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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **AVON PRODUCTS, INC.** [US/US]; Avon Place, Suffern, NY 10901-5605 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **LU, Michelle, Z.** [CN/CN]; 34 Mingfeng Road, Palm Villa, Riverside Gar-

den, Guangzhou (CN). **XIAO, Shell** [CN/CN]; 1st Beijing Road, Nanguo Olympic Garden, Guangzhou (CN).

(74) Agent: **CCPIT PATENT AND TRADEMARK LAW OFFICE**; 8th Floor, Vantone New World Plaza, 2 Fuchengmenwai Street, Beijing 100037 (CN).

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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: STRETCHABLE COSMETIC MASK

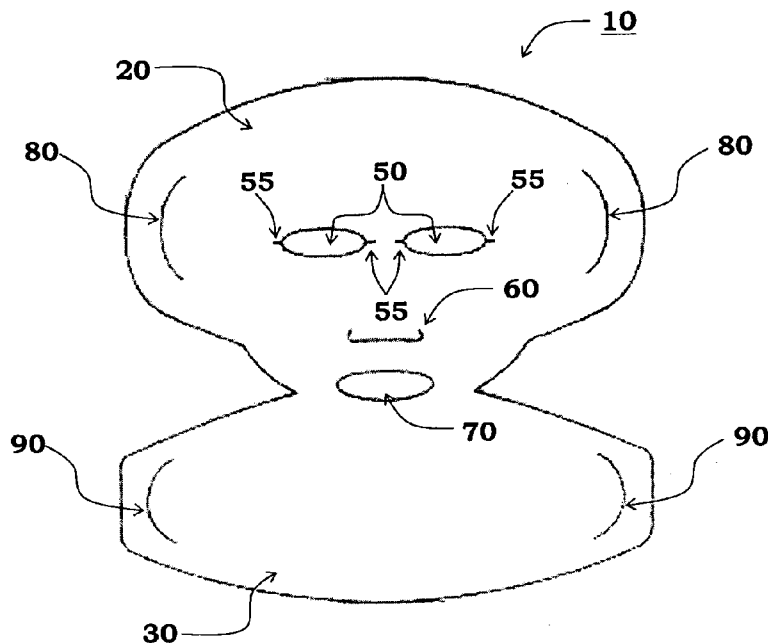


Figure 1

[Continued on next page]



ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, **Published:**

TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE,
ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV,
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(BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR,
NE, SN, TD, TG).

— *with international search report (Art. 21(3))*

(57) Abstract: A stretchable cosmetic mask (10) comprises an upper portion (20) adapted to cover the face and a lower portion (30) adapted to cover at least a portion of the neck. The upper and lower portions are secured to the wearer by pairs of slits which are stretched around the ears.

STRETCHABLE COSMETIC MASK

FIELD OF INVENTION

[0001] The invention relates generally to a cosmetic or therapeutic mask. More particularly, the invention relates to a cosmetic or therapeutic mask composed of a stretchable substrate impregnated with one or more beneficial agents for the skin.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The use of cosmetic masks for treating the skin is generally known. Most masks comprise a liquid vehicle contained in a matrix, such as a gel or cloth. Beneficial agents, including skin moisturizers and therapeutic agents, are typically contained within the liquid and are released to the skin when the mask is worn. Masks have the advantage that the beneficial agents are dispensed to the skin over a long period of time and the high moisture environment increases the ability of many agents to penetrate the skin.

[0003] U.S. Patent No. 6,537,308 describes a face mask having two eye patch regions comprising pockets for holding therapeutic materials against the face. The mask is secured on the face using straps which encircle the head.

[0004] U.S. Patent No. 6,316,021 describes an extensible mask including an adhesive matrix that can be stretched at least in the wet state. The extensible mask is formed as a laminate having a backing sheet and an adhesive matrix containing at least one active ingredient. The extensible mask is secured to the face by the adhesive matrix and covers only the skin of the face.

[0005] U.S. Patent No. 6,042,844 describes a sheet pack having a multi-layer moisture-permeable support comprising a hydrophobic layer and a hydrophilic layer. A cosmetic substance is contained in the hydrophilic layer. The sheet pack is shaped to cover only a portion of the consumer's face and may be adhered to the skin of the face.

[0006] U.S. Patent No. 7,004,844 describes a facemask containing a plurality of aromatic capsules and having bands disposed at the two sides for looping around the ears of the wearer.

[0007] WO99/18903 discloses a mask for promoting wound healing. The mask is held in place with retaining straps or bands. The straps may encompass the entire head or may hook behind the ears.

