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(54) **PAPER CUP SIP ADAPTOR**

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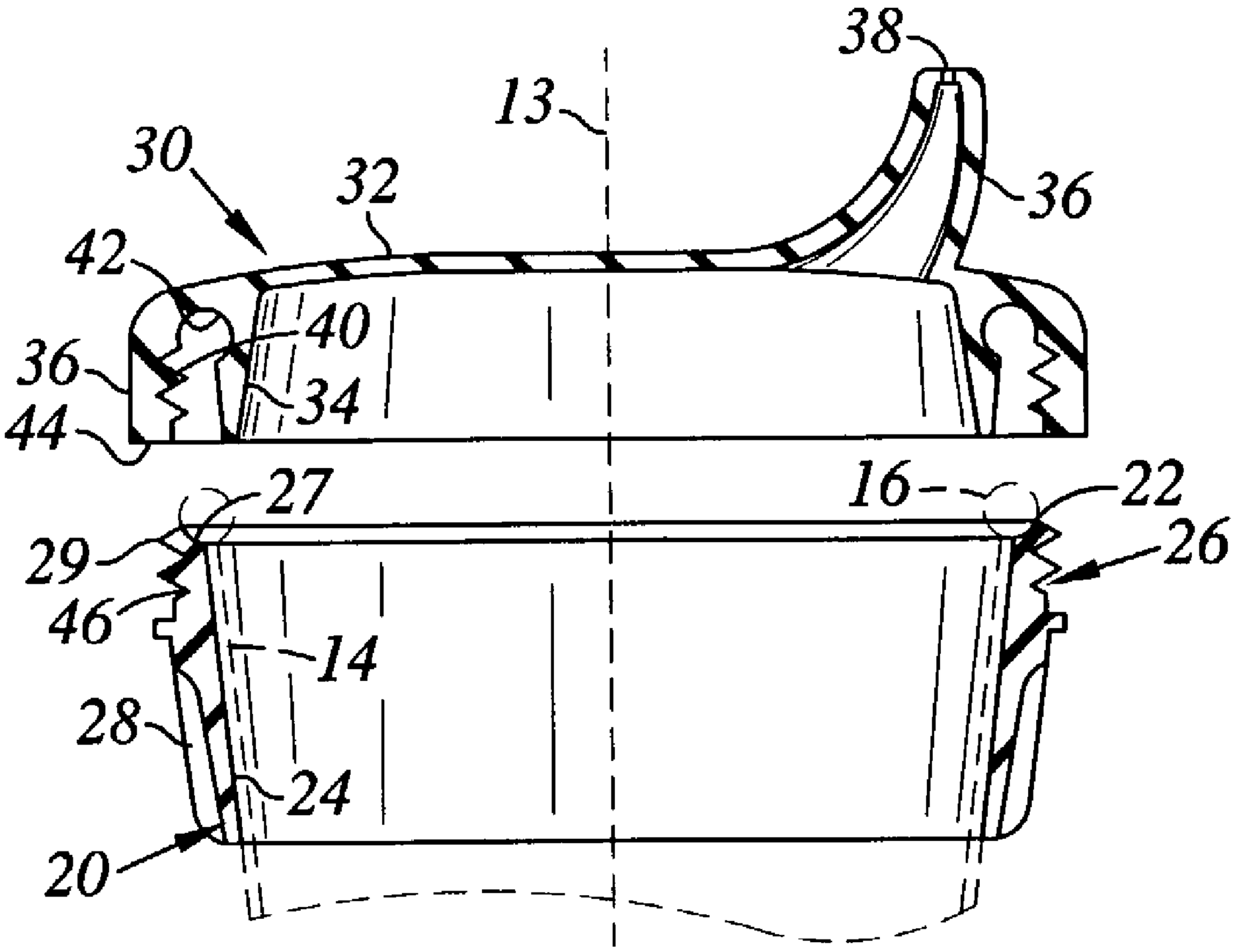
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An adaptor enables a child to drink from a cup having a bead extending around an open end of the cup. The adaptor has an annular collar that supports the cup by engaging a lower portion of a bead of the cup around a substantial portion of a periphery of the bead. A lid is removably engageable with the collar using mating threaded surfaces on the lid and collar. The lid has two annular flanges depending from a lower surface toward the collar to enclose the bead and collar between the flanges and to abut the inner flange with the interior side of the wall of the cup when the lid engages the collar to form a fluid seal with the cup. The lid has a child drinking spout on an exterior surface of the lid adjacent a peripheral edge of the lid. The spout is in fluid communication with the cup during use of the adaptor.



