

Personal Protective Equipment

A guide on how to wear masks with hearing aids
for adult and pediatric patients

Ways to wear masks for adults



Tie-on masks

- Make sure to tie the straps high up on the head and low on the neck. Hearing aids will not be obstructed.
- When removing mask, untie the bottom first then the top to avoid knocking off hearing aids.

N95 respirator masks

- To avoid elastic band contact with hearing aids, place the top elastic band high on the head and the bottom elastic band on the neck.
- When removing the mask, release the top band first and then slowly pull the bottom over the head, making sure hearing aids are secure.

Ways to wear masks for adults – masks with elastic bands



Option 1

- Use a mask extender. It connects the mask bands to avoid contact with the ears.
- An extender can be made out of a paperclip, shoelace or ribbon.

Option 2

- Sew two buttons on a hat to connect each band to a side. This helps hearing aids stay secure on the ears and avoids the elastic from resting on top of the ears.
- When removing the mask, unfasten from one side first slowly by looping over the ear to avoid disrupting the hearing aid. Repeat on the same process for the other side.

Ways to wear masks for adults – masks with elastic bands



Option 3

- Attach your mask through a ponytail by crisscrossing it in the back.
- When removing the mask, it's best to pull from the bottom up over the face, making sure that hearing aids are secure.



Option 4

- A regular headband or sweatband can be used to attach the mask in order to keep your hearing aids free from the elastic bands.
- Buttons can be adhered with glue or sewn on both sides of a sweatband. Once set, simply attach both sides of the mask to the buttons so the mask stays in place.
- To remove, slowly take one side off at a time.

Ways to wear masks for adults – masks with elastic bands



Option 5

- Attach bands to a barrette on either side of the head to keep them off ears and away from hearing aids.
- Slide elastic through the barrette and clip to hair to hold.
- When removing the mask, simply unclip the barrettes and make sure hearing aids are secure.

Ways to wear masks for children



- The best way to keep hearing aids secure when wearing a mask is to put the hearing aids on first and the mask second. This way the hearing aids stay in place with the elastic in front of them
- Upon removing the mask, carefully take one side off, looping over each ear to make sure hearing aids are still secure.
- Sweatbands or headbands can also be used for children.
- Buttons can be glued or sewn on both sides of a sweatband. Simply attach both sides of the mask to the buttons to stay in place.
- To remove, slowly take one side off at a time.

Making wearing masks fun for children

Face masks can sometimes be scary for kids. Make it fun by implementing some creative ideas! For example:

- Have their favorite stuffed animal or doll wear a mask.
- The World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/>, published a book for children to learn about COVID-19 and wearing masks. There is also a version of the book being read online. The link to follow is: <https://youtu.be/8mBWE--T9yQ>. Read or follow along and answer any questions they might have.
- If they have a favorite superhero, have them dress up as the superhero, including the mask.
- Make a mask with them together using a fun print or design.
 - You can use a bandana or a scarf. Please visit www.cdc.gov for appropriate guidelines.
- Assure them that wearing the mask is okay and that nobody will think differently of them. Children need reassurance that everything will be alright.

Tips when speaking to those with hearing loss while wearing a mask

Having hearing loss is a challenge, but trying to hear when people are wearing masks is even more difficult. Here are a few tips to help:

- Reduce noise and obtain person's attention
- Speak slowly
- Ask how they prefer to communicate
- Rephrase remarks if not understood
- Do not shout, over-emphasize or over-exaggerate your words
- Be patient, kind and courteous

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