[0008] A mask product is commercially available in Asia under the name Olay® Total Effects™ De-wrinkle Firming Stretch Mask which comprises an elastic non-woven matrix substrate for delivering cosmetic actives to the skin. The mask is held in place only by adhesion to the skin and requires the wearer to remain still or lying down for the duration of the treatment. The Olay® mask also fails to treat the skin of the neck area.

[0009] There is a continuing need in the art for a cosmetic mask that overcomes one or more of the foregoing deficiencies of conventional cosmetic masks. It would be desirable to provide a cosmetic mask that is capable of effectively and comfortably securing to the face of the consumer. It would also be desirable to provide a cosmetic mask that is capable of treating the neck area of an individual simultaneously with the face.

[0010] It is therefore an object of the invention to provide a cosmetic mask that is capable of comfortably yet securely affixing to the face. It is further an object of the invention to provide a cosmetic mask for treating the neck area in addition to the skin of the face.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] A mask for delivering a beneficial agent to the face and neck is provided comprising a sheet of stretchable substrate having (i) an upper portion configured to substantially cover the human face and having a pair of openings (slits) positioned at opposite ends thereof, the openings being adapted to fit around the ears and secure the mask onto the face in a substantially stretched condition; and (2) a lower portion configured to stretch under the chin and substantially cover the front of the neck and underside of the jaw line, the lower portion also having a pair of openings positioned at opposite ends thereof, said openings being adapted to fit around the ears to secure the lower portion against the neck area of the wearer; the substrate comprising a bibulous matrix material having one or more beneficial agents included therein for delivery to the skin when the mask is worn.

[0012] In some embodiments, the bibulous matrix material is a non-woven cloth, preferably one which comprises predominantly cotton fibers but which has an additional content of elastomer of from about 1–30%, more typically 5–25% by weight to impart

stretchability. The non-woven cloth may be stretchable to more than twice its original dimensions without breaking when a stretching force of 1 kgf is applied. For example, a 230% increase in length may be obtained without breaking with an applied force of 1 kgf. In some embodiments the cloth may be stretchable to more than 2.5 times, three-times, or even four-times its original dimensions. The fact that the cloth is highly stretchable allows the slits to comfortably loop around the ears.

[0013] The non-woven cloth preferably exhibits a micro-funnel effect when stretched, whereby liquid is preferentially delivered to the side of the curved sheet facing the skin when the region of the body over which the cloth is disposed is convex, for example, the forehead.

[0014] The cloth is preferably patterned (e.g., embossed) with hexagons or the like to increase its absorptive capacity. In some embodiments, the mask will be capable of absorbing liquid from about 5 to about 15 times, or about 10 times its dry weight.

[0015] The mask is suitable for delivering a variety of beneficial agents to the skin, including cosmetic, therapeutic, or pharmaceutical agents. In one embodiment, the beneficial agents are selected from the group consisting of moisturizers, anti-acne agents, anti-aging agents, anti-wrinkle agents, botanicals, keratinolytic agents, exfoliants, α -hydroxy acids, β -hydroxy acids, free radical scavengers, and de-pigmenting agents. The beneficial agents are contained within a cosmetically acceptable liquid vehicle, which is typically an emulsion of suitably high viscosity such that the liquid does not drip excessively from the mask.

[0016] These and other aspects of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art after a reading of the following detailed description of the invention, including the figures and appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] Figure 1 shows a plan view of a mask according to a first embodiment of the invention. In this embodiment, the face portion and the neck portion are defined predominately by the outer contours of the mask which is in a substantially hour-glass configuration.

[0018] Figure 2 shows a plan view of a mask according to a second embodiment of the invention. In this embodiment, the face portion and the neck portion are defined predominately by the cuts in the substrate sheet which form a central flap that can be stretched under the chin.

[0019] Figure 3 illustrates the application to the face and neck of the mask shown in Figure 2. As shown, the mask has already been stretched across the face and fastened to the ears by looping the pair of apertures of the top portion around each ear. The neck portion, also comprising a pair of apertures, is then stretched under the chin and the apertures are fastened around each ear.

[0020] Figure 4 shows an exemplary patterning of the non-woven cloth according to a preferred embodiment of the invention.

[0021] Figure 5 compares the stretchability of a mask according to one embodiment of the invention with the commercially available Olay® Total Effects™ De-wrinkle Firming Stretch Mask, which likewise is based on a non-woven matrix.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0022] The cosmetic or therapeutic mask according to the invention is composed of a continuous sheet of stretchable substrate and may roughly be divided into a face portion, which is configured to stretch across and substantially cover the face, and a neck portion, which substantially covers the front of the neck and the underside of the chin and jaw line. The face portion of the mask comprises a slit or aperture on each side (left and right) that can be stretched out to loop onto the ears to hold the face portion tightly against the face, and two additional slits on the left and right sides of the lower portion can also be looped onto the ears to hold the mask snugly against the neck area.