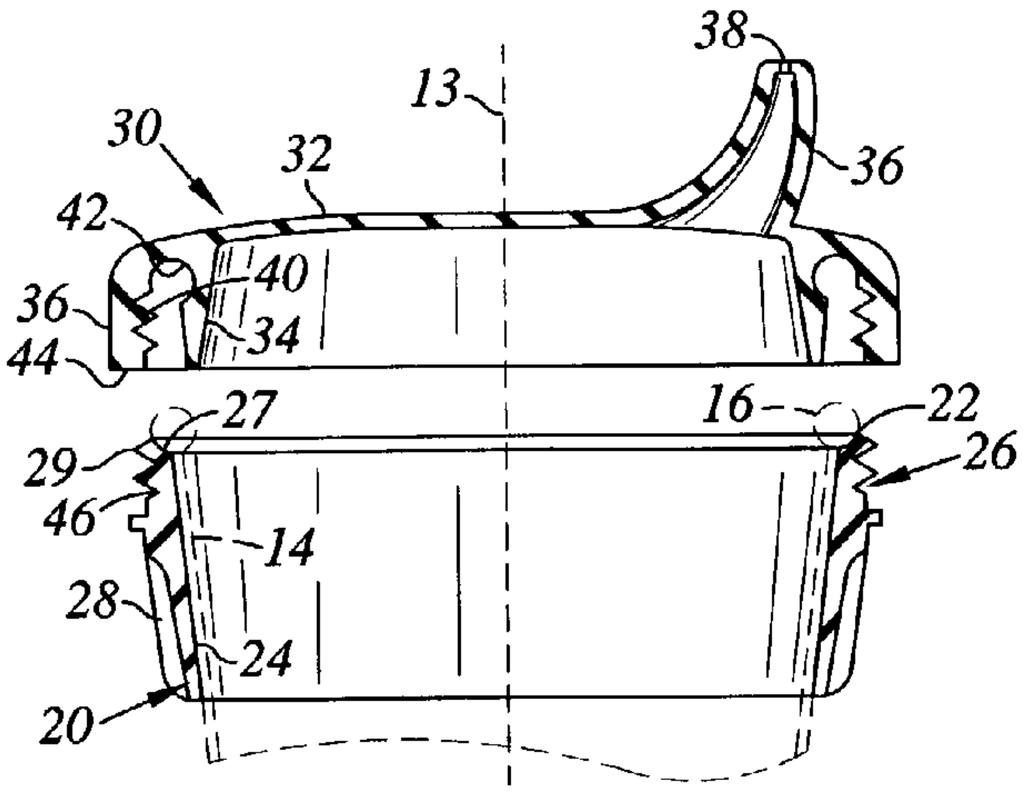


Fig. 3

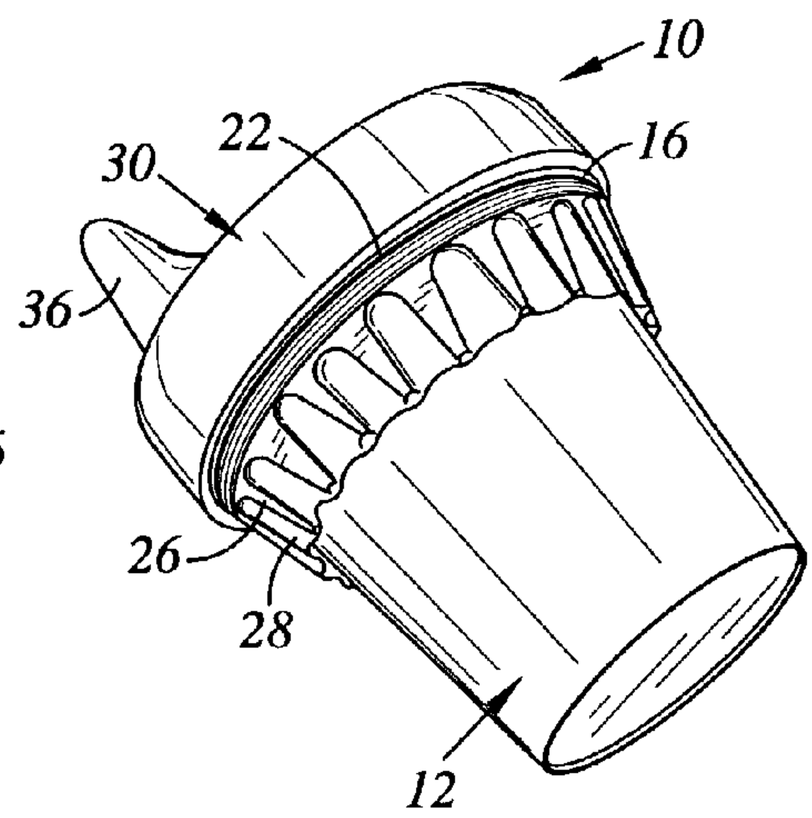


Fig. 1

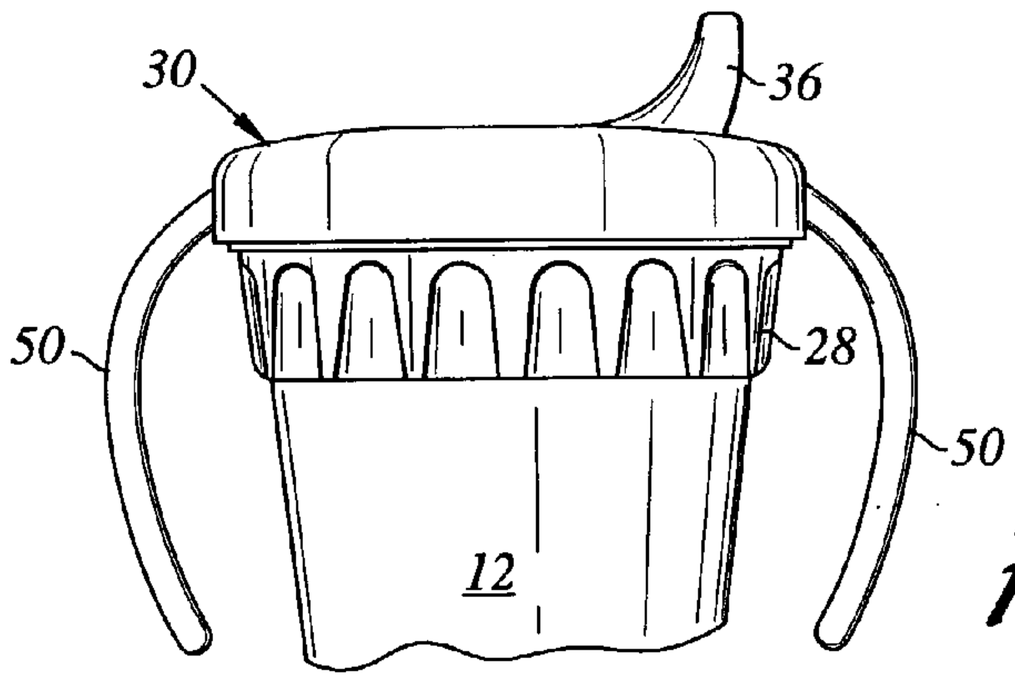


Fig. 4

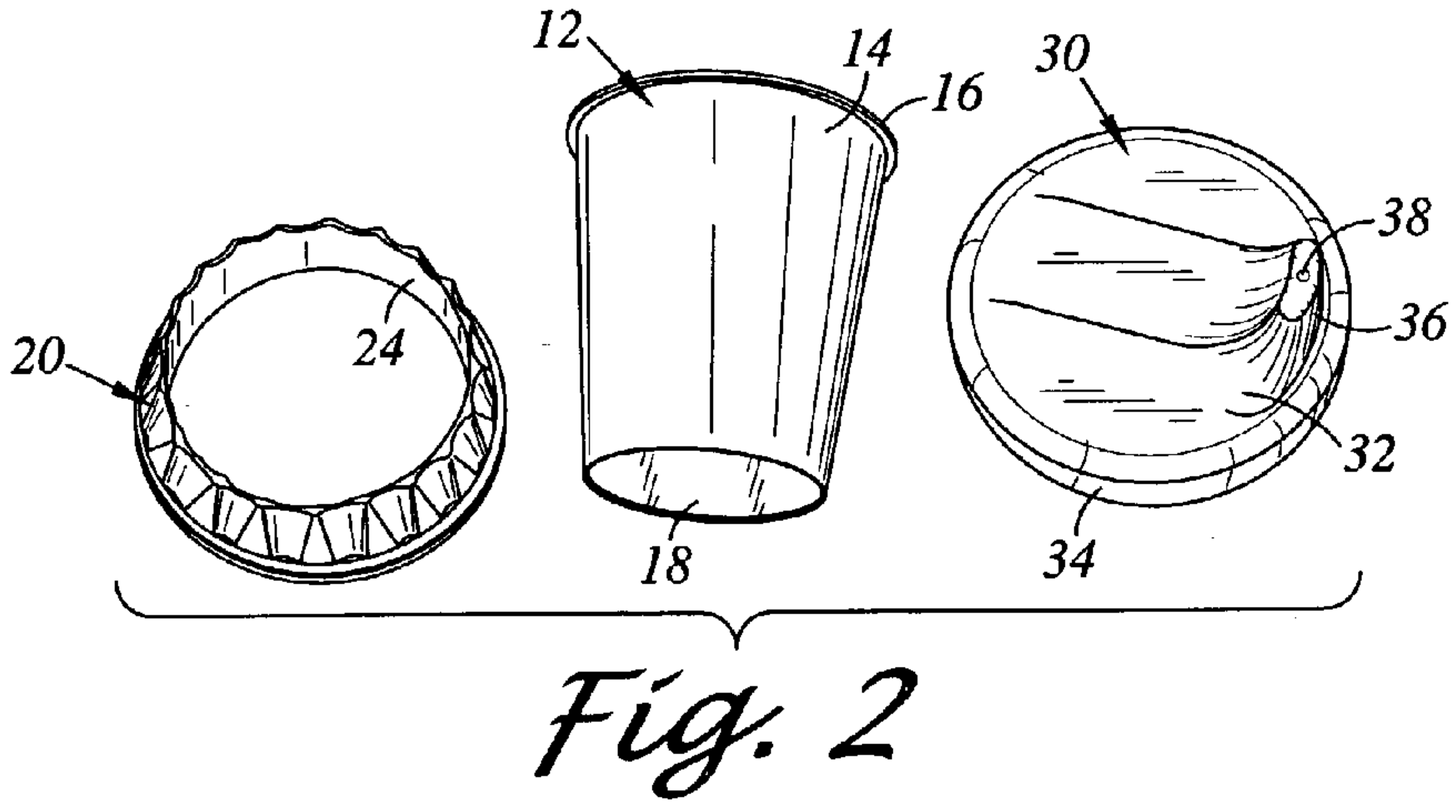


Fig. 2

PAPER CUP SIP ADAPTOR

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/369,702, filed Apr. 10, 2002, the entire content of which is hereby incorporated by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates generally to drink cups for infants, and more particularly to a sip adaptor specifically sized and configured for retrofit attachment to a conventional paper drink cup.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Most parents of infants and young children are very familiar with drinking cups often referred to as "sippy" or "sip" cups. Sip cups as currently known in the art typically comprises a cup portion which is fabricated from a plastic material and formed in the same general shape as a conventional paper drinking cup. In addition to this cup portion, the sip cup includes a lid which is engageable to the top rim of the cup portion. The lid itself typically includes an elongate spout which protrudes from a peripheral portion of the top surface thereof and includes a flow opening therein which fluidly communicates with the interior of the sip cup. In certain sip cups, the lid is threadably engaged to the cup portion, i.e., the cup portion is formed to include external threads about the rim thereof, with the lid being internally threaded with complementary threads. In other sip cups, the lid is frictionally engaged to the cup portion. The lid of some sip cups is provided with a valve arrangement which allows liquid to be drawn out of the flow passage of the spout when suction is applied thereto, but otherwise prevents liquid from spilling or dripping out of the spout when the sip cup is turned upside down or on its side and no suction is being applied to the spout.

