

168 of 172 DOCUMENTS

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE PRE-GRANT  
PUBLICATION

20020059940

(Note: This is a Patent Application only.)

[Link to Claims Section](#)

May 23, 2002

Protective closing cover for nails

**INVENTOR:** Cain-Kozma, Angela B. - Sarasota, Florida, United States (US)

**APPL-NO:** 683734 (09)

**FILED-DATE:** February 7, 2002

**LEGAL-REP:** GREENBERG & LIEBERMAN - 314 PHILADELPHIA AVE., TAKOMA PARK, Maryland, 20912

**PUB-TYPE:** May 23, 2002 - Utility Patent Application Publication (A1)

**PUB-COUNTRY:** United States (US)

**REL-DATA:**

Continuation-in-part of Ser. No. 09770181, March 29, 2001, PENDING  
Provisional Application Ser. No. 60193660, April 7, 2000, PENDING

**US-MAIN-CL:** 132#73

**CL:** 132

**IPC-MAIN-CL:** [7] A45D 029#00

**ENGLISH-ABST:**

A protective nail cover for use in polishing process. It is a bubble nail cover that protects the nail and allows it to dry without contact with other fingernails and other materials. The protective closing covers allow the person to continue with their daily activities even with wet nails. The user may drive, or read, or even sleep with wet nails covered by protective closing covers. The nail cover has two halves that fit around the fingertips in a secure and removable clasping hinged fashion

**EXMPL-FIGURE:** 1

**NO-DRWNG-PP:** 8

**PARENT-PAT-INFO:**

## CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This is a Continuation-In-Part Application of patent application Ser. No. 09/770,181 filed on Mar. 29, 2001, which claimed priority to patent application Ser. No. 60/193,660 filed on Apr. 7, 2000.

## SUMMARY:

## BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

[0002] For many women, and some men, a manicure is considered a part of a regular hygiene program. For some this includes the application of lotions, creams, and polishes.

[0003] An inherent problem in manicures is waiting for polish to dry. Often a proper manicure can take between 4 and 6 coats of nail polish. The total drying time can be over 20 minutes, and the person with damp nails must restrict their activities until their nails are completely dry. It is difficult to read, drive, or sleep with wet painted fingernails, and they are very likely to chip or smudge the paint if they partake in any activity.

[0004] On the market are foam finger dividers to help manicurists keep the fingernails from touching each other during the manicure. Essentially these are small thin pads of foam that have protrusions to fit in between each of the fingers to separate the fingers. The foam finger dividers are unlike the present invention because they have no protective covers for the wet nail, the user must continue to not use their fingers during the drying stage, and they do not totally inhibit the fingernails from touching each other while wet.

[0005] There are also manicure station pads that user may set their hands flat upon, while they are receiving their manicure. Unlike the present invention, these stations do not protect the nails while drying, are not intended to be worn, do not inhibit the fingernails from touching each other, and the user must refrain from utilizing their fingernails while wet.

[0006] Many manicurists use small fans to speed up the drying process. These fans are unlike the present invention because they do not keep the nails from touching each other, the users cannot use their nails during drying and they provide no protective cover for the drying nails.

[0007] Therefore a need has been established for a protective cover for fingernails while drying polish.

## SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0008] The present invention is a protective closing cover for fingernails that fits around the fingertip and nail of the user to protect the nail from damage after painting. The protective closing cover fits in a secure fastened manner around the fingertip and up the finger from nail cuticle. The present invention extends from the fingertip portion so that the nail sits surrounded on all sides by the cover.

[0009] The protective closing cover has a fastener that can be used by either right handed or left handed user to attach the bubble nail to their fingers. The lower portion of the present invention is made of foam that conforms to the user's finger and allows for wider or narrower fingers without discomfort.

[0010] The top of the protective closing cover has air holes punctured in the topside to allow air to ventilate around

the nail. The clasps have two locking mechanisms based a set amount of distance from each other on a parallel line to receive a pointed piece in between each of the locking mechanisms.