[0023] Referring now to Figure 1, one embodiment of the mask according to the invention is shown. Mask **10** generally comprises a continuous sheet of substrate configured so as to define an upper face portion **20** roughly matching the contours of a human face and a lower neck portion **30**. Ovoid-shaped openings **50** and **70** are cut out of the sheet to accommodate the eyes and mouth of the wearer, respectively, and cutting **60** is configured so that nostrils are uncovered in use but otherwise allowing the mask to fit snugly over the surface of the nose.

[0024] Face portion **20** is suitably dimensioned to stretch across the human face such that the pair of arcuate slits **80** which define openings through the substrate on each side of the upper face portion **20** may be fit around the ears of the wearer to secure the mask in place. In one embodiment, the upper face portion **20** of the mask may be approximately 25 cm in width at the widest point, such that ear slits **80** are approximately 22 cm apart. It will be understood, however, that there is wide latitude in the dimensions of the mask, determined primarily by the mechanical properties of the substrate. In one embodiment, the upper face portion of the mask is approximately 16 cm in height as measured from the bottom of mouth opening **70** to the top of the mask.

[0025] One or more slits **55** may extend from the left and right edges of eye holes **50** or mouth hole **70** (not shown) to increase comfort and better accommodate movement of the eyelids and mouth. The slits **55** may be any length but are optimally about 2 cm in length. The slits may also or alternatively extend from the top and/or bottom edges of eye holes **50** or mouth hole **70**, although this embodiment is not shown in Figure 1.

[0026] The lower portion **30** of mask **10** also comprises a pair of arcuate cuttings **90**, each formed adjacent the edges of the left and right sides of the mask, respectively. In one embodiment, lower portion **30** is approximately 26 cm in width and slits **90** are separated by about 23 cm. In use, lower portion **30** will partly cover the skin of the neck and slits **90** are fitted around the ears of the wearer to secure the lower portion of the mask in place. In this manner, the mask is stretched snugly across the skin of the neck and face and provides upward support to the skin along the jaw line and cheeks.

[0027] Figure 2 illustrates a currently preferred mask according to the invention. In this embodiment, lower portion **30** and upper face portion **20** of mask **10** are defined in part by cuts **25** which extend inward from the left and right edges of the mask, leaving only a small section of the substrate sheet connecting the upper and lower portions. In one embodiment, the center-most ends of cuts **25** are separated by about 3 cm. Together with cuts **25**, cuts **15** define a central flap which is adapted for tucking under the chin and allow the ear slits **90** to come into position to be stretched over the ears. Small slits may be cut in the chin region to allow a better fit to the facial contour. In the embodiment illustrated in Figure 2, three short slit **35** are cut in the chin area. Figure 3 illustrates the

application of the mask of Figure 2 to the face and neck. Typically, the mask is first applied to the face by stretching the upper portion 20 across the face and securing the slits 80 around the ears. Next, the user pulls the bottom portion 30 under the chin and pulls the slits 90 upwards and towards the ear and also loops these slits around the ears. This creates upward lift to the skin under the chin and along the jaw lines and lends to the overall impression of skin tautness.

[0028] The bibulous matrix material may be any material that is capable of holding a liquid cosmetic formulation, but is preferably also highly elastic to enable the slits to be comfortably stretched around the ears. Both woven and non-woven cloths are contemplated to be suitable, although non-woven cloths are preferred. The absorbent fibers of the bibulous material may include natural and synthetic fibers. Preferably, the bibulous material comprises hydrophilic fibers. Exemplary natural absorbent fibers may include cotton fibers, cellulose fibers and the like. Preferably, the mask is formed from a material comprising predominantly cotton fibers but with an additional content of elastomer of from about 1–40% by weight, more typically from about 5–30% by weight, to impart stretchability. Suitable synthetic fibers may include, for example, elastomers such as polyolefins (polypropylene).

[0029] The non-woven cloth may be stretchable to more than twice its original dimensions without breaking when a stretching force of 1 kgf is applied. For example, a 230% increase in length may be obtained without breaking with an applied force of 1 kgf. The ability of a material to stretch is related to the elongation ratio (α) of the material, which is defined as $\alpha = L/L_0$, where L represents the stretched length and L_0 represents the original length of the material. Preferably, the elongation ratio of material, without breaking, is greater than 2, greater than 2.5, greater than 3, greater than 3.5, or even greater than 4. The fact that the cloth is highly stretchable allows the slits to comfortably loop around the ears and renders the mask suitable for a wide range of head and face sizes.

