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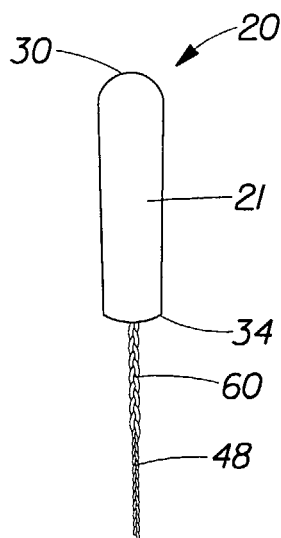
(43) International Publication Date
13 June 2002 (13.06.2002)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/45635 A2

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **A61F 13/20**
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US01/50474
- (22) International Filing Date: 23 October 2001 (23.10.2001)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
09/695,552 24 October 2000 (24.10.2000) US
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- (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AT (utility model), AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, CZ (utility model), DE, DE (utility model), DK, DK (utility model), DM, DZ, EC, EE, EE (utility model), ES, FI, FI (utility model), GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SK (utility model), SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- Published:**
— *without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report*
- For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

(54) Title: IMPROVED PROTECTION TAMPON AND METHOD OF MAKING



(57) Abstract: A tampon showing improved leakage protection through improved expansion characteristics is disclosed. The tampons disclosed demonstrate these improved expansion characteristics particularly in the width dimension without introducing new drawbacks. Preferred tampons are described which are compressed to an initial size comparable to current tampons, but which expand to a width exceeding that achieved by current tampons. Such increased expansion is preferably accomplished without an increase in the total absorbency of the tampon. Tampons of various absorbencies are disclosed having increased total expansion in the width direction compared to current tampons. Additionally, tampons of various absorbencies which expand to a greater degree in the width direction under pressure are also disclosed. Tampons of various absorbencies which expand at a rate exceeding that achieved previously are also disclosed. Microwave conditioning of tampon pledgets following compression is disclosed as part of the tampon formation process.