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(54) Title: ABSORBENT COMPONENTS HAVING A SUSTAINED ACQUISITION RATE CAPABILITY UPON ABSORBING MULTIPLE DISCHARGES OF AQUEOUS BODY FLUIDS

(57) Abstract

In one aspect, the present invention relates to absorbent articles (10) that maintain or increase fluid rates when subjected to successive fluid loads. A test method is described for measuring fluid acquisition rates.

In another aspect, the invention relates to an absorbent article (10) useful for absorbing discharged aqueous body fluids that comprises: A) a fluid pervious topsheet (12); B) a backsheet (14); and C) an absorbent core (18) positioned between the topsheet and the backsheet, the absorbent core comprising:

(1) at least one upper fluid storage component (34, 36) capable of expanding in the z-direction when contacted with aqueous body fluids, said at least one upper fluid storage component being in direct fluid communication with the topsheet and at least partially forming a fluid acquisition zone (38); (2) a fluid acquisition zone (38) capable of receiving aqueous body fluids, said fluid acquisition zone being at least partially surrounded by said at least one upper fluid storage component and positioned at least partially beneath the fluid discharge region of the absorbent core; (3) a fluid acquisition/distribution component (42) capable of acquiring and transporting aqueous body fluids, at least a portion of this fluid acquisition/distribution component being positioned underneath and in fluid communication with said at least one fluid storage component, and at least a portion of the fluid acquisition/distribution component being positioned underneath, and in fluid communication with the fluid acquisition zone of the absorbent core; and (4) preferably, at least one lower fluid storage component (60) positioned underneath the fluid acquisition/distribution component and in fluid communication therewith, at least a portion of this lower storage component being positioned underneath the fluid acquisition zone.

