



How to Help Your Child Get Used to a Face Mask

When you come to see your Nemours doctor, you and your child will both need to wear a mask. Health experts recommend everyone age 2 and older wear a mask whenever they are out in public. Wondering how you can help your child get used to wearing a mask? **Just follow these tips:**



1. Explain WHY kids and adults are wearing a mask

- Keep it simple: “I wear a mask to keep you safe. You wear a mask to keep me safe.”
- Talk about teamwork and that families can do this together.
- Be calm and listen to your child’s concerns.



2. NORMALIZE wearing a mask

- Remind your child we wear many things to keep ourselves safe: shoes to protect our feet, a jacket to protect against cold, sunscreen to protect our skin. Now, we wear a mask in public to keep everyone safe from germs.
- Help your child see other people are wearing masks too. Play a game when you’re out: do you see a person with a green shirt wearing a mask? Do you see a person with blue shorts wearing a mask?
- Read the Nemours social story on masking together. The story can be found in the COVID-19 section of [Nemours.org](https://www.nemours.org).



3. Be a GOOD ROLE MODEL

- When you wear a mask, you are teaching your child what to do.
- Emphasize that you’re following guidelines to keep others safe.
- Wear your mask at home to help your child adjust and better understand.



4. Let your child PRACTICE wearing a mask at home before wearing one out in public

- Leave clean masks around the house, let kids touch and play with them.
- Your younger child may think it’s fun to try the mask on a stuffed animal first.
- Start by having your child hold a mask to their face, and then wear the mask for short periods to adjust to it.
- Let your child do a fun activity (play a game, watch a show) while wearing the mask.

5. ADAPT to your child’s preferences

- Try different materials to see which your child likes the best.
- Try different designs (behind head, over ears, attached to a hat) if there is discomfort.
- Try a fabric with images your child loves – dogs, superheroes, etc.
- If the smell bothers them, try using a scented lip balm before placing the mask.

At Nemours, the safety of our patients, families and associates is our top priority. If you know your child will not or cannot wear a mask due to sensory or behavioral issues, please let us know before your appointment so we can find the best solution together.