

For some people, wearing a face mask can cause or worsen skin problems.

Acne breakouts, dryness, rashes, itchiness, and irritation are some common skin problems experienced by people who wear masks.

Below are a few simple steps you can take to reduce mask-related skin problems.

Wear the right mask



Ensure the mask fits you properly. A proper mask should form a snug fit across your nose, sides of your face, and under your chin but should be comfortable at the same time.

Friction caused by repeated rubbing of the mask on your face and nose can cause tenderness over time. Choose a mask made of a smooth-textured material to reduce friction that can chafe and irritate the face.

Pressure from the ear strap may also cause soreness around your ears. Try a mask with different type of ties and ear loops.



Keep your face clean

Wash your face daily and after heavy sweating to keep the skin clean and to remove oil, dirt, bacteria and irritants. Use a gentle skin cleaner and water. Avoid scented or antibacterial soaps.



Moisturize your face and lips

Wearing a face mask for long periods of time may cause skin to become dry. Apply a gentle moisturizer after washing your face and before wearing your mask to protect the skin barrier. Choose a moisturizer ideal for your skin type.

Lips may also become dry, cracked, or chapped. Protect your lips by applying lip balm or other moisturizers.



Avoid unnecessary cosmetics

Ingredients found in makeup can clog your pores, act as an additional irritant, and worsen a mask-induced skin problem. Consider avoiding makeup in areas covered by the mask.

If you must apply makeup, consider products that are labelled non-comedogenic (does not clog pores).



Wash your mask daily or after each use

Germ, oils, nasal mucus, saliva, particles, and sweat can collect on your face mask. As they build up, they can irritate your skin covered by your mask.

Wash your masks in hot water using fragrance-free and hypoallergenic laundry detergent. Tumble dry on high heat. Store fresh masks in a bag to keep them clean.

Disposable masks should be replaced often.

The above tips are intended as a general guide to address mask-related skin problems and should not be considered as a substitute for medical advice. If your face mask causes new skin conditions or existing skin conditions to spread or worsen, or signs of infection, **seek professional treatment immediately.**

Persons experiencing dermatitis, severe acne, rosacea, or other dermatological issues should consult their family physician or a certified dermatologist for treatment of mask-related skin problems.