[0004] In eating establishments where young children or toddlers are often found (e.g., fast-food restaurants, amusement park concession stands, etc.), it is the typical practice that a beverage is provided in a paper drinking cup. The paper drinking cup is typically provided with a plastic lid enclosure on one end thereof to contain the liquid within the cup, the lid enclosure including a slit for accommodating the advancement of a straw therethrough into the interior of the cup. Oftentimes, a toddler cannot be trusted to drink out of the cup/straw arrangement since there is still a high susceptibility for the lid enclosure to be dislodged from the cup and the contents spilling over the toddler. As such, it is a common practice for parents to pour the contents of the paper drinking cup into the cup portion of a sip cup, thereafter re-attaching the lid to the cup portion of the sip cup. The sip cup filled with the beverage is typically easier for the toddler to handle, and has substantially less susceptibility to spillage.

[0005] However, the initial transfer of the beverage from within the paper cup into the cup portion of the sip cup itself creates a susceptibility to accidental spillage. The present invention addresses this problem by providing a paper cup sip adaptor which is specifically sized and configured for retrofit attachment to a conventional paper beverage cup and provides the functional attributes of the lid of a sip cup.

SUMMARY

[0006] The above problems, and others, are resolved by providing an adaptor for a commonly available cup having a longitudinal axis, the cup having side walls tapered along a length of that axis and having a smaller bottom and forming a larger circular opening with a bead around the opening. The adaptor, the adaptor has an annular collar defining a collar opening that is sized to receive the cup during use. The collar has a top rim with a recess configured to receive the bead of the cup during use.

[0007] A lid is provided that is configured to be removably fastened to the collar during use. The lid has inner and outer concentric flanges depending from the lid toward the collar. The flanges are sized and configured to receive the collar between them. The outer flange engages an outer surface of the collar to removably fasten the lid to the collar. The inner flange is configured to engage the cup adjacent the opening of the cup. The lid has a spout on an exterior surface of the lid with the spout having at least one fluid outflow opening in the spout placed in fluid communication with an inside of the lid. The spout being sized to allow a child to drink from the spout during use of the adaptor.

[0008] In the above adaptor the collar preferably, but optionally, has external threads mating with internal threads on an inside of the outer flange on the lid to releasably engage the lid and collar. Preferably, but optionally, at least one of the collar and inner flange is tapered at an angle corresponding to the taper of the cup side walls. Preferably, but optionally, the inner flange is oriented relative to the longitudinal axis so the flange abuts the side walls of the cup during use around a circumference of the side walls.

[0009] Moreover, the collar advantageously, but optionally, has a gripping surface on an exterior surface of the collar configured to be grabbed manually during use of the cup. Further, a handle can extend from one of the lid or collar. Advantageously, the handle extends along a length of the longitudinal axis corresponding to about ½ to ¾ of a length of the cup with which the adaptor is intended to be used. The Preferably the handle extends from the collar and is integrally molded with the collar.

[0010] When the cup with which the adaptor is intended to be used has a bead with a circular-cross-sectional shape, then advantageously, but optionally, the recess has a curved cross-sectional shape conforming to the circular cross-section of the bead on the cup and the recess is located to abut the bead along a lower quadrant of the bead during use. Ideally, a stop is provided on one of the collar and lid in order to engage a portion of the other of the collar and lid in order to limit relative motion between the collar and lid and control deformation of the bead.

[0011] In a further embodiment an adaptor is provided to enable a child to drink from a cup having a wall tapered at an angle and having a bead extending around an open end of the cup and located on an exterior surface of the cup. The adaptor includes an annular collar for supporting the cup by engaging a lower portion of the bead of the cup around a substantial portion of a periphery of the bead. The collar has a rotationally activated, releasable locking mechanism on an exterior surface of the collar.

[0012] A lid is removably engageable with the collar. The lid has inner and outer concentric, annular flanges depending from a lower surface and extending toward the collar during use of the adaptor. The inner flange is located to abut an interior side of the wall of the cup when the lid engages the collar. The outer flange is located and configured to engage the releasable locking mechanism to releasably fasten the lid to the collar. The lid also preferably has an annular groove formed between the flanges and enclosing a portion of the bead of the cup when the lid engages the collar during use of the adaptor. Thus, the bead of the cup is substantially enclosed by the annular recess and collar and sealingly engaged with at least one of the flanges and recess in the lid to form a fluid seal.

[0013] The lid has a child drinking spout on an exterior surface of the lid adjacent a peripheral edge of the lid, the spout having at least one hole therein that is in fluid communication with a lower surface of the lid to place the spout in fluid communication with the cup during use of the adaptor. Advantageously the lid and collar are integrally molded of plastic. Moreover, a gripping surface is placed on the exterior of the collar, the lid, or both. Advantageously, but optionally, the collar has an inner periphery inclined at an angle complementary to the angle of the wall of the cup and wherein the collar has a recess with an arcuate cross-section configured and located to engage a lower portion of the bead of the cup. Moreover, handles can optionally be provided on one of the lid or collar, with the handles extending along a length of the cup greater than ½ the length of the cup, and preferably from ½ to ¾ of that length.

[0014] There is also advantageously provided a method for enabling a child to drink from a cup having a wall with a bead extending around an open end of the cup and located on an exterior surface of the cup. The method includes supporting a lower portion of the bead on an annular collar having an inner periphery defining an opening through which a body of the cup extends. The method also includes enclosing an upper portion of the bead with a lid having an annular recess defined between inner and outer by concentric flanges depending from the lid so that the recess encloses the bead. The method further includes fastening the lid to the collar using a rotating connection on the outer flange in cooperating with a mating rotational connection on the collar. A fluid seal is provided between the lid and the cup. The method also includes providing a child drinking spout on the lid, where the spout has an opening in fluid communication with the cup.

