

Tips for **Communicating** with a **Mask**

The increased use of masks prevent the ability to read lips or expressions.

Most people don't realize they naturally lip read until they aren't able to.

Here are our tips to keep up with the conversation even with a mask!

HELP YOUR CONVERSATION PARTNER

- **Reduce distracting noise** around you so there is less to filter out for the listener.
(Ex: wind, tv or other conversations)
- Consider your rate of speech. **Speaking fast requires faster processing** for the listener.
- If your communication partner asked you to repeat, **rephrase your statement instead** of just repeating it. This gives the listener more detail to capture what you said.



HELP YOURSELF

- **Reduce distracting noise.** If you can't, situate yourself so the noise is behind you.
- Position yourself so you are **facing the person you are listening to**. This allows for the most direct audio and the best ability to read expression.
- **Advocate for yourself.** If you need someone to slow down, ask them to. If you need someone to repeat something, tell them the part you missed. Often when asking to repeat, only one part was missed. This helps your conversation partner help you.
- If you often have difficulty understanding in background noise, require repetition, or have family members saying they are worried about your hearing, schedule a hearing evaluation. **Communicating with masks, makes us all more reliant on our hearing and can make untreated hearing loss more noticeable.**

HELP YOURSELF WITH HEARING DEVICES

- If you have hearing devices, **wear them.**
- If communicating with a mask is still difficult, call a hearing professional. They have means to tune your devices, add options to overcome distance, or offer strategies **tailored to your unique circumstances.**
- Be careful donning and **removing your mask, as they can knock hearing devices loose.**
- Opt for a mask that go **around your head rather** than behind the ears.

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