



ABSTRACT

The present invention is directed to a gathered, layered composite material comprised of a fabric, film, foam or combination thereof that has a first layer of flexible reversibly elongatable material, bonded at spaced apart positions to at least one additional layer of a flexible material, wherein both layers are gathered, the gathers of one layer being aparallel to the gathers of the other layer.

5      The composite material may be made by first reversibly tensioning, the first layer and concomitantly reversibly narrowing the first layer, in a direction coplanarly orthogonal to that in which tension is applied. The tensioned and narrowed first layer is then bonded discrete spaced apart positions to an at least one additional layer of a flexible nontensioned material, comprised of a fabric, film or foam or combination thereof. When these resulting tensioned and adhered layered materials are subsequently untensioned, they form a three dimensional layered composite material, wherein both layers are gathered, the gathers of one layer being aparallel to the gathers of the other layer.

10      The layered composites of this invention may be used in the manufacture of various products including, but not limited to, sanitary absorbent products such as diapers, sanitary napkins, incontinence products, as well as bandages, wound dressings, surgical dressings, cushioning and bandages for the treatment of stasis ulcers, surgical drapes, underpads and the like.