[0011] The protective closing cover allows the user to paint their nails and then go onto other tasks such as driving, using the phone, sleep or carry out other daily activities without damaging their nails. In this manner a user may have a manicure apply the ten bubble nail covers and continue with other tasks.

[0012] The protective closing covers will clasp around the finger after the first knuckle.

[0013] The wet nail is protected by the dome with air holes punctured so the nails may easily dry, but the nails are not damaged. When the fingernails are dry the user may detach the bubble nail cover and store for the next use.

#### **DRWDESC:**

#### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS**

[0014]FIG. 1 is a side view of the present invention with a clear view of the snapping clasps.

[0015]FIG. 2 is a side view of the present invention with a clear view of the hinge.

[0016]FIG. 3 shows a bottom view of the present invention.

[0017]FIG. 4 shows a top view of the present invention.

[0018]FIG. 5 shows a top open view of the present invention.

[0019]FIG. 6 shows a side view of the present invention closed around a finger.

[0020]FIG. 7 gives an interior open view of the present invention.

#### **DETDESC:**

#### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

[0021] The present invention is a protective closing cover for fingernails that allows users freedom of movement for their hands while nail polish is drying. It is manufactured of two interlocking hinged pieces that fit around the fingertip below the first knuckle and cover the nail of the user without touching the nail or chipping the polish. The bubble nail covers are reusable, and are easily applied and removed.

[0022]FIG. 1 shows a side view of the protective closing cover. The protective closingcover has a first half (10) and a second half (20) with a top foam end (30) and a bottom foam end (40). The foam end (40) in this embodiment is made of a foam like material due to its cushioning nature. However, in separate embodiments of the present invention the foam end (40) can be constructed of any other cushioning material that is non-toxic, such as neoprene material, gel packets, or a sponge materials. The foam end (40) is incorporated in the present invention so that the user may insert their finger and have a snug fit regardless of the size of their finger.

[0023] For example, if the user has a small finger, the foam end (40) will help to fill the space around the diameter of their finger so that the present invention has a snug fit. Also if the user has a large finger, the foam end (40) conforms to the diameter of their finger without pain, or constriction of blood flow, but still snug enough to not slip off. The foam

ends (40) are used on the present invention because the fit is universal. There are two larger bubble nails in each set for the thumbs, and eight smaller ones for each of the fingers. Since each user's hand will have fingers of differing diameters, the foam end (40) allows the bubble nail to fit regardless of diameter of the finger. The foam end (40) has a rebound rate of 100%, meaning that after the bubble nail is used, the foam end (40) will increase in size to its original size. In this manner the same set of bubble nails can be used many times with many different users as they are one size fits all. In separate embodiments the bubble nails can be manufactured with a custom fit for each finger, disposing of the need for the foam end (40). The first half (10) has air holes (50) placed immediately above where the nail is placed (see FIG. 2). The air holes (50) are placed directly above the nail so the user may see their nails as they dry and this is the area that needs the most ventilation. The user may blow air through the air holes (50) to help the nails to dry, or if they choose to move their hands in a rapid, shaking fashion to help nails dry the air will easily circulate on top of the nail. Also the user can wear the bubble nails while they are putting on clothes, or going about their daily activities, their nails will dry due to natural movement of their hands and air circulating through the air holes (50). In an alternate embodiment of the present invention, the bubble nails will be produced without air holes, so a user may use them while tanning and protect their manicure from UV rays from the tanning bed or the sun. UV lights will yellow the nails over prolonged exposure and can lead to brittle and breaking nails.

[0024] There do not need to be a particular number of air holes (50) to function as a drying tool. However, during manufacture, the strength of the plastic material should be taken into account when puncturing the air holes (50). Too many air holes (50) will weaken the bubble nails, and too few air holes (50) will not allow for proper ventilation. There are six air holes (50) on the present invention because that number of air holes (50) does not weaken the plastic, but allows for proper ventilation. The air holes (50) are 0.25 centimeters in diameter. The spacing of the air holes (50) from each other is not relevant, as long as structural integrity and proper ventilation are achieved. The air holes (50) in separate embodiments of the present invention could be in the shape of flowers, snowflakes, suns, or other novelty shapes.

