

allowance to the upper edge. Cut out the panel.

**Right sides together**, pin the panel to the pants, aligning the semicircle center points and easing in the fullness if necessary. Leave  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " extending past the pants upper edge to turn under later for the elastic casing. Stitch with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance; finish the edges by serging or zigzagging. Press the seams toward the panel. Topstitch the panel  $\frac{1}{8}$ " away from the seam.

**Fold down the panel upper edge**  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " so it's even with the waistband upper edge on either side. Stitch across the panel  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " from the upper edge with a short, narrow zigzag, stretching the fabric as you sew and leaving the ends open.

**Sew one button** to each pant upper edge corner, next to each casing opening (5). Thread the desired length of buttonhole elastic through the casing. Secure by attaching the elastic to the buttons.



Micki Palmer has been sewing for 23 years—seven of which were for her children. She's currently nursing her fourth child and enjoys sharing information about

adapting patterns for nursing wear. Reach her at <http://members.tripod.com/thealmerpages/micki/htm>.

## resources

**Emma Powell**, [www.sewing.2ya.com](http://www.sewing.2ya.com), provided the nursing overlay pattern adaptation.

*Pattern Making for Maternity Wear*, by Sarah J. Doyle; to order, visit [www.patternsthatfityou.com](http://www.patternsthatfityou.com), [www.sewwithsarah.com](http://www.sewwithsarah.com) or call (800) 883-2348.

Clear elastic and foldover elastic can be found at **Sew Sassy Fabrics**; to order, visit [www.sewsassy.com](http://www.sewsassy.com), or call (256) 536-4405.

**Valency Fox** provided the ready-to-wear nursing overlay adaptation.

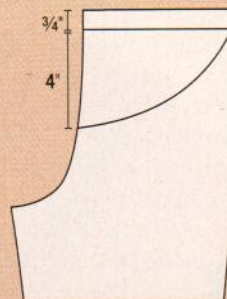
## Under-the-Belly Designs

SARAH J. DOYLE

Under-the-belly maternity designs are comfortable to wear during pregnancy since there's no waistband to alter as the weeks and months progress. Converting regular patterns to the under-the-belly style is simple. Use the following method to lower the original waistline on shorts, pant or skirt patterns.

**Measure a new waistline**  $\frac{3}{4}$ " below the waist on both the front and back pattern pieces. Measure down an additional 4" at the center front, then draw a curved line to the previous waist mark (A).

A Measure new waistline.



**Use knit fabric** to create an elastic casing for the new waistline—cotton knit or ribbed knit works well paired with soft stretchy elastic. ( $1\frac{1}{4}$ "-wide elastic designed for underwear and pajamas works best because it's softer than other elastics.)

**Follow the pattern instructions** to stitch the garment pieces together at the side seams. Then measure around the new waistline. Cut the elastic to this measurement—don't add extra for seams.

**For the elastic casing**, cut a knit fabric rectangle the same length as the elastic and  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " wide (this accounts for  $\frac{1}{2}$ " seams). Cut the rectangle with the length in the direction with the most stretch.

**Fold the casing rectangle lengthwise** with right sides together; stitch the short ends with  $\frac{1}{2}$ " seams, stopping  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the raw edges. Fold under  $\frac{1}{2}$ " on one long edge and press.

**Divide the casing unfolded edge into fourths** and pin-mark at each point. With right sides facing, match these points to the center front, center back and side seams of the garment waistline; pin. Stitch with a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance, using taught sewing techniques and stretching the casing to fit the waist edge as you sew.

**Overlap the elastic short ends**  $\frac{1}{2}$ " and zigzag them together. Place the elastic inside the casing, folding the casing over the elastic as you work. Match the folded casing edge to the garment waistline; pin generously. Topstitch the folded edge in place with a stretch stitch.



Sarah J. Doyle graduated from Cheing Mei Pattern Making School in Tainan, Taiwan, in 1972. Since then, she's taught pattern making, designed patterns for plus-size children and is the owner of [www.patternsthatfityou.com](http://www.patternsthatfityou.com). ➤

