

Your child may be asked to wear a mask while checking in at the Hospital or going to a clinic.



We understand some children may be resistant or scared to wear a mask. Below are some helpful tips to encourage your child to keep their mask on in a fun and child-friendly way.

- Use a marker or pen, and ask if your child would like to decorate the front of their mask before they wear it. This allows for your child to feel like they a part of what is being asked of them. It also increases their sense of control and reduces their fear and anxiety through creativity and expression.
- Wear a mask with your child, too, or put one on their stuffed animal from home! Modeling is a very powerful tool for younger children to physically see what is being asked of them, and it also helps them to feel less alone and out of control.
- If your child appears afraid of the mask, sometimes humor and/or familiarity is a helpful way to decrease anxiety. Phrases and object children are familiar with can be helpful in these situations.
- "This looks like a banana peel! That is so silly!"
- "We get to wear a mask just like Darth Vader to keep us safe!"
- Provide incentive:
- "First, I need you to put your mask on, and then we can watch Paw Patrol on mom's phone."
- "If you keep your mask on, dad will tell you a funny joke when the doctor is ready to see you."
- Education can also be a powerful tool in empowering children through knowledge. Explain how a mask is something people use to "keep the germs away from their nose and mouth."

If your child has to get a nasal swab to be tested for COVID-19, here are some ways to prepare your child as to what to expect:

- The nurse or doctor may ask your child to sit or lay down for the test. We suggest a comfortable position (back-to-chest or chest-to-chest) to provide comfort and support for your child. The swab will go through their nose because germs like to sometimes live or hide in their snot or boogers.
- You can say: "The doctor needs to look at the germs in your nose..."
- A nurse or doctor will use a nasal swab with a soft tip to look at your child's germs under a microscope.
- You can say: "The doctor will put a skinny Q-tip in your nose to get a little bit of your boogers so they can look at them under a microscope. They will be able to see if the germs are making you feel sick. Your job is to stay super still."
- Be honest with your child. It will be uncomfortable and may make them feel like gagging.
- You can say: "Some kids say that it feels uncomfortable and may make your eyes water or sneeze."