[0030] In one embodiment, the bibulous material has a patterned texture. It is believed that the patterned texture increases the absorbability of the matrix as compared to an untextured material. An exemplary embodiment of the bibulous material of the present invention may comprise surface texture, in particular having the honeycomb

pattern shown in Figure 4. This exemplary embodiment increases the internal volume by $2.4 \times 10^3 \text{ mm}^3$ per 30 cm^3 of material and thus, increases the material's absorption capacity by 8%. Overall, a 3.5 g mask (on a dry basis) is able to imbibe and hold about 30 g of liquid.

[0031] It is particularly preferred that the liquid cosmetic formulation absorbed by the mask be made available to the face and neck. The preferred material allows for enhanced delivery of the liquid cosmetic formulation to the skin. In particular, when the preferred material is placed onto a surface having a convex curvature, such as, for example, the exterior surface of a cylinder or the overall shape of a face of a consumer (e.g., the neck, forehead, etc.), the interior surface of the material is reduced, whereas the exterior surface of the material is expanded creating a difference in tensility between the opposing faces of the sheet. It is believed that the interior surface of the materials is subject to an increased pressure due to enhanced capillary action and the exterior surface of the material is subject to a decreased pressure. This difference in pressure between the interior and exterior surfaces of the material creates a micro-funneling effect, directing the liquid cosmetic formulation from the exterior surface toward the interior surface of the material. This micro-funneling effect increases the amount and uniformity of liquid delivery to the skin and is expected to be enhanced with highly extensible materials.

[0032] Collaterally, the present invention also provides for topical compositions for application to the skin that provide an anti-aging benefit. The compositions have an effective amount of one or more active ingredients which, when applied to human skin, prevent, treat and/or ameliorate the various signs of aging at the area or portion of skin to which they are applied. In particular, the present invention provides compositions and methods for treating skin to prevent, inhibit, reduce and/or ameliorate the signs of dermatological aging due to, for example, chronological aging, hormonal aging, and/or photoaging. Such signs of aging include, but are not limited to skin fragility; loss of collagen and/or elastin; estrogen imbalance in skin; skin atrophy; appearance and/or depth of lines and/or wrinkles, including fine lines; skin discoloration, including dark eye circles; skin sagging; skin fatigue and/or stress, e.g., skin breakout due to environmental stress, such as pollution and/or temperature changes; skin dryness; skin flakiness; cellular aging; loss of skin tone, elasticity and/or luster; loss of skin firmness; poor skin texture;

loss of skin elasticity and/or resiliency; and thin skin. In various embodiments, the mask is applied to the skin suffering from any of the foregoing conditions and will comprise suitable beneficial agents for addressing the condition.

[0033] The vehicles that can be used in compositions of the present invention include, but are not limited to, water; vegetable oils; esters such as octyl palmitate, isopropyl myristate and isopropyl palmitate; ethers such as dicapryl ether and dimethyl isosorbide; alcohols such as ethanol and isopropanol; fatty alcohols such as cetyl alcohol, stearyl alcohol and behenyl alcohol; isoparaffins such as isooctane, isododecane and isohexadecane; silicone oils such as dimethicones and polysiloxanes; hydrocarbon oils such as mineral oil, petrolatum, isoeicosane and polyisobutene; polyols such as propylene glycol, glycerin, butylene glycol, pentylene glycol and hexylene glycol; or any combinations thereof. Typically, the vehicle will comprise an aqueous phase and an oil phase, stabilized by the presence of an emulsifier and optionally a thickening agent.

[0034] In one embodiment, the masks include any of the mask formulations disclosed in WO2004/009042, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety. Those composition generally comprise an emulsified liquid composition comprising (a) an oily component; (b) a hydrophilic surfactant; (c) a water-soluble thickening polymer which provides a viscosity of from about 500 mPas to about 60,000 mPas; and (d) an aqueous carrier.

[0035] The masks of the invention will typically comprise an effective amount of beneficial agent. By "effective amount" is meant that one or more beneficial agents are present at about 0.001 wt % to about 20 wt % based on the total weight of the composition, preferably at about 0.05 wt % to about 10 wt %, and more preferably at about 0.5 wt % to about 5 wt %.

