

Frequently asked questions about wearing face masks outdoors

Do I need to wear a face covering while outdoors?

Yes, in most cases. Anyone who is near others who don't live with them, they must wear a mask.

Do my children need to wear face coverings outdoors?

In some instances. Children younger than two should not wear face coverings. Children who can wear a face covering safely should do so.

Do I need to wear a face covering while swimming?

No. Face coverings should not be worn while swimming or playing in the water.

Do I need to wear a face covering while visiting Rhode Island parks?

Yes, in most cases. Anyone who is near others who don't live with them, they must wear a mask. The clearest advice is to keep six feet away from other people or groups, whether you're wearing a face covering or not. For example, if you're hiking and no one else is on the trail, you don't need to wear your face covering, but if you're beginning a hike and on a crowded trailhead, you must wear a face covering. Similarly, if you're having a picnic with people who live with you, you don't need to wear a face covering, but if you're waiting in a line at a food truck or concession stand where other people are within six feet of you, you must wear a face covering.

Am I required to wear face coverings while jogging, bicycling, or exercising outdoors?

Yes, any time you're near someone who doesn't live with you, you must wear a mask. As always, check with your doctor before starting an exercise program. While exercising in a face covering, moderate your expectations. You may need to go a little slower while you get used to the mask. Stop or take a break more often.

Also, if children are engaged in sports outdoors, face coverings are suggested but may not always be appropriate given a child's health, stage of development, or activity. Adults should monitor youth who wear face coverings while taking part in sports activities and encourage youth to take more frequent breaks.

Are there exceptions for Rhode Islanders with developmental disabilities or medical conditions?

Yes. The Executive Order states: "Face coverings shall not be required of those who are developmentally unable to comply" or "those whose health would be damaged" by wearing a face covering.