[0015] Advantageously, the step of providing a fluid seal optionally, but preferably includes placing the inner flange in frictional engagement with an inner surface of the wall of the cup. Moreover, the step of providing a fluid seal advantageously, but optionally includes wedging the wall of the cup between the collar and the inner flange. Still further, the step of providing a fluid seal includes pressing a bottom of the annular recess against the bead. Advantageously, the method also includes providing a manual gripping surface on an outer periphery of at least one of the lid and collar The method can also optionally include providing at least one handle connected to the collar or lid to allow manual manipulation of the cup and adaptor during use. Advantageously, the handle extends along a length of the cup for a distance of about ½ to ¾ of that length.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0016] These, as well as other features of the present invention will become more apparent upon reference to the drawings in which like numbers refer to like parts throughout, and wherein:

[0017] **FIG. 1** is a perspective view illustrating the sip cup adaptor assembly of the present invention as operatively interfaced to a conventional paper beverage cup; and

[0018] **FIG. 2** comprises top views of the collar and lid components of the sip cup adaptor assembly of the present invention;

[0019] **FIG. 3** is a partial sectional view of the cup and adaptor of **FIG. 1**; and

[0020] **FIG. 4** is a side view of a further embodiment of the cup and adaptor of **FIG. 1** but having handles fastened to the adaptor.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0021] Referring now to the drawings wherein the showings are for purposes of illustrating one embodiment of the present invention only, and not for purposes of limiting the same, the subject invention is directed to a sip cup assembly **10** which is adapted for retrofit attachment to a conventional paper beverage cup **12**. As best seen in **FIG. 2**, such conventional beverage cup **12** comprises an outer wall **14** which has a generally frusto conical configuration. Extending along the periphery of one end of the outer wall **14** is a continuous, enlarged bead **16** which defines the rim of the beverage cup **12** and that encircles the opening that allows access to the inside of cup. The opposite end of the outer wall **14** is enclosed by a bottom wall **18**. In accordance with conventional construction techniques, the bead **16** of the beverage cup **12** has a generally circular cross-sectional configuration. The cup **12**, and bead **16**, are typically made of a paper-based material coated with a sealant such as wax or plastic, or the entire cup may be made of plastic. Other materials could of course be used to form a fluid container comprising the cup **12**.

[0022] As used herein, the up, upper or top direction or part refers to the relative direction along a longitudinal axis **13** extending from the bottom of the cup **18** toward the top of the cup **12**, which direction is generally vertical when the bottom **18** rests on or parallel to the ground. As used herein, the term inner or inward refers to a direction generally toward the inside of the cup **12** and preferably toward a longitudinal axis **13** of the cup **12**. The term outer or outward indicates a direction away from that centerline.

[0023] The sip cup assembly **10** of the present invention comprises two parts, the first of which is an annular collar **20** which is preferably fabricated from a plastic material such as PVC, although any other plastic material suitable for holding beverages consumed by mammals, and especially consumed by humans, could be used. The collar **20** has a top rim **22** sized and located to generally match the bead **16** and engage an exterior of wall **14** and a lower portion of bead **16**. The collar **20** also defines an outer or exterior surface **26** which is itself tapered and includes a plurality of recesses **28** formed therein to provide a gripping surface for the sip cup assembly **10** when the collar is interfaced to the beverage cup **12** in a manner which will be described in more detail below.

[0024] The collar **20** also has an inner surface or inner wall **24** depending from the collar toward the bottom **18** of the cup **12**. The inner wall **24** is preferably, but optionally, tapered. The slope or contour of the tapered inner wall **24** is configured to be complementary to the taper of the outer wall **14** of the beverage cup **12**, or in some instances angled slightly toward the wall **14** to ensure a snug, and optionally, but preferably, a slight interference fit with the walls **14**. The annular wall **24** may be slit longitudinally, parallel to axis **13** in order to provide a resilient engagement with the cup **14**.

[0025] Extending between the top rim **22** or edge of the annular collar **20** and the inner surface **24** is a preferably arcuately contoured, generally concave engagement surface **27**. The engagement surface **27** could comprise a radial ledge in a plane orthogonal to axis **13**, or an inclined surface, but preferably takes the form of a top rim **22** having a recess with a circular cross-section sized to snugly receive bead **16** of cup **12**. The engagement surface **27** itself thus defines a groove or detent within the top rim of the collar **20** that is preferably, but optionally, continuous.

[0026] External threads **29** are formed on an exterior surface of collar **20**, adjacent the top edge of the collar. As used herein, the term threads includes continuous or intermittent threads, bayonet mounts, and any other interlocking mechanisms that use relative rotation to engage locking portions on two mating parts. The threads **29**, as broadly defined herein, comprise rotational locking means that are sized and configured to releasably engage the collar to a cap **30**.

[0027] The exterior surface of collar **20** is opposite and generally parallel to interior surface **24**, but the exterior surface is contoured whereas the interior surface **24** is advantageously smooth. In addition to the threads **29**, the exterior surface advantageously, but optionally, has a textured gripping surface **28**. The gripping surface **28** advantageously is formed by alternating recesses and raised areas, but could include knurled surface or other arrangements of raised and recessed surfaces that make it easier for a person to manually grip and hold the collar **20** when a cup **12** is held by the collar **20**.

[0028] In addition to the annular collar **20**, the sip cup assembly **10** includes a lid member **30** which is preferably, circular and sized to cover the opening of cup **12** and to mate with the annular collar **20**. The lid **30**, like the collar **20**, is also preferably fabricated from a plastic material. The lid member **30** defines a top wall **32** and an inner side wall **34** and outer side wall **34**, each of which are integrally connected to and extends about the periphery of the top wall **32**. Integrally connected to and protruding outwardly from the top wall **32** is a spout portion **36** of the lid member **30**. Formed in the distal end of the spout portion **36** is a flow opening **38**. The spout portion **36** is not centrally positioned upon the top wall **32**, but rather is offset toward the side wall **34** thereof.