[0036] The present compositions may also include one or more of the following ingredients: anesthetic, anti-allergenic, antifungal, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory agent, antioxidant, antiseptic, chelating agent, colorant, depigmenting agent, emollient, emulsifier, exfollient, film former, fragrance, humectant, insect repellent, lubricant, moisturizer, pharmaceutical agent, photostabilizing agent, preservative, skin protectant, skin penetration enhancer, sunscreen, stabilizer, surfactant, thickener, viscosity modifier,

vitamin, or any combinations thereof. Preferably, these ingredients are present in an amount about 0.001 wt % to about 10 wt % based on the total weight of the composition.

[0037] The mask according to the invention may be prepared, for example, by placing the dry mask in a pouch and charging the pouch with an amount of the aqueous composition. The pouch is then sealed and preferably roll pressed to evenly distribute the liquid. In the case of a 3.5 g dry mask, it has been found suitable to add about 30 g of liquid (including all ingredients) to the pouch.

[0038] The invention described and claimed herein is not to be limited in scope by the specific embodiments herein disclosed since these embodiments are intended as illustrations of several aspects of the invention. Any equivalent embodiments are intended to be within the scope of this invention. Indeed, various modifications of the invention in addition to those shown and described therein will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the foregoing description. Such modifications are also intended to fall within the scope of the appended claims. All publications cited herein are incorporated by reference in their entirety.

Claims:

1. A mask for delivering a beneficial agent to the face and neck comprising a sheet of stretchable substrate having (i) an upper portion configured to substantially cover the human face and having a pair of openings positioned at opposite ends thereof, said openings being adapted to fit around the ears and secure the mask onto the face in a substantially stretched condition; and (2) a lower portion configured to stretch under the chin and substantially cover the front of the neck and underside of the jaw line, said lower portion also having a pair of openings positioned at opposite ends thereof, said openings being adapted to fit around the ears to secure the lower portion against the neck area of the wearer; said substrate comprising a bibulous matrix material having one or more beneficial agents included therein for delivery to the skin when the mask is worn.
2. The mask according to claim 1, wherein said bibulous matrix material is a non-woven cloth.
3. The mask according to claim 2, wherein said non-woven cloth comprises predominantly cotton fibers.
4. The mask according to claim 3, wherein said non-woven cloth has an elongation ratio (α) greater than 2 when a stretching force of 1 kgf is applied.
5. The mask according to claim 3, wherein said non-woven cloth has an elongation ratio (α) greater than 2.3 when a stretching force of 1 kgf is applied.
6. The mask according to claim 2, wherein said non-woven cloth exhibits a micro-funnel effect when stretched, whereby liquid is preferentially delivered to the side of the curved sheet facing the skin when the region of the face over which the cloth is disposed is convex.
7. The mask according to claim 1, wherein said beneficial agent is selected from the group consisting of moisturizers, α -hydroxy acids, β -hydroxy acids, free radical scavengers, anti-acne agents, anti-aging agents, anti-wrinkle agents, botanicals, exfoliants, keratolytic agents, and de-pigmenting agents.

