

How to Wear a Mask — for Patients and Visitors

COVID-19 is a virus that mainly spreads by respiratory droplets when a person with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes. To prevent spreading the virus: cover coughs and sneezes, clean your hands, stay at least 6 feet away from others, and wear a face covering or face mask when in public and at any BJC or Washington University facility.



Cloth Face Covering/Cloth Face Mask

Why do I need to wear a mask?

A face mask is to protect other people from COVID-19 in case you are infected. Some people can be infected and not feel sick. Wearing a mask protects against COVID-19 and other disease transmission. Universal masking — or having everyone wear masks in public places — is recommended by the CDC, the Department of Health and all major health, science and government authorities.

What is it/what is it for?

A cloth face covering/face mask can be homemade, or a medical-grade isolation mask. It should:

- Cover the nose and mouth
- Allow you to breathe comfortably
- Fasten with ear loops or ties
- Be clean

If you're experiencing respiratory symptoms or if you don't have a cloth face covering, you will be provided an isolation mask on arrival.

When to wear a mask:

You should wear a mask all the time while you are in the health care facility. It is also a good idea to wear a face covering when you are in public and cannot social distance (> 6 feet) from others.

Children under age 2, people with difficulty breathing, people who are unconscious, and people who are unable to remove their own mask without assistance should NOT wear a mask. Social distancing should be maintained.

Inpatients:

Parents may remove their masks when at their child's bedside. We ask that you put your mask back on when healthcare providers or other hospital staff enter the room. Parents are required to wear a mask at all times when outside of your child's room.

Patients are not required to keep their mask on while in their patient room. If the child is old enough to understand and can tolerate the mask, we would ask that they apply or reapply their mask when a healthcare provider is present in the room.

Outpatients:

Parents will be asked to keep their masks on for the duration of the outpatient visit. If the parent cannot tolerate the mask during the entire visit, they can remove their mask when in the exam room but are asked to reapply the mask when a healthcare provider enters the room.

Patients will be asked to keep their mask on for the entire visit unless their symptoms make it difficult to tolerate. The child may be asked to remove the ask for portions of the exam.

Visitors are required to wear masks and will not be permitted into our buildings without a mask. If they do not have a mask, they will be provided one.

How to put the mask on:

1. Clean your hands.
2. Pick up the mask by holding the ear loops or ties.
3. Place the mask over your nose and mouth and secure the loops over your ears or tie the ties behind your head.
4. Adjust the mask on your face to make sure it fits snugly over your mouth and nose. Make sure it is comfortable and allows you to breathe. Some masks have a metal wire that you can mold over the bridge of your nose.
5. Clean your hands again and avoid touching the outside of the mask with your hands.

**How to take the mask off:**

1. Clean your hands.
2. Remove the mask by untying it or unfastening the ear loops. Do not touch the front of the mask.
3. Place the mask somewhere clean.
4. Clean your hands again.

How to clean cloth face masks:

You should launder cloth masks each day after use and anytime it is visibly soiled. Surgical/isolation masks cannot be laundered and should be discarded after use.

How to store cloth face masks:

Between uses, store your mask somewhere clean.

When to get a new cloth face mask:

If your mask becomes damaged, torn, or is no longer able to cover your nose and mouth, or if you can no longer breathe comfortably wearing the mask, you should discard it and obtain a new mask.

Keeping You Safe