

Tips for Wearing a Mask

Wearing a mask is important for the health of our loved ones but can be tough for children. With practice, children can learn to have success wearing a mask!

Step 1. Get used to the mask at home

Goal: Wear the mask for 30 minutes a day while doing something fun!

- How?
 - Start slowly – practice **each day** for just a few seconds or minutes and work up to 30 minutes.
 - Distraction – find something **fun & rewarding** for your child to do while practicing with the mask (such as, TV, video games, music, art, toys).
 - Stay calm – only remove the mask and end practice when your child is calm.
 - If your child takes off the mask before practice is over, calmly put it back on.
 - Be Positive – Your **positive & encouraging attitude** will help your child!
 - Repeat – practice **each day** and stick with it!
- Steps for Mask Practice
 - Play with the mask (play peek-a-boo with the mask, put it on stuffed animals)
 - Touch the mask to your child's face
 - Hold the mask on your child's face for a few seconds/minutes, slowly adding time
 - Wear the mask for a few seconds/minutes, slowly adding time

Step 2. Get used to wearing the mask in different settings

Goal: Wear the mask in public settings, slowly adding time.

- How?
 - Again, slowly - start with short outings to a preferred place (such as, walk in the neighborhood, park).
 - Slowly add to the amount of time you spend at each place and slowly add new places.
 - Attention - focus on positive praise and attention for keeping the mask on and ignore any complaints about wearing the mask or small adjustments to the mask.
 - Normalize wearing a mask (point out other people wearing masks).
 - Choice - allow your child to choose the mask they want to wear.
- Set them up for success - let your child know where you are going, when to put the mask on, and when it is okay to take it off.

More Tips:

Take small steps: slowly move up to harder goals once your child has had success several times.

Use rewards: rewards can help children as they finish each step. Tell your child what they can earn by practicing and wearing the mask.

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