[0025] The first half (10) and second half (20) in an alternate embodiment of the present invention could be shaped to fit the natural curve of the nail. In this embodiment, the first half (10) and second half (20) would be narrow and fit closer to the side of the finger and nail than the present embodiment. This would provide for easier movement of the hand and manipulation of objects with the fingers while wearing the bubble nails. In the present embodiment, the bubble nail for the thumb is less rounded in the first half (10) and the second half (20) than the bubble nails for the fingers. However in separate embodiments the thumb bubble nail can be manufactured at the same or proportional diameter as the bubble nails for the fingers. Also, in separate embodiments the bubble nails can be designed for men or children. Additionally, the bubble nails can be produced in larger sizes for toe uses for pedicures. FIG. 1 also gives a clear view of the snapping closures (60) which are removably attached to the first half (10) and the second half (20). It is necessary to have one snapping closure (60) on each side of the first knuckle of the finger for tight closure of the present invention around the finger. The snapping closures (60) in conjunction with the foam end (40) create a snug fit around the first knuckle of the finger. The upper snapping closure (60) closes the gap between the first half (10) and the second half (20) of the present invention. The snapping closures (60) are manufactured as congruous pieces with the first half (10) and second half (20).

[0026] To apply the bubble nails the user should open all of the bubble nails and lay them in order to which they are applied on the table or other flat surface. The user should start with the smallest finger and place the finger on top of the first half (10) and then close the second half (20) on top of the first half (10) with use of the snapping closures (60). The user should start with the smallest finger on each hand and move into the thumb because they then have prolonged use of their index fingers and thumbs to assist in applying the bubble nails.

[0027] The snapping closures (60) in other embodiments of the present invention could be replaced by a spring loaded closure. The spring loaded closure (not shown) would be installed at the uppermost end of the present invention and the first half (10) and second half (20) would be securely attached at the spring loaded closure (not shown). In this embodiment of the present invention, the user could press on the top of the bubble nail, and the first half (10) would pop up in a 90 degree angle from the spring loaded closure (not shown) to the second half (20). The user would then place

their finger on top of the second half (20) and press the first half (10) down upon the second half (20) activating the spring loaded closure (not shown) to close the bubble nail around the finger. As the first half (10) and second half (20) of the present invention in this embodiment are of the same shape as in the present embodiment, the nail will not be touched by the first half (10) upon closing.

[0028] A possible variation on the snapping closures (60) is enclosing 1-2 closures (not shown) that can be opened by inserting a wand into the side of the closure (not shown) to release the closing mechanism. The user may simply remove those 1 or 2 bubble nails and use those fingers to release the standard snapping closures (60) of the other fingers. The wand closure (not shown) can be constructed of a tubing mechanism wherein one half of the tubing mechanism (not shown) would curve in an outward and downward fashion from a side of the first half (10) of the bubble nail. The second half of the tubing mechanism (not shown) would extend in an upward and outward manner from the second half (20) of the bubble nail. In this embodiment upon closure, the first half and second half of the tubing mechanism (not shown) would meet and allow for a tight fit of the bubble nail. A user would merely need to insert a wand (not shown) of sufficient diameter into the tubing mechanism, and with an upward push, the tubing mechanism would release to open the bubble nail.

[0029] In another embodiment of the present invention the snapping closures (60) can be replaced by a hinge closure (FIG. 7). The hinge closure (FIG. 7) would be manufactured of a hinge on one side of the present invention. Opposite the hinge would be a rim device in which the first half (10) would have an interlocking ridge with the second half (20) so that when the second half (20) is closed on the first half (10) the bubble nail will close for drying purposes. The hinge closure (FIG. 7) would work in the same manner as a hinged closure cap on a toothpaste tube. The hinged closure (FIG. 7) could also be opened by pressing down on the second half (20) as in the spring loaded closure (FIG. 7). The snapping closures (60) have two parallel knobs that are along the edge of the second half (20) and one knob along the edge of the first half (10) to interlock with the two parallel knobs along the edge of the second half (20). The two parallel knobs on the second half (20) and the one knob on the first half (10) must be of significant diameter to allow the snapping closures (60) to close in a snug manner. If the one knob on the first half (10) is too small it will slip out of the space between the two parallel knobs on the second half (20). If the one knob on the first half (10) is too large it will not fit in the space between the two knobs on the second half (20).