[0029] The collar **20** thus has a depending outer surface or outer wall **36** which is generally parallel to, but radially outward of, the inner wall **34**. The outer wall **36** is preferably, but optionally tapered to match the inclination of wall **14**. Preferably, but optionally, the inclination of the outer wall **36** is slightly toward the wall **14** of the cup **12** to ensure a slight interference fit and to ensure a good fluid seal between the walls **14**, **36**. Thus, the inner and outer walls **34**, **36** are either parallel with each other and with cup wall **12**, or one or both walls **34**, **36** are slightly angled toward each other so as to sealingly grip the wall **14** of cup **12** between the walls **34**, **36** of collar **20**. Walls **34**, **36** are angled toward each other by less than 10° from being parallel to each other, and preferably less than 5° and still mor preferably by 1-3° are believed suitable. Because the walls **34**, **36** are annular, they are effectively concentric or alternatively concentric and slightly inclined toward each other.

[0030] The interior surface of outer wall **36** has internal threads **40** facing the inner wall **34**. The threads **40** are thus generally concentric with walls **34**, **36**.

[0031] The walls **34**, **36** are spaced apart a distance sufficient to accommodate the passage of bead **16** of cup **12** and to allow the internal threads **40** to engage external threads **29**. The walls **34**, **36** thus form an annular groove or recess around the periphery of collar **20**. The bottom **42** of that groove or recess forms the interior juncture between inner and outer walls **24**, **26**. The bottom **42** is preferably, but optionally curved to match the curvature of bead **16**, and thus forms an annular recess centered on axis **13** with a cross-sectional shape of a circle slightly larger than the circular bead **16**. The bottom **42** could be flat, as a plane orthogonal to axis **13**, or the bottom could be formed of a plurality of flat, annular surfaces concentric with axis **13**.

[0032] As best seen in **FIGS. 1 and 3**, the sip cup assembly **10** is interfaced to the beverage cup **12** by dropping the beverage cup **12** into the collar **20** such that the enlarged bead **16** of the beverage cup **12** is brought into direct, abutting contact with the top rim **22** of the collar **20**, and advantageously with contoured engaging surface **27** formed in or adjacent to that rim.

[0033] As will be recognized, such an interface is facilitated by advancing the beverage cup **12** into the collar **20** with the bottom wall **18** entering first. The complementary tapers between the inner surface **24** of the collar **20** and the outer wall **14** of the beverage cup **12** maintain the collar **20** in firm, frictional engagement to the beverage cup **12**.

[0034] Once the collar **20** has been engaged to the beverage cup **12** in the above-described manner, the lid member **30** is advanced over the bead **16** and top rim **22**, and maintained upon the collar **20**. Advantageously the lid **30** screws onto the collar **20** by use of the mating threads **29**, **40**.

[0035] Alternatively, the threads **29**, **40** could be replaced by various snap-lock arrangements that use an axial interlock rather than a rotational interlock. Indeed, even a frictional engagement could be used in which the rim **22** and bead **16** are wedged into the space between walls **34**, **36** with the walls **34**, **36** engaging the wall **12** to form a frictional engagement to hold the lid **30** on the collar.

[0036] The engaging surface **27** advantageously encloses the lower quarter of the bead **16** of cup **12**. The groove between walls **34**, **36** encloses between half to the remaining portion of the bead **16**. Preferably, the groove bottom **42** is configured to snugly engage the bead **16**. Advantageously the groove **42** and walls **34**, **36** cooperate with recess **27** to enclose the bead **16** while preferably not crushing the bead **16** as that may create a location for fluid to leak from the cup **12** past the crushed portion. To help achieve this snug fit, the bottom **40** may enclose more than half of the upper portion of the bead **16**, causing a slight snap lock with the bead.

Alternatively, the groove **40** encompasses no more than about half the upper portion of bead **16**.

[**0037**] The slightly inclined walls **34**, **36** advantageously grip the collar **20** between them in a realasably engageable manner. Preferably, the walls **34**, **36** of lid **32** cooperate with the collar **20** to grip the wall of cup **12** adjacent the bead **16**, desirably within about ½ inch of the lip, and preferably as close as possible to the bead. The gripping preferably does not crush the bead **16** as that may create a location for fluid to leak from the cup **12** past the crushed portion. The engagement of the lid **32** with the collar **20** advantageously provides a substantially fluid tight engagement with the cup **12** to prevent fluid from leaking out of the cup (other than through openings **38** in spout **36**, and the parts are preferably configured to achieve that fluid tight engagement.

[**0038**] The firm engagement between the lid member **30** and the collar **20** causes the combination of the beverage cup **12**, collar **20** and lid member **30** to closely mimic the structural and functional attributes of a conventional sip cup, i.e., the beverage cup **12** satisfies the aforementioned cup portion element of the conventional sip cup. Once the beverage within the beverage cup **12** has been consumed by the toddler, the lid member **30** is detached from the collar **20**, with the now empty beverage cup **12** simply being removed by being unscrew or "popped out" from within the collar **20**, depending on how the lid is fastened to the cup. As will be recognized, with the sip cup assembly **10** being positioned upon the beverage cup **12** in the above-described manner, liquid is drawn out from within the beverage cup **12** by the toddler sucking on the spout portion **36** of the lid member **30**.

[**0039**] Referring to **FIG. 4**, in a further embodiment a handle **50** extends from one of the collar **20** or lid **30**. Preferably the handle **50** extends from the lid **30** so that the handle or handles **50** can be consistently orientated relative to the spout **38**. The handle **50** preferably, but optionally, is slightly curved to provide more room for a child's hands to fit between the handle and the cup **12**. The handle **50** thus extends laterally from the collar **20** along an axis radial to a centerline of the cup **12** and then curves to extend along a length of the cup **12**. Because the cup **12** is tapered, the handle **50** can extend in a gradual arc without any prominent lateral section as shown in **FIG. 4**. Advantageously, but optionally, the handle **50** extends for about ½ to ¾ of a length of the cup **12**. That allows a child to hold the handle at about the middle of the cup, near the center of gravity of the cup **12**. A handle **50** extending a length of about 3-4 inches (76 mm-100 mm) along the length of a cup **12** is believed suitable.

