

CLAIMS

It is claimed:

1. A gripping sleeve for handling a urinary catheter, comprising:

a pair of flexible flat sheets of material having textured inner or outer surfaces that each have proximal and distal ends defining a longitudinal axis therebetween and are bonded together at juxtaposed longitudinal edges to form a sleeve which may be expanded into a tubular shape sized to loosely receive a urinary catheter, wherein the longitudinal edges transition to rounded portions just before the distal ends.

2. The gripping sleeve of claim 1, wherein the distal end of a first sheet terminates shorter than the distal end of a second sheet.

3. The gripping sleeve of claim 2, wherein the distal end of the first sheet terminates 1-3 mm shorter than the distal end of the second sheet.

4. The gripping sleeve of any preceding claim, wherein the sheets of material are bonded along proximal portions of the longitudinal edges, while at least some of distal portions of the longitudinal edges including the distal ends are not bonded.

5. The gripping sleeve of any preceding claim, wherein the entire distal ends of each of the sheets of material are rounded with no discrete corners.

6. The gripping sleeve of claim 1, wherein both sheets of material have a rectangular proximal portion extending from the proximal end and a tapered distal portion

terminating at the distal end, wherein the tapered distal portion of each sheet includes an elongated constantly tapered section leading to the rounded portion just before the distal end.

7. The gripping sleeve of claim 6, wherein the sheets of material are bonded together along the rectangular proximal portions, while at least some of the tapered distal portions including the distal ends are not bonded.

8. A gripping sleeve for handling a urinary catheter, comprising:

a pair of flexible flat sheets of material having textured inner or outer surfaces that each have proximal and distal ends defining a longitudinal axis therebetween and are bonded together at longitudinal edges to form a sleeve which may be expanded into a tubular shape sized to loosely receive a urinary catheter, wherein the sheets of material are bonded along proximal portions of the longitudinal edges, while at least some of the distal portions of the longitudinal edges including the distal ends are not bonded.

9. The gripping sleeve of claim 8, wherein the sheets of material are both rectangular.

10. The gripping sleeve of claim 8, wherein both sheets of material are at least partly tapered narrower in a proximal-distal direction.

11. The gripping sleeve of claim 8, wherein both sheets of material have a rectangular proximal portion extending from the proximal end and a tapered distal portion terminating at the distal end.

12. The gripping sleeve of claim 11, wherein the tapered distal portion of each sheet includes a constantly tapered section leading to a rounded portion just before the distal end.

13. The gripping sleeve of claim 8, wherein the entire distal ends of each of the sheets of material are rounded with no discrete corners.

14. The gripping sleeve of any of claims 8-13, wherein the distal end of a first sheet terminates shorter than the distal end of a second sheet.

15. A gripping sleeve for handling a urinary catheter, comprising:

a pair of flexible flat sheets of material having textured inner or outer surfaces that each have proximal and distal ends defining a longitudinal axis therebetween and are bonded together at longitudinal edges to form a sleeve which may be expanded into a tubular shape sized to loosely receive a urinary catheter, wherein the sheets of material have different lengths or are offset with the distal end of a first sheet terminating shorter than the distal end of a second sheet.

16. The gripping sleeve of claim 15, wherein the distal end of the first sheet terminates 1-3 mm shorter than the distal end of the second sheet.

17. The gripping sleeve of either of claims 15 or 16, wherein the entire distal ends of each of the sheets of material are rounded with no discrete corners.

18. The gripping sleeve of either of claims 15 or 16, wherein both sheets of material have a rectangular proximal portion extending from the proximal end and a tapered distal portion terminating at the distal end, wherein the tapered distal portion of each sheet includes an elongated constantly tapered section that transitions to a rounded portion just before the distal end.

19. The gripping sleeve of either of claims 15 or 16, wherein the sheets of material both narrow on a constant taper from the proximal to the distal ends.

20. The gripping sleeve of either of claims 15 or 16, wherein the sheets of material are both rectangular.