

Tips for wearing a mask

Wearing a mask or face covering is one way to help keep you and others safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

We understand you may feel anxious or uncomfortable as you get used to wearing a mask - below are a few tips you might find useful.

- **Remind yourself masks are safe.** Face masks allow for airflow around your mouth and do not reduce the amount of oxygen you are breathing in.
- **Focus on your breathing.** Try to slow down your breathing so each breath is longer. Breathe deeply so the breath comes from your stomach, not your chest. Imagine you are blowing your lungs up right to the bottom like a balloon.
- **Practise mindfulness.** Often people can become anxious if they start to worry about the mask and what might happen while wearing it. Try to focus on the present moment by directing your attention to the colours, noises and smells around you in that moment.
- **Keep talking.** It is likely many of the people around you are feeling uncomfortable about wearing masks too. Talking can help with sharing tips and feeling less alone.
- **Challenge negative thoughts.** Notice negative thoughts you have and challenge these with a more positive alternative. For example, if you notice you're having the thought "this mask is awful," tell yourself "I would prefer not to wear this mask but I am ok and I will be able to take it off soon."
- **Access information and resources to help you.** Video resources and a guide to putting on, wearing and removing your mask safely can be found at cabrini.com.au/coronavirus/mandatory-use-of-masks/
Further guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services can be found at dhhs.vic.gov.au/face-coverings-covid-19

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a member of your care team.

Adapted from Tips for Wearing Face Masks document created by NHS Oxford University Hospitals.



Remember that masks alone cannot protect you from COVID-19.

Maintain social distancing and wash your hands frequently even while wearing a mask.