



Protraction Face Mask

Why is this used? Some patients have a bite relationship in which the upper teeth are behind the lower teeth which is called an “underbite”. This is caused by either the lower jaw growing excessively forward, the upper jaw not growing forward enough or combination of both. A Protraction Facemask is used to correct these “underbites”.

When is it used? It is used on actively growing patients. It is not effective on adults because their growth is complete. The appliance is worn a minimum 12-14 hours per day (after school and bed time). The more often it is worn; the less time it will take to work.

How does this work? The upper pad rests on the forehead and the lower pad rests on the chin. Rubber bands (elastics) are placed on the pins and connect to the hooks on the appliance in the mouth. When stretched, the rubber bands will apply a light force to the upper jaw. This light force helps to move the upper jaw and upper teeth forward.

How should I sleep? Most patients are able to sleep normally with the appliance after a 2-4 day period of adjustment. Of course, every patient is different. It is most comfortable to sleep on your back or on your sides. Gentle encouragement at home is helpful.

How soon will I see changes? The changes will be noticeable within the first month. Due to individual variation, every patient responds differently. Since the upper teeth are moving forward, there may be a period in which the upper and lower teeth contact on the edges. This is normal and will soon pass once the bite is completely corrected.

How many months will it be worn? The amount of time is dependent on the severity of the under bite, the amount of appliance wear and jaw growth. The average patient will wear the appliance for 6-12 months.

Once the bite is corrected, what happens next? Once the bite is corrected, minimal retention is needed because the lower teeth usually prevent the upper teeth from moving back to their original position. In severe cases, an early set of braces (Phase I treatment-partial braces) will be recommended braces are placed after full eruption of all of the teeth.

Things to remember: It is very important to wear your facemask for the specified time and duration. Forgetting to wear your facemask will reduce the success, increase your treatment time, and in some cases make our goals impossible to achieve. Wearing your facemask may help prevent the future need of having permanent teeth removed and/or jaw surgery.