[**0040**] The handle **50** is advantageously thick enough so it will not break under use and abuse by a child. A handle **50** with a circular or oval cross section is preferred, and a smooth surface to avoid abrasion. But a textured gripping surface could be provided along the gripping areas of the handle. Knurling or slightly roughened areas along the straight portions are believed suitable.

[**0041**] Advantageously, there are two handles **50** extending from opposing sides of the collar **20**. More than two handles **50** could be formed. If four, equally spaced handles are provided, then the cup **12** can rest on a lower two of the handles while being held by an upper two of the handles by a child. Advantageously the handles **50** are integrally molded with whichever of the collar **20** or lid **30** to which the handles **50** are fastened, but the handles could formed separately and then glued, welded, adhered or fastened to the collar or lid. Alternatively, one or more handles **50** could be fastened or molded to the lid **30**, and one or more handles **50** could be fastened or molded to the collar **20**. A variety of configurations for a handle **50** could be used and the depicted configuration is given for illustration, not limitation.

[**0042**] In use, the bottom of the cup is placed through the opening defined by the annular collar so that the bead **16** rests against the top rim **22** of the collar. Advantageously, the bead **16** rests against the mating contour of the recess **22** in the collar. The collar **20** thus holds the cup **12**.

[**0043**] The lid **30** is then screwed onto the collar, so that the bottom **42** of the groove formed by flanges **34**, **36** cooperates with the recess **42** to complete the enclosure of the bead **16**. The collar **20** is received in the annular space between concentric flanges **34**, **36**. A seal is formed between one or both of flanges **34**, **36** and the walls **14** of cup **12**, and/or with the bead **16**. Further, the collar **20** stabilizes the open end of the cup **12** so that it cannot be easily deformed radially inward toward the longitudinal axis **13**. That allows a fluid tight seal to be maintained. The collar **20** also advantageously provides a gripping surface to hold the cup with the adaptor **10** on the cup. Fluid can then be withdrawn through outflow opening **38** of spout **36** by tipping the cup to the user's mouth, preferably using the handle **50** to guide the cup and adaptor. This allows a parent to buy a soft drink or other drink at a fast food restaurant and to easily place the adaptor **10** on the soft drink container for use by a child.

[**0044**] Advantageously, the rim **22** of the collar **20** is sized relative to a depth of flanges **34**, **36** so that the rim **22** abuts a projection on at least one of the inner and outer flange **34**, **36** in order to limit the relative movement of the lid and collar toward each other along the longitudinal axis **13**. That limit on motion helps prevent the bottom **42** of the annular groove between flanges **34**, **36**, from abutting and crushing the bead **16** in unacceptable ways. A slight, tight fit is desirable, but if the bead **16** is crushed it may form paths through which fluid could leak from the cup **12**. As shown in **FIG. 3**, the rim **22** abuts a curved portion of bottom **42** to limit the motion. In lieu of or in addition to the rim **22** abutting lid **30**, the distal lip or rim **44** of lid **30** can abut a stop **46** on the exterior of collar **20** in order to limit relative motion of the lid and collar.

[**0045**] Those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that various modifications to the sip cup assembly **10** may be implemented without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. For example, the lid member **30** of the sip cup assembly **10** may be formed to include the above-described valve arrangement of prior art sip cups which prevents the spillage of liquid from the spout portion **36** unless suction is applied thereto. Such a valve is shown in U.S. Pat. No. 5,079,013, the complete contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference.

[**0046**] Additionally, the inner surface **24** of the collar **20** need not necessarily be formed to have a tapered configuration, nor do the recesses **38** necessarily need to be formed within the outer wall **26** of the collar **20**. Additionally, the taper of the inner wall **24** of the collar **20** may be formed to have a slope which provides for some measure or level of

frictional retention to a wide variety of differently sized beverage cups **12**. Along these lines, the collar **20** (as well as the lid member **30**) may be fabricated to be of differing diameters, depending on the particular size or size range of the beverage cup **12** with which the sip cup assembly **10** is to be used. Moreover, the gripping surface **28** can be on the outer periphery of the collar **20**, the lid **30**, or both, even if handles **50** are provided.

[**0047**] Additional modifications and improvements of the present invention may also be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. Further, the various features of this invention can be used alone, or in varying combinations with each other and are not intended to be limited to the specific combination described herein. Thus, the particular combination of parts described and illustrated herein is intended to represent only certain embodiments of the present invention, and is not intended to serve as limitations of alternative devices within the spirit and scope of the invention.

I claim:

1. An adaptor for a cup having a longitudinal axis, the cup having side walls tapered along a length of that axis and having a smaller bottom and forming a larger circular opening with a bead around the opening, the adaptor comprising:

an annular collar defining a collar opening that is sized to receive the cup during use and having a top rim with a recess configured to receive the bead during use, the collar having a gripping surface on an exterior surface of the collar configured to be grabbed manually during use of the cup;

a lid configured to be removably fastened to the collar during use, the lid having inner and outer concentric flanges depending from the lid toward the collar, the flanges being sized and configured to receive the collar between them, the outer flange engaging an outer surface of the collar to removably fasten the lid to the collar, the inner flange being configured to engage the cup adjacent the opening of the cup, the lid having a spout on an exterior surface of the lid with the spout having at least one fluid outflow opening in the spout placed in fluid communication with an inside of the lid, the spout being sized to allow a child to drink from the spout during use of the adaptor.

