



Welcome to HLAA Webinars



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Face Masks and Hearing Loss: Practical Tips and Strategies



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Introduction to CHC

Center for Hearing and Communication is a leader in hearing health care since 1910

- Audiology
- Emotional Health and Wellness
- Speech and Communication
- Community Outreach
- Technical Services
- Telehealth



CHC Website

<https://chchearing.org/>

CHC's Blog Hear and Connect

<https://chchearing.org/blog/hear-connect-better-videoconference-hearing-loss/>

<https://chchearing.org/blog/zoom-captioning-hearing-loss/>

<https://chchearing.org/blog/videoconference-hearing-loss-friendly-carolyn-stern/>

Face Masks Tips

<https://chchearing.org/blog/face-masks-hearing-loss-communication-tips/>

Agenda

- Visual and acoustic challenges
- Clear masks considerations
- Wearing masks with hearing devices
- Improve hearing and communication
- Emotional care and making sure hearing aids are working
- Q & A

Challenges

Hearing Loss and Mask Wearing

- Visual
- Acoustic
 - “low pass filter”
 - limits high pitched sounds
 - impairs ability to hear speech
 - https://www.hearingreview.com/hearing-loss/health-wellness/how-do-medical-masks-degrade-speech-reception?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_term=HRZ1TodayZ1AprZ12020&utm_hsid=133685251&campaign_type=newsletter

Clear Mask Considerations

- Useful solution, needs wide adaptation
- Limited inventory for FDA approved style
- Homemade patterns
- Fogging concerns
- Face shields and N95 masks

Where to buy clear masks?

<https://safenclear.com>

<http://www.faceviewmask.com/>

<https://connect-hear.com/knowledge-base/clear-masks-to-order/>

Patterns for Face Masks

<https://deafhhs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Communicator-Face-Mask.pdf>

<http://connect-hear.com/knowledge-base/diy-mask-patterns-with-clear-panel-for-deaf-hard-of-hearing/>

YouTube Video for Making Face Masks

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhLf9Silpp8>

Types of Masks

- **Tie-back style**
 - extend length with extra string/shoelace
 - pull up and tie on top of head
- **Elastic band style**
 - pull off ears and clip at top of head or below neck
 - connect the two bands
 - barrette, twistee, velcro strip
 - connected paper clips, ponytail, bun or baseball cap
 - cloth headband or fabric strip with two buttons

Wearing Masks with Hearing Devices

- Secure hearing aids to prevent loss
 - Eyeglass straps
 - Wig tape
 - Otoclip
 - Cloth headband
- If very concerned, only wear one or none, BUT prepare yourself
- Remove mask carefully in a secure area

- Eyeglass staps with loop
- <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B07DP3QS38>
- https://www.sunglasshut.com/us/accessories/ahu0001st-8056597094580?cid=PM-FGS_300419-PLAAllOtherBrandsMay2019-%7bproduct_gtin%7d&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI17jxi7zF6QIVhY7ICCh0cyQ3GEAQYASABEgJm8fD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds
- Otoclip
- https://www.amazon.com/Westone-BTE-Monaural-OtoClip-Blue/dp/B01C62PAXQ/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=otoclip&qid=1590081842&s=apparel&sr=8-3

Improve Hearing Ability When Masks are Worn

- Adjust hearing aid or CI volume
- Consider an assistive listening device
 - remote microphones, FM systems, and other devices
- Smartphone options
 - Live listen with airpods or “made for iPhone” hearing aids
- Discuss with your audiologist - not recommended to source own



Note: Many hearing aid manufacturers have dedicated remote mics that can be purchased through your audiologist. Please discuss with your audiologist the right device for your hearing aid or cochlear implant.

Roger Pen

<https://www.phonak.com/us/en/hearing-aids/accessories/roger-pen.html>

Phonak Select

<https://www.phonak.com/us/en/hearing-aids/accessories/roger.html>

Phonak MyLink

<https://www.phonak.com/us/en/support/product-support/accessories/roger-my-link.html>

Live Listen App

<https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT203990>

AirPods

<https://www.apple.com/airpods/>

Facilitate Communication When Masks are Worn

- Utilize smartphone talk to text apps
 - Otter, Ava, Microsoft Translator (Android or iPhone)
 - Google Live Transcribe (Android)
 - For iPhone try “Notes”
- Plug in or Bluetooth mic with smartphone
- Prepopulated digital or paper index cards
 - Buzz Cards, Cardzilla, BigNote
- Practice - sometimes less is more and always carry pen and paper

Apps:

Google Live Transcribe:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.audio.hearing.visualization.accessibility.scribe&hl=en_US

Ava - <https://www.ava.me/>

Otter - <https://otter.ai/>

Bluetooth Mic Options

Alead LiveMIC2

https://www.amazon.com/Nolan-LiveMIC2-Microphone-conference-impairment/dp/B014EIRNEO?fbclid=IwAR3rnWQ7T7pbTdL9_VaR7kdFjEeo-coVZp5SpEbCVrB7-lyMu7hBEN5O3jw

SmartMic

<https://www.sabnetek.com/products/smartmikeplus>

<https://www.sabnetek.com/collections/all/products/smartmike-unidirectional-mic-addon>

Plug In Mic – for smartphones with a headphone jack built in (might not work with lightning or USB adapter)

https://www.amazon.com/Saramonic-Directional-Condenser-Microphone-Smartphones/dp/B0725Y5TN1/ref=sr_1_9?dchild=1&keywords=plug+in+mic+trrs&qid=1590081236&sr=8-9

Digital Index Card Apps

Buzz Cards

<https://www.sorensonvrs.com/buzzapps>

Cardzilla

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/cardzilla/id623346823>

Big Note

For Android

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=tashuapps.deafnote&hl=en_US

For iPhone

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/big-note/id1448497055>

Communication Strategies When Masks are Worn

- Self-disclose your hearing loss
- Anticipate potential questions and vocabulary
- Observe carefully for cues from eyes and eyebrows

- Explain how the person can help you
 - Speak slightly louder with good enunciation
 - Request rephrasing after two repeats

- Share what you heard (or think you heard)

Emotional Care When Masks are Worn

- Range of emotions
 - anxiety, stress, isolation, fear
- Solicit support from understanding family and friends
- Prepare but know surprises may happen
- Be gentle with yourself and practice self-care

If you are looking for guidance, please feel free to contact Jeff Wax, CHC's Director of Emotional Health and Wellness at jwax@chchearing.org or 917-305-7700.

<https://chchearing.org/nyc/therapists/emotional-health-services-video/>

Make Sure Your Hearing Aids Are Working!!

- Simple battery check
- Wax removal
- Moisture
- Wired connections

If you have any questions, please contact:

Dr. Ellen Lafargue - elafargue@chchearing.org, 917-305-7700

Carolyn Stern - cgstern@chchearing.org, 917-305-7700



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on hearing loss and recorded webinars,
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hearingloss.org