

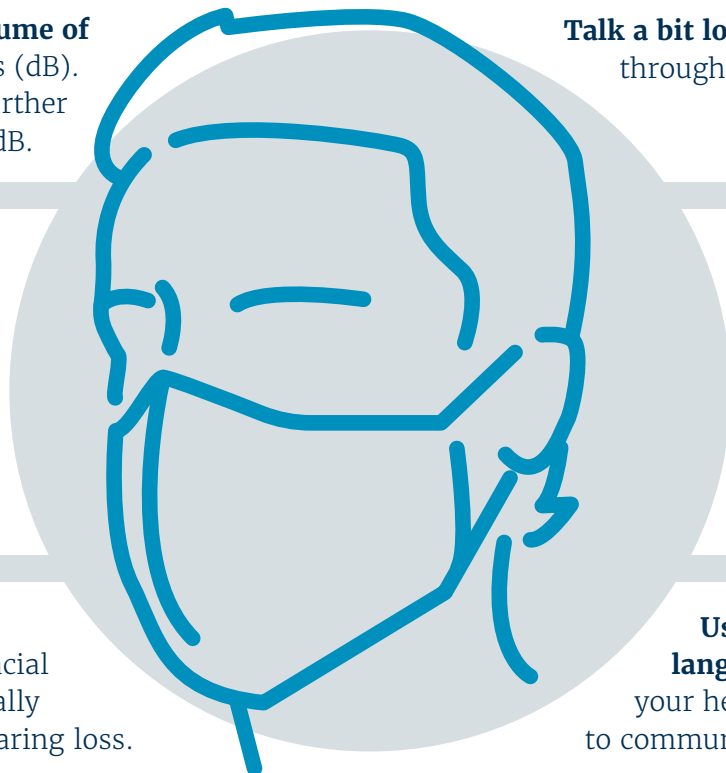
How to communicate effectively while wearing a mask

Did you know?

Face masks lower the volume of speech by about 5 decibels (dB). N95 medical masks can further lower speech by about 12 dB.

Face masks can lower the clarity of speech, causing words to sound "garbled." It may be harder for a person to hear consonant sounds like "f," "s," "sh" and "th."

Face masks remove lip reading clues and other facial expressions that are typically helpful for people with hearing loss.



How to communicate clearly while wearing a mask

Talk a bit louder so your voice carries through the mask, but do not shout.

Speak slowly and clearly, using greater enunciation. Slower speaking gives the person you're communicating with time to process what you're saying and a chance to ask for clarification.

Use your hands and body language while you talk. Nod your head and use your eyebrows to communicate.

Everyone 55 plus should be referred for a hearing evaluation

Meet our audiologists



Jamie Healy



Tarja Oliver

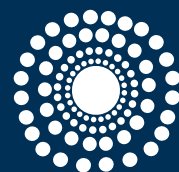


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How do face masks affect communication?



Face masks lower the volume of speech. Research shows that cloth and surgical masks reduce the clarity of speech and lower it by about 5 decibels (dB). This effect is stronger when a person is wearing an N95 medical mask, which can lower speech by about 12 dB.



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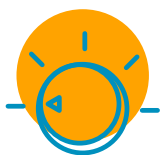


Face masks may make wearing behind-the-ear hearing aids uncomfortable.



Face shields, social distancing and plastic barriers further muffle or reduce sound.

6 tips for communicating when wearing a mask



1. Reduce any background noise in the room. Talk a bit louder than you normally would so your voice carries through the mask, but do not shout.



2. Speak slowly and clearly. Use greater enunciation when speaking. Speaking slowly makes it easier for the person you’re communicating with to process what you’re saying and gives them a chance to ask for clarification.



3. Pause often to make sure you are being understood. Try to rephrase what you said using different words for clarification or write down the important points.



4. Use your hands and body language while you talk. Nod your head and use your eyebrows to communicate. This can help overcome the limitations of not seeing facial expressions clearly. Consider using a portable hearing aid amplifier.



5. Speak directly at the other person; do not talk while walking or looking away.



6. If obtainable, clear or transparent masks can help with lip reading or conveying facial expressions.

