

8 TIPS FOR IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

WHEN WEARING A FACE COVERING



BE AWARE

Is the person you're communicating with having trouble understanding you? Ask and adapt if needed.



BE PATIENT

Face coverings block visual cues and muffle sounds that help us understand speech, which can make interactions frustrating.



BE MINDFUL

Consider how physical distancing might affect your communication. As distance increases, sound levels decrease, and visual cues are more difficult to see.



BE LOUD AND CLEAR

Speak up, but don't shout. Focus on speaking clearly. Consider wearing a clear face covering, if possible. If you're having trouble understanding, ask the person you're talking with to speak louder. If you lip-read, ask those you interact with regularly to wear a clear face covering.



TURN DOWN THE BACKGROUND VOLUME

Background noise can make conversation especially hard. When possible, move to a quieter spot or turn down the sound.



COMMUNICATE ANOTHER WAY

Use a smartphone talk-to-text application or writing tools (paper/pen, whiteboard) to communicate.



CONFIRM THAT YOUR STATEMENT IS CLEAR

Ask if your message has been understood.



BRING A FRIEND OR BE A FRIEND

If it's essential that you comprehend important spoken details—during a discussion with a health care provider, for example—consider bringing a friend or family member with you. Or, offer to come along to listen and take notes when a friend has an important appointment or meeting.