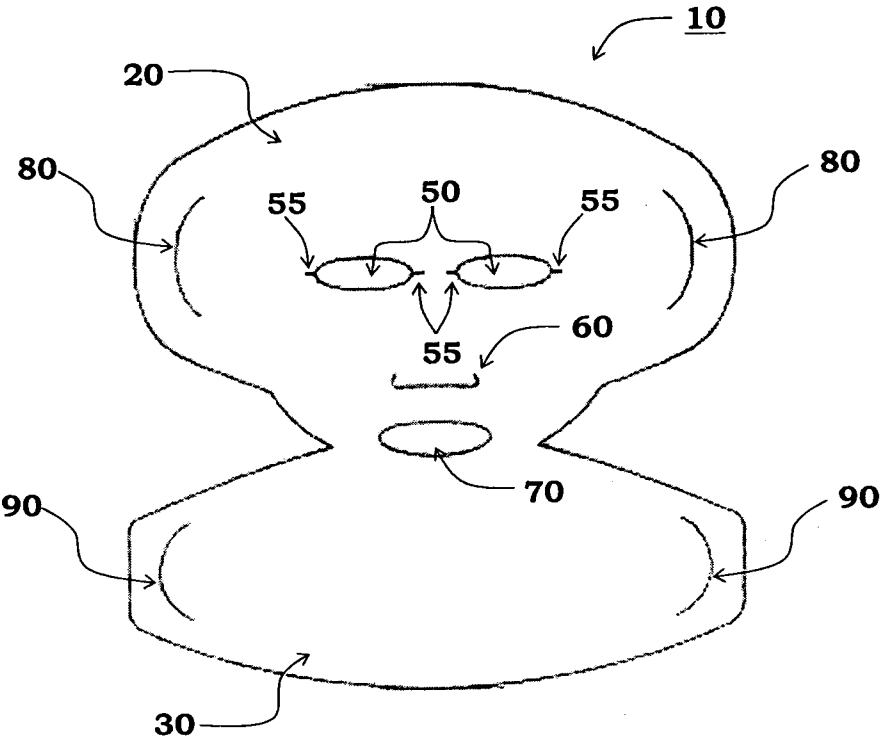


Figure 1

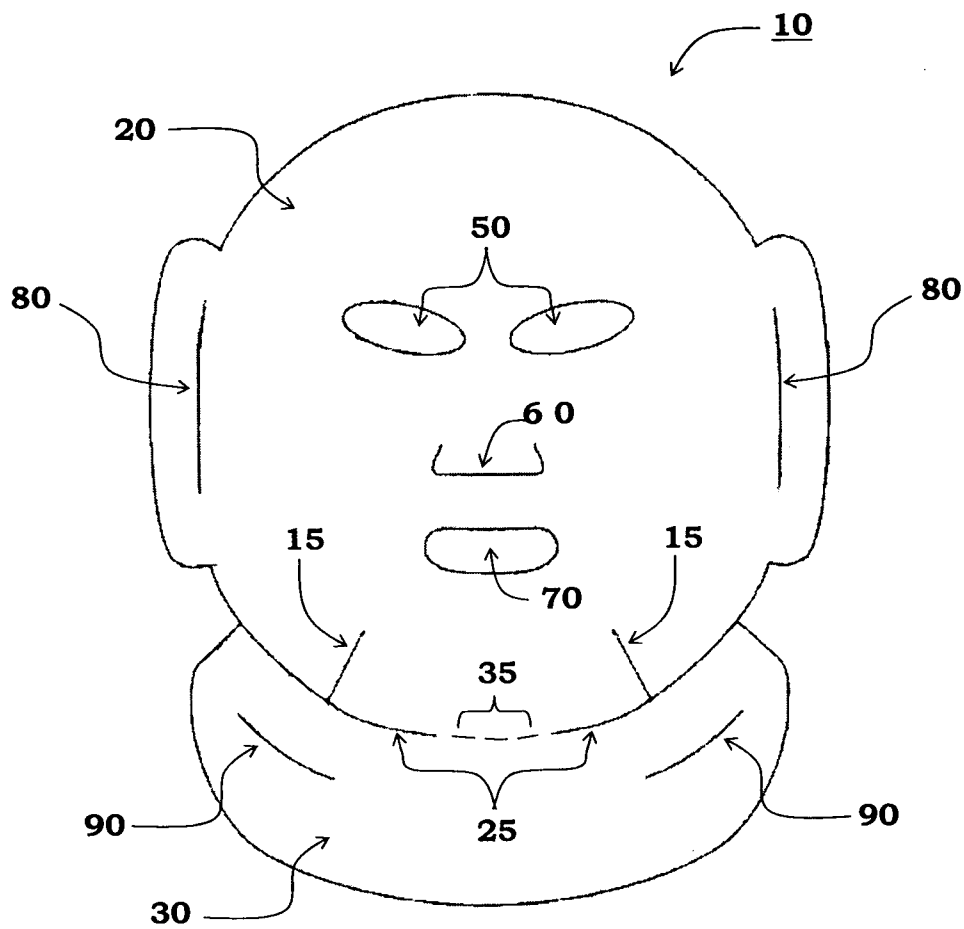
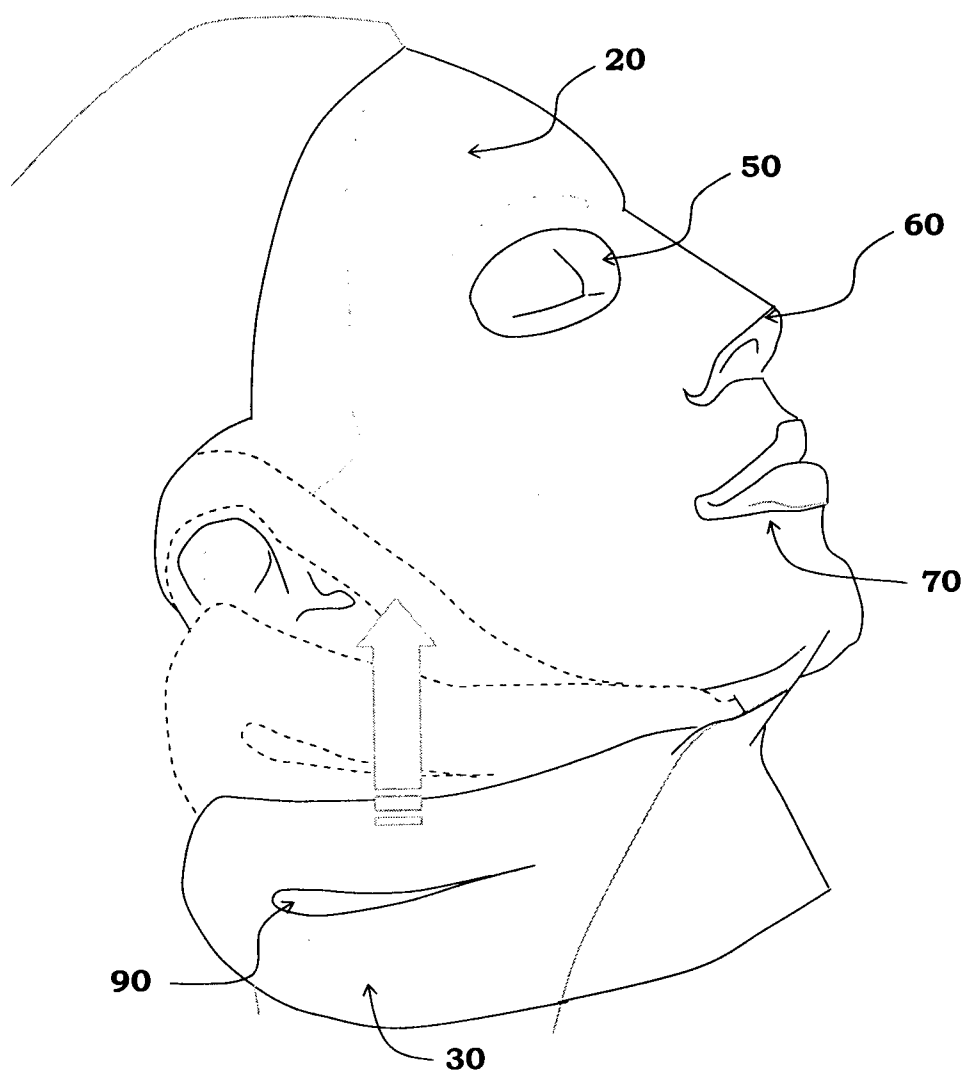