2. The adaptor of claim 1, wherein the exterior of the collar has external threads mating with internal threads on an inside of the outer flange on the lid to releasably engage the lid and collar.

3. The adaptor of claim 1, wherein at least one of the collar and inner flange is tapered at an angle corresponding to the taper of the cup side walls.

4. The adaptor of claim 3, wherein the inner flange is oriented relative to the longitudinal axis so the flange abuts the side walls of the cup during use around a circumference of the side walls.

5. The adaptor of claim 1, wherein the cup with which the adaptor is intended to be used has a bead with a circular-cross-sectional shape and the recess has a curved cross-sectional shape conforming to the circular cross-section of the bead on the cup and the recess is located to abut the bead along a lower quadrant of the bead during use.

6. The adaptor of claim 1, further comprising a handle extending from one of the lid or collar, the handle extending along a length of the longitudinal axis corresponding to about ½ to ¾ of a length of the cup with which the adaptor is intended to be used.

7. The adaptor of claim 6, wherein the handle extends from the collar and is integrally molded with the collar.

8. The adaptor of claim 1, further comprising the cup, with the bead engaging the recess and a bottom of an annular space defined between the inner and outer flanges.

9. The adaptor of claim 9, further comprising a stop on one of the collar and lid engaging a portion of the other of the collar and lid in order to limit relative motion between the collar and lid and control deformation of the bead.

10. An adaptor to enable a child to drink from a cup having a wall tapered at an angle and having a bead extending around an open end of the cup and located on an exterior surface of the cup, the adaptor comprising:

annular collar for supporting the cup by engaging a lower portion of the bead of the cup around a substantial portion of a periphery of the bead, the collar having a rotationally activated, releasable locking mechanism on an exterior surface of the collar; and

a lid removably engageable with the collar, the lid having inner and outer concentric, annular flanges depending from a lower surface and extending toward the collar during use of the adaptor, the inner flange being located to abut an interior side of the wall of the cup when the lid engages the collar, the outer flange being located and configured to engage the releasable locking mechanism to releasably fasten the lid to the collar, the lid having an annular groove formed between the flanges and enclosing a portion of the bead of the cup when the lid engages the collar during use of the adaptor, the lid having a child drinking spout on an exterior surface of the lid adjacent a peripheral edge of the lid, the spout having at least one hole therein that is in fluid communication with a lower surface of the lid to place the spout in fluid communication with the cup during use of the adaptor.

11. The adaptor of claim 10, wherein the lid and collar are integrally molded of plastic.

12. The adaptor of claim 10, further comprising a gripping surface on the exterior of the collar.

13. The adaptor of claim 10, further comprising the cup with the bead of the cup substantially enclosed by the annular recess and collar and sealingly engaged with at least one of the flanges and recess in the lid to form a fluid seal.

14. The adaptor of claim 13, wherein the collar comprises an inner periphery inclined at an angle complementary to the angle of the wall of the cup and wherein the collar has a recess with an arcuate cross-section configured and located to engage a lower portion of the bead of the cup.

15. The adaptor of claim 14, further comprising a gripping surface on the exterior of the collar.

16. The adaptor assembly of claim 14, further comprising a handle on at least one of the lid or collar, the handle extending along a length of the cup greater than ½ the length of the cup.

17. An adaptor assembly for enabling a child to drink from a cup having a wall with a bead extending around an open end of the cup and located on an exterior surface of the cup, the adaptor comprising:

an annular collar having an inner periphery defining a circular opening through which a body of the cup

extends, the collar being configured to engage a lower portion of the bead of the cup around a substantial portion of a periphery of the bead to support the cup when the cup is placed in the collar during use of the adaptor, the collar having external threads thereon;

a lid depending inner and outer flanges with internal threads on the outer flange, the lid being placed over the collar and engaged with the collar so the collar is located between the flanges and the external and internal threads threadingly engage and so the inner flange wedges the wall of the cup between the inner flange and collar adjacent the bead to grip the cup when the lid engages the collar during use of the adaptor, the lid having a child drinking spout extending from an exterior surface of the lid with at least one opening in the spout in fluid communication with an inside of the lid to allow fluid communication with the cup during use of the adaptor.

18. The adaptor of claim 17, further comprising a manual gripping surface on a periphery of at least one of the collar and lid.

19. The adaptor of claim 18, wherein the collar has a concave surface configured to receive the lower portion of the bead of the cup during use of the adaptor.

20. A method for enabling a child to drink from a cup having a wall with a bead extending around an open end of the cup and located on an exterior surface of the cup, the method comprising:

supporting a lower portion of the bead on an annular collar having an inner periphery defining an opening through which a body of the cup extends;

enclosing an upper portion of the bead with a lid having an annular recess defined between inner and outer by concentric flanges depending from the lid so that the recess encloses the bead;

fastening the lid to the collar using a rotating connection on the outer flange in cooperating with a mating rotational connection on the collar;

providing a fluid seal between the lid and the cup; and

providing a child drinking spout on the lid, the spout having an opening in fluid communication with the cup.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of providing a fluid seal includes placing the inner flange in frictional engagement with an inner surface of the wall of the cup.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of providing a fluid seal includes wedging the wall of the cup between the collar and the inner flange.

23. The method of claim 20, wherein the step of providing a fluid seal includes pressing a bottom of the annular recess against the bead.

24. The method of claim 20, further comprising providing a manual gripping surface on an outer periphery of at least one of the lid and collar.

25. The method of claim 20, further comprising providing at least one handle connected to the collar or lid to allow manual manipulation of the cup and adaptor during use.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the handle is fastened to the lid and extends along a length of the cup for a distance of about ½ to ¾ of that length.

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