

## **Burn Mask**

### **General Description:**

A Burn Mask is a clear plastic mask used to help compress, soften and stretch scarring on the face. This type of device is most commonly used when compression garments are unsuccessful. It is highly effective because it is custom molded to fit the highly contoured features of the face. It is not uncommon to see “bridging” of a compression garment around the nose and eyes, which can result in the scars raising (hypertrophic scarring). The plastic Burn Mask is molded to fit intimately in these areas, which eliminates the bridging problem. It is held on with elastic Velcro straps that go around the head.

Burn Masks are typically made of either a clear plastic or a clear plastic with laminated silicone. The plastic with the silicone has proven to be very helpful in softening scars and keeping the mask in position.

Typically, masks are worn all day and night. They are removed for cleaning and for eating and then immediately replaced. Individuals must wear the mask anywhere from 6 to 24 months. The physician determines when to discontinue using the mask when the scars are no longer “active” or changing. Failure to wear the mask as described will have unfavorable results.



### **Application and Removal:**

Because the mask is custom molded, it needs to be positioned appropriately on the face. If the mask is positioned slightly off, it will allow scars to rise. For this reason it is best to put on the mask by placing it on the chin and pushing up and into the face.

The lower straps should be put on first, followed by the upper side straps, and finally the top strap. The elastic should be pulled with some tension before applying it to the other side. When wearing a mask for the first time, it is recommended to slowly increase the tension on the straps. The straps can be removed in any order. An individual should wear the mask for ½ to 1 hour three times a day, and increase the wearing time each day until wearing it all day. When taking off the mask, it should be slowly pulled off (especially with the silicone-laminated mask) so that the skin does not stick to the mask.

### **Cleaning and Maintenance:**

The Burn Mask should be cleaned every time it is removed. It is recommended to use a mild, hypoallergenic soap. Soaps with deodorants or lotions should be avoided. Thoroughly rinse the mask and dry before putting back on.

### **Tips and Problem Solving:**

- Care should be taken to avoid prolonged exposure of the mask to sunlight or heat. Heat can cause the mask to deform.
- The mask is also somewhat brittle and will easily crack. Store the mask in a safe place when not wearing.
- The Velcro tabs on the mask may come off. The mask should be cleaned of the Velcro residue and then a new piece applied. Never use crazy glue or similar products on the mask.

**In order to get the most benefit from the mask, monthly adjustments with an Orthotist should be made. The mask will need to be remolded to accommodate changes of the face.**