upper part of the body of the wearer. The hood **101** comprises an inner layer **101a** and an outer layer **101b**. The inner layer **101a** and the outer layer **101b** may be made of different materials. The inner layer **101a** may be formed of an absorbent material that may be comfortably worn against the skin and scalp. The absorbent material may be, for example, terry cloth, a pile fabric, or cotton with uncut loops on one or both sides. The outer layer **101b** may be formed of a porous material with high reflectivity. The porous material may be, for example, woven nylon or polymer fabrics that allow unidirectional or bidirectional movement of vapor through the material. The porous material may be quilted with an insulating material such as Thinsulate® sewn between two layers of fabric to provide additional warmth.

[0016] The hood **101** comprises a front edge defining a facial opening. The hood **101** is detachably attached to the body portion **102** of the apparel **100**. The hood **101** may be detachably attached to the body portion **102** of the apparel **100** using one of Velcro®, buttons, zipper, magnets, etc. The hood **101** may also be sewed to the body portion **102** of the apparel **100**. The hood **101** may be made of breathable materials that provides comfort and avoids suffocation or severe sweating. The hood **101** may be thick to keep the head of the wearer warm while providing support for the head if the wearer is lying on the side.

[0017] The apparel **100** further comprises a cord **103** passing through a channel between the inner layer **101a** and the outer layer **101b** within the hood **101** defined by a neckline **105**. The free ends of the cord **103** extend outwards from the open ends of the channel. The free ends of the cord **103** may be pulled towards each other beneath the face of the wearer to adjust the hood **101** on the head of the wearer. The cord **103** may also be freely slidable so that the free ends of the cord **103** may be adjustably connected together beneath the chin of the wearer. The cord **103** may also be used to tighten and provide a grip to fold the hood **101** around the cushion structure **104** to create a neck support **202**.

[0018] The apparel **100** further comprises a cushion structure **104** detachably attached to the inner layer **101a** of the hood **101** for supporting the head of the wearer as illustrated in FIG. 1B and FIG. 4B. The cushion structure **104** may be made of hypo allergenic materials, for example, cotton, micro fiber, feather down, etc. The cushion structure **104** may be a single cushion structure or may be broken up into two or three cushion structures. The cushion structure **104** may be a pillow

or a duvet. The cushion structure 104 may be removed from the hood 101 for washing. A side view of the apparel 100 is illustrated in FIG. 1B. The hood 101 may also be worn without the cushion structure 104 to cover the head of the wearer.

[0019] The hood 101 is folded around the cushion structure 104 to create a neck support 202. FIG. 2A illustrates a side view of the apparel 100 outlining the neck support 202. The neck support 202 supports the neck of the wearer. FIG. 2B illustrates the top view of the apparel 100 with the hood 101 folded into a neck support 202. The apparel 100 further comprises holders 201a and 201b provided at the shoulder section of the body portion 102 for holding the neck support 202 onto the body portion 102. The holders 201a and 201b for holding the neck support 202 onto the shoulder section of the body portion 102 is exemplarily illustrated in FIG. 2B. Each of the holders 201a and 201b comprises a fixed end and a free end. The free end of each of the holders 201a and 201b may be detachably attached to the shoulder section of the body portion 102 using fasteners 201c and 201d. The fasteners 201c and 201d may be, for example, Velcro®, buttons, etc.

[0020] FIG. 3 illustrates a method of providing cushioned support for the head and the neck of the wearer. An apparel 100 comprising a hood and a body portion is provided 301 to the wearer. The hood comprises an inner layer and an outer layer. A cushion structure is detachably attached 302 to the inner layer of the hood. The hood is folded 303 around the cushion structure to create a neck support. The neck support supports the neck of the wearer. A cord provided inside the hood is loosened and stretched to full length. The cushion structure is then compressed inside the hood. The hood is folded into the neck support as illustrated in FIGS. 4A-4C. The free ends of the cord are stretched for providing a grip for folding the hood inwards to create the neck support. The neck support is held on to the shoulder section of the body portion using the holders. The holders are wrapped on to the neck support and fastened to the shoulder section of the body portion using the fasteners.

[0021] FIGS. 4A-4C exemplarily illustrate a method of folding the hood 101 of the apparel 100 into the neck support 202. FIG. 4A exemplarily illustrates the hood 101 with the cushion structure 104 to be folded into a neck support 202. In FIG. 4A, the hood 101 is outlined in its position 401 prior to folding. FIG. 4B exemplarily illustrates the inward folding of the hood 101 around the cushion structure 104. In FIG. 4B, the hood 101 is outlined in its position 402 prior to the inward folding. The hood 101 with the cushion structure 104 is folded inwards and towards the neckline 105 of the apparel 100 and rolled into a cylindrical or semi circular shape to create the neck support 202 as exemplarily illustrated in FIG. 4C. In FIG. 4C, the hood 101 is outlined in its position 403 prior to rolling into the neck support 202. The neck support 202 is contoured around the back and sides of the wearer's neck as the hood 101 is folded around the cushion structure 104. The hood 101 with the cushion structure 104 is folded into the neck support 202 at approximately the neckline 105 of the apparel 100. The apparel 100 provides support to the wearer's head or neck while the wearer is in different positions, for example, while standing, sitting, while resting the wearer's head or neck against the back support of a chair, etc.

[0022] The foregoing examples have been provided merely for the purpose of explanation and are in no way to be construed as limiting of the present invention disclosed herein.

While the invention has been described with reference to various embodiments, it is understood that the words, which have been used herein, are words of description and illustration, rather than words of limitation. Further, although the invention has been described herein with reference to particular means, materials and embodiments, the invention is not intended to be limited to the particulars disclosed herein; rather, the invention extends to all functionally equivalent structures, methods and uses, such as are within the scope of the appended claims. Those skilled in the art, having the benefit of the teachings of this specification, may effect numerous modifications thereto and changes may be made without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention in its aspects.

I claim:

1. A convertible apparel for providing cushioned support for head and neck of a wearer, comprising:
 - a hood detachably attached to body portion of said convertible apparel for covering said head of said wearer, wherein said hood comprises an inner layer and an outer layer;
 - a cushion structure detachably attached to said inner layer of the hood for supporting the head of the wearer; and
 - a neck support comprising the hood folded around said cushion structure to support said neck of the wearer;
 whereby the hood with the cushion structure provides support for the head and the neck of the wearer.
2. The convertible apparel of claim 1, wherein the cushion structure is made of hypo allergenic materials.
3. The convertible apparel of claim 1, wherein the hood comprises a cord for tightening and providing grip to fold the hood around the cushion structure to create said neck support.
4. The convertible apparel of claim 1, wherein the hood comprises a front edge defining a facial opening.
5. The convertible apparel of claim 1, further comprising holders provided at shoulder section of said body portion for holding said neck support onto the body portion.
6. A method of providing cushioned support for head and neck of a wearer, comprising the steps of:
 - providing a convertible apparel comprising a hood and a body portion, wherein said hood comprising an inner layer and an outer layer covers said head of said wearer; detachably attaching a cushion structure to said inner layer of the hood, wherein the hood with said cushion structure supports the head of the wearer; and
 - folding the hood around said cushion structure to create a neck support for supporting said neck of the wearer.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the hood is detachably attached to said convertible apparel.
8. The method of claim 6, wherein said step of folding the hood with the cushion structure, comprises the steps of:
 - loosening a cord provided inside the hood and stretching said cord to full length;
 - compressing the cushion structure inside the hood; and
 - folding the hood over the cord into said neck support.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein said neck support is fastened to shoulder section of said body portion using holders.

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