[0030] FIG. 2 shows a side view of the protective closing cover. The first half (10), the second half (20), the top foam end (40), the bottom foam end (30), the air holes (50) and the snapping closure (60). Also shown in FIG. 3 is the hinge (80) which is attached to the first half (10) and the second half (20) to allow the protective closing cover to open and the user to enter their finger so the nail may dry.

[0031] FIG. 3 shows a bottom view of the present invention. The second half (20) has grooves to hold a finger (not shown) The hinge (80), snapping closures (60), and bottom foam end (30). As is shown the bottom foam end (30) has two snapping closures (60) one each side so the user may enter their finger and tighten the bottom foam end (30) and the top foam end (40) below their first knuckle. FIG. 4 shows a top view of the protective closing cover. The air holes (50), first half (10) hinge (80), top foam end (40), and snapping closures (60).

[0032] FIG. 5 shows a top view of the protective closing cover in an open position. The air holes (50), first half (10), second half (20), top foam end (40) and bottom foam end (30) are clearly shown. The hinge (80) is at fully extended position and the ability to close the first half (10) on top of the second half (20) is shown by the directional arrows at the top and bottom of the figure. The snapping closures (60) are shown at open position in this figure to clearly show how the singular knob is placed to fit between the two parallel knobs to securely close the protective closing cover.

[0033] FIG. 6 shows a side view of the protective closing cover closed around a finger.

[0034] The first half (10) and the second half (20) are shown wrapped around the user's finger. The foam ends (40) are shown wrapped around the finger above the first knuckle.

[0035] FIG. 7 gives an interior open view of the protective closing cover. The first half (10) and second half (20) of the present invention are shown as are the air holes (50).

[0036] Also shown are the foam ends (40) and snapping closures (60). FIG. 7 gives a clear view of the hinge mechanism (80) of the protective closing cover connecting the first half (10) and the second half (20).

[0037] In additional embodiments of the present invention the second half (20) would be fitted with a gripping substance to allow the user to grip small or slick objects with ease while wearing the bubble nails. The gripping substance (not shown) may be constructed of a raised bump rubber section, a sand paper material, or any applicable gripping substance. Also a hook may be added to the first half (10) or second half (20) of the present invention for accessing small or hard to handle objects while wearing the bubble nails.

[0038] The present invention is not limited to the sole embodiments described above but includes any and all embodiments in the following claims.

#### **ENGLISH-CLAIMS:**

Return to Top of Patent

1. A protective nail cover, comprising: a first member; a second member, in communication with said first member; at least one hole on said first member; a first intermediary end, in communication with said first member; a second intermediary end, in communication with said second member; and a closure, in communication with said first member and said second member.

2. A protective nail cover, as in claim 1, wherein said closure enables said first member to close above a nail and onto said second member.

3. A protective nail cover, as in claim 2, wherein said first member, said second member, and said closure prevent contact with the nail.

4. A protective nail cover, as in claim 3, wherein said closure is a snapping closure.

5. A protective nail cover as in claim 1, wherein said closure is tubular, having a first tubular half attached to said first member, a second tubular half attached to said second member, and a rod member separating said first tubular member from said second tubular member.

6. A protective nail cover as in claim 1, wherein said at least one hole provides ventilation for a nail covered by said first member.

7. A protective nail cover, as in claim 1, wherein said first intermediary end and second intermediary end are made of a foam material.

8. A protective nail cover, as in claim 1, wherein said first intermediary end and said second intermediary end fit around a nail supporting appendage below a nail.

9. A protective nail cover, as in claim 8, wherein said first intermediary end and said second intermediary end are capable of being depressed to fit the shape of a nail supporting appendage.

10. A protective nail cover, as in claim 1, wherein said first member, said second member, said first intermediary end, said second intermediary end, and said closure are removably fixed around a nail and a nail supporting appendage.

**LOAD-DATE:** April 9, 2006