Figure 2

**Figure 3**

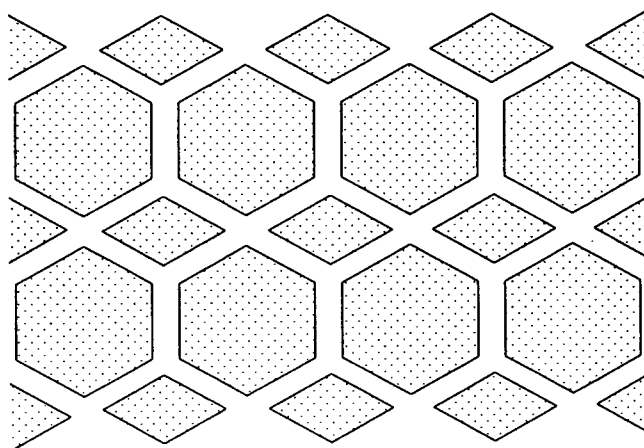
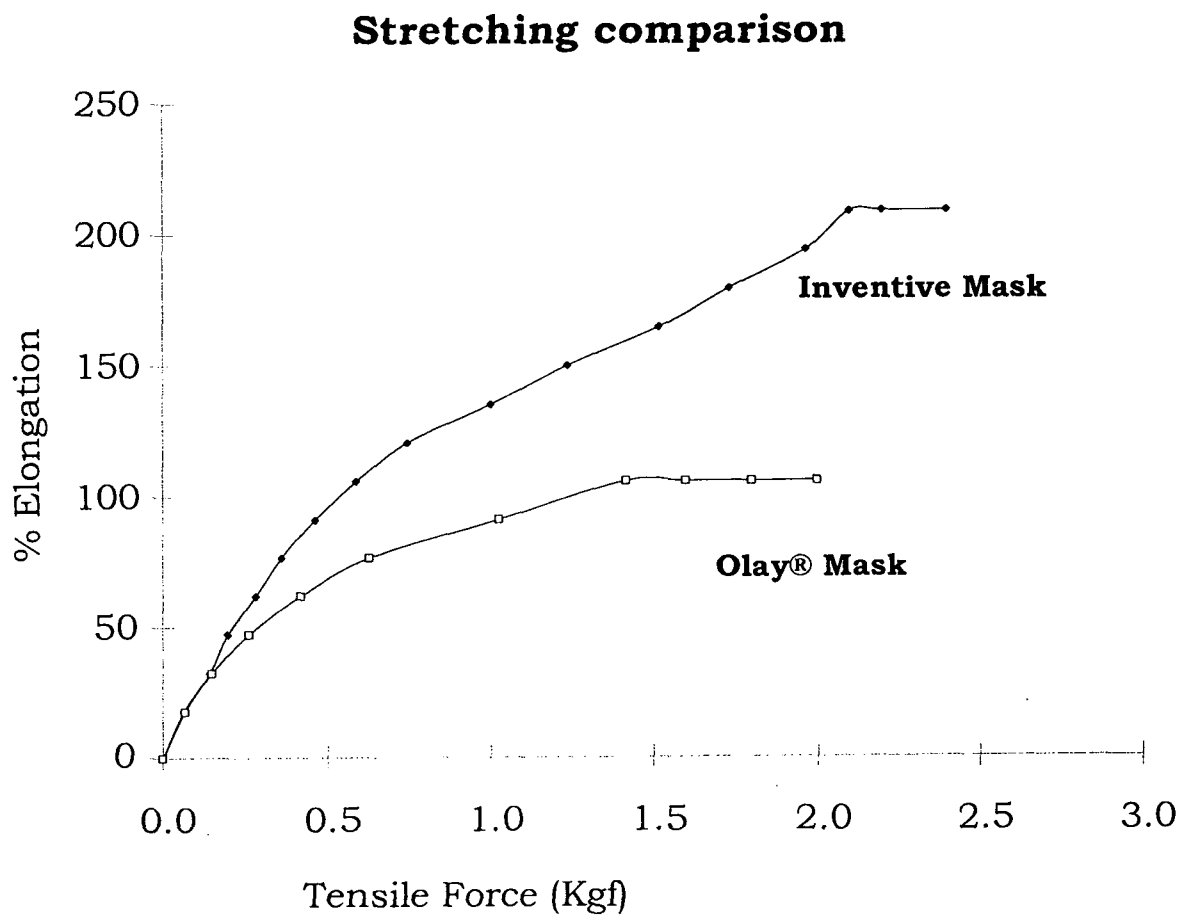


