

Treating Skin Irritations From Wearing Face Masks



North Central
Health Care
Person centered. Outcome focused.

Since many health care workers and staff at NCHC are wearing face masks because of COVID-19 pandemic requirements, skin irritations on the face might be more prevalent.

People can get friction and irritation across their nasal bridge, behind their ears and perhaps under their chin because of natural wear but also because the masks are tight, which is well-intentioned, but can stragulate the skin.

Properly Fit Your Mask

Masks should not be loose and should be worn firmly against the skin, but not so tight it bruises the skin.

Use Zinc Oxide as Protective Barrier

Zinc oxide is a white hypoallergenic chemical that's in unscented diaper paste. It has anti-inflammatory properties. Put a thin layer across your nasal bridge, behind your ears or under your chin — in places where the mask will rub. Zinc oxide will serve as a barrier to the friction without affecting or decreasing the effectiveness of the mask.

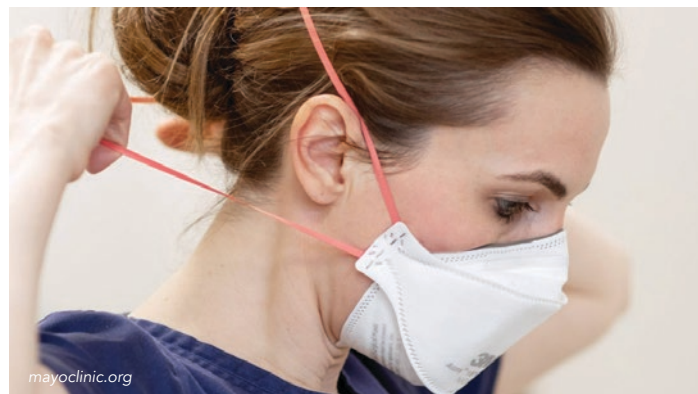
Care for Sensitive Skin Care

After you have washed your face, **pat it dry** and apply **hypoallergenic moisturizer** that's identified as **face moisturizer**. Apply the lotion or cream twice, leaving a thick layer.

Next do a **vinegar soak** with a washcloth and lay it across your face for about 15 minutes in the areas that are irritated. Repeat that two to three times a day, if possible.

How to Make a Vinegar Soak

A vinegar soak is made by putting a teaspoon of white vinegar in a glass or small bowl of warm water, soak a clean washcloth, then rest it on your face.



Acne, Rosacea and Psoriasis

Skin issues on the face and neck that are not related to COVID-19, where the mask rests or rubs, are likely to be exacerbated by the friction of the mask and sweating, since some people get warm wearing them. Examples include acne, rosacea and psoriasis. For these concerns, try washing your face gently with soap and water, twice daily. Use medications as directed.

Consult your dermatologist or primary health care provider if a new rash erupts, or if the current skin condition changes appearance or is not responding to treatment.

Keep Your Masks Clean and Dry

If you wear a cotton mask that is washable, keep them clean. Washing by hand is gentler on the mask. However, remember to wash adequately with soap and hot water.

If you wear a surgical mask or N95 fitted masks, replace your mask when it becomes wet or soiled. Do not save a soiled disposable mask or try to wash it. Always store all masks in a paper bag, never plastic.



<https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/treating-skin-irritations-from-wearing-face-masks/>



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