

Maintaining Wellbeing while wearing a Mask

Establishing a solid mindset is key.

Think about what motivates you to wear a mask, what's your positive reason for wearing a mask? Come back to this 'one good reason' if you get overwhelmed or anxious.

Reasonable adjustment.

Once you have a solid mindset, ask yourself – do I need to adjust the way I work? If so, raise it with your line manager and/or GP to understand the impact on you and get adjustments made.

Better breathing.

When we breathe, 'on automatic', our breath can become shallow and air in our lung becomes stale. This can trigger an anxiety signal to our brain ... and the first thing you may notice is anxiety or worry. You can put your breathing 'on manual' by counting breaths or breathing deeply. One of the most recommended ways is to use, 'diaphragmatic or abdominal breathing'.

Keep aware of psychological stress.

Is it getting better, worse, or staying the same? If you are experiencing increased stress, you may become more sensitive to mask wearing.

Keep aware of physical stress. Make sure to take your breaks and stay hydrated.

Trigger management.

Moving quickly, being hungry, angry, late or tired, speaking for long periods and many other triggers need to be variously avoided, accepted and /or accommodated, pending on your role. Become aware of what your triggers might be and the impact they have on you.

Check in on each other.

Make the effort to reach out to colleagues to ask R U OK? Checking how others are doing is a great way to shift the focus from our own issues.

Seek support if you need it.

Remember, if you have tried these tips and you are still concerned, reach out to a [Peer Responder](#) or the [Staff Psychology team](#) if you are experiencing distress or feeling overwhelmed by these changes.

Remember - Mask wearing needs to be done in conjunction with existing measures – social distancing, frequent hand washing and staying home if unwell.