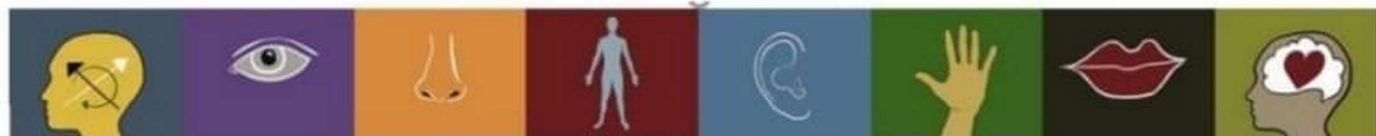


Some Ideas about choosing a Face Mask

There are many reasons why an autistic person may or may not enjoy or tolerate wearing a mask. We've explored a few of the possible reasons:



Sensory processing: Wearing a mask may feel..

Too hot

Too itchy

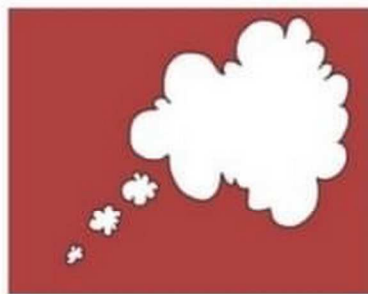
Too tight

Tickly

It hurts my ears

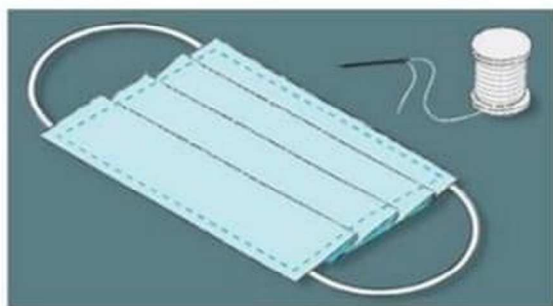
I can't touch my face

I look different – that's not me in the mirror!



Or it may feel something else you never expected...

Or it may feel fine!



There are numerous websites with tips on making your own mask out of material. Some don't even need sewing!

You may like to use an old worn t-shirt that feels and smells familiar rather than new material. Perhaps make several out of the same t-shirt so you have a few that are similar in smell, design and feel.

- Keep spare masks to hand – some people may find the sensation uncomfortable when the mask gets wet with condensation from their breath.
- Talk about how wearing a mask feels if that helps e.g. your breath may feel hot but that's ok.
- Try different styles of mask – DIY masks (like painters and decorators use) may sit off the mouth and nose more and could be preferable for some people.
- A tiny amount of a preferred fragrance may help the mask smell more familiar.
- If freshly washed masks "don't smell right". Keep them inside your clothing until they lose their washing detergent aroma.
- If fastening loops over your ears feels difficult – try wearing a hat with buttons sewn on or use a headband instead.
- Spend time getting used to how it looks (in the mirror) and how it feels.
- Some people may like to wear a mask for the minimum time, whereas others may find it preferable to wear it continually when out rather than taking it off and on.