



## SAFE EXERCISE AT HOME

### MASK UP AND LOOK DOWN

In some situations, Australians are being advised to wear a face mask to reduce the spread of COVID-19. In some states and hotspots this includes when they are outside their home such as public transport, places of worship, supermarkets, and shops.

Anything that interferes with vision may increase your risk of falls, particularly walking outdoors. Your lower peripheral vision (the things you can see without moving your head to look down) is restricted when you wear a mask. This means you may not be able to see the ground and your feet without looking down when you have a face covering on. In addition, if you wear glasses, they may fog up when you are wearing a face covering such as a mask.

To stay safe while walking outdoors with a mask we recommend you:

- tilt your head to look down at the ground regularly when walking, particularly when you are walking on an uneven surface or approaching a curb or step;
- don't rush when walking, particularly if you have difficulty seeing obstacles, are walking on an uneven surface, or are approaching a curb or step;
- when going up or down a curb or step, tilt your head to look down and use a support such as a handrail to assist with balance if available;
- if wearing glasses, try the following to help prevent them fogging up:
  - ensure firm fit over your nose, with glasses over the top of the fabric (if your mask has a wire, mould it over your nose; or use tape that is designed to be used on skin to hold down the top of your mask);
  - place a small piece of folded paper towel or tissue on the bridge of your nose between the mask and your face to help absorb moisture;
  - cleaning glasses with a small amount of dishwashing liquid;
- use single lens glasses (in preference to bifocal or multifocal glasses) for walking outside if you have them.

**Remember: Mask Up and Look Down!**

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*Seek advice from your doctor or health professional prior to starting exercise if you have had two or more falls in the past 12 months, a recent heart problem, shortness of breath, chronic pain or other serious medical condition*

*Stop exercising immediately if you become dizzy, develop chest pain or feel unwell. You should discuss these problems with your doctor*

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We provide examples of ways to stay active during COVID-19 at three levels of function and fitness. ***If you are not sure which level best suits you, start at the easiest level*** ([Level 1](#)) and work your way up. Also review the sections on [how hard should you work](#) and [tips for staying motivated](#) which gives additional tips on your exercise program. Remember if you need assistance, a physiotherapist can help.

*The information on the "Safe exercise at home" website is not intended to replace individual health professional care. If you have any concerns or questions about what you can safely do, you should seek professional advice from your doctor, physiotherapist, or other health professional with expertise in exercise prescription.*