Figure 4

**Figure 5**

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/CN2008/000912

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

See extra sheet

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC: A61K8 A45D44 A61K 9 A61Q19 A61F13

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

CNKI, CNPAT, WPI, EPODOC, PAJ: mask? pad? pack? face? neck? chin? jaw? stretch???? extend???? expand???? elongat????

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	CN2885253Y (KANGNAXIANG ENTERPRISE CO LTD) 04 Apr. 2007 (04.04.2007) Figs. 3 and 4, and line 4, page 3 to line 16, page 4	1-7
Y	CN101010017A (DAIWA SPINNING CO LTD et al.) 01 Aug.2007 (01.08.2007) Figs. 1-3, and line 11, page 5 to line 18, page 13	1-7
Y	CN2885252Y (KANGNAXIANG ENTERPRISE CO LTD) 04 Apr. 2007 (04.04.2007) Figs. 3 and 4, and line 3, page 3 to line 13, page 4	1-7
A	CN2531785Y (XU, Rongyuan) 22 Jan.2003 (22.01.2003) the whole document	1-7
A	US6316021B1 (Jean-Louis Gueret) 13 Nov.2001 (13.11.2001) the whole document	1-7

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☒ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

“A” document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

“E” earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

“L” document which may throw doubts on priority claim (S) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

“O” document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

“P” document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

“T” later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

“X” document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

“Y” document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

“&” document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search
10 Jan.2009 (10.01.2009)

Date of mailing of the international search report
12 Feb. 2009 (12.02.2009)

Name and mailing address of the ISA/CN
The State Intellectual Property Office, the P.R.China
6 Xitucheng Rd., Jimen Bridge, Haidian District, Beijing, China
100088
Facsimile No. 86-10-62019451

Authorized officer

SHANG, AIXUE

Telephone No. (86-10)62085591

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/CN2008/000912

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	JP2007-222367A (MOMOSE M) 06 Sept.2007 (06.09.2007) the whole document	1-7
A	JP2000-63236A (KANEBO LTD) 29 Feb.2000 (29.02.2000) the whole document	1-7

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

International application No.
PCT/CN2008/000912

Patent Documents referred in the Report	Publication Date	Patent Family	Publication Date
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JP2000-63236A	29.02.2000	JP3902705B2	11.04.2007

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

According to International Patent Classifications (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

A61K8/02 (2006.01) i

A45D44/22 (2006.01) i

A61K9/70 (2006.01) n

A61F13/12 (2006.01) n

A61Q19/00 (2006.01) n