

## Pediatricians recommend cloth face coverings for almost all kids over age 2 years

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Wearing cloth face coverings, washing hands, and physical distancing are three important ways to protect children and adults from getting sick during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Use of cloth face coverings by children ages 2 years and up and adults should be part of all plans for safe return to schools, child care and other group settings, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

“Cloth face coverings can be safely worn by all children 2 years of age and older, including the vast majority of children with underlying health conditions, with rare exception,” according to [interim guidance from the AAP](#).

Children under age 2 years and anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious or otherwise unable to remove a face covering on their own should not wear one.

“Just like children understand that they must wear bicycle helmets and buckle into their car seats, they will come to learn to wear masks routinely when necessary,” said AAP President Sally Goza, M.D., FAAP.

People who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread it to others by talking, laughing, sneezing or coughing. Wearing cloth face coverings reduces the chance of spreading the virus to others. Cloth face coverings also can protect children from catching the virus.

Even if you or your child do not have symptoms or feel sick, it is important to wear a cloth face covering, according to the AAP. This is because people who are infected but don't have symptoms can spread the virus.

Parents can have their children practice wearing cloth face coverings at home so they are comfortable wearing them in school. Wearing them at home also helps protect family members who are at high risk of problems if they are infected with the virus.

Cloth face coverings are different from surgical masks and N-95 masks, which should be saved for health care workers.

If you have questions about cloth face coverings, talk to your child's pediatrician. Find more tips at <https://bit.ly/clothfacecoveringsHealthyChildren>.

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