

Novel techniques for wearing an ear-looped mask to reduce pressure on the ear



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SURGICAL CHALLENGE

The wearing of ear-looped face masks and specs/goggles has become routine for everyone in the world to prevent infection of airborne COVID-19. However, when using this mask daily for a long period, there is pressure injury to the ear. Because of this, people keep adjusting the mask to release the pressure, thereby increasing the chance of getting the COVID-19 infection themselves. To reduce this problem, it is a good idea to tie the mask loop on the occipital area with a plastic band, but this band is not readily available.¹ Here, the author describes a new method to reduce the pressure of the loop on the ear.

SOLUTION

The ear loops of the mask are wrapped around the handles of the specs instead of around the ear. For this, the specs are put on first, and then the loop of the mask is wrapped twice around the handles of specs (Fig 1, A and B). By wrapping around the handles, direct contact of the loop on the ear is reduced. In this way, the pressure injury in the form of pain and numbness is minimized, so people can wear the mask for a longer period with less discomfort. The main advantage is that there is no need for any accessory to tie the loop. Thus, wearing the ear-looped mask with specs is a good option. The broadening of the ear loop is another technique for reducing the pressure on the ear (pressure = force/area) (Fig 2, A-D).

REFERENCE

1. Jiang W, Cao W, Liu Q. Wearing the N95 mask with a plastic handle reduces pressure injury. *J Am Acad Dermatol*. 2020;82(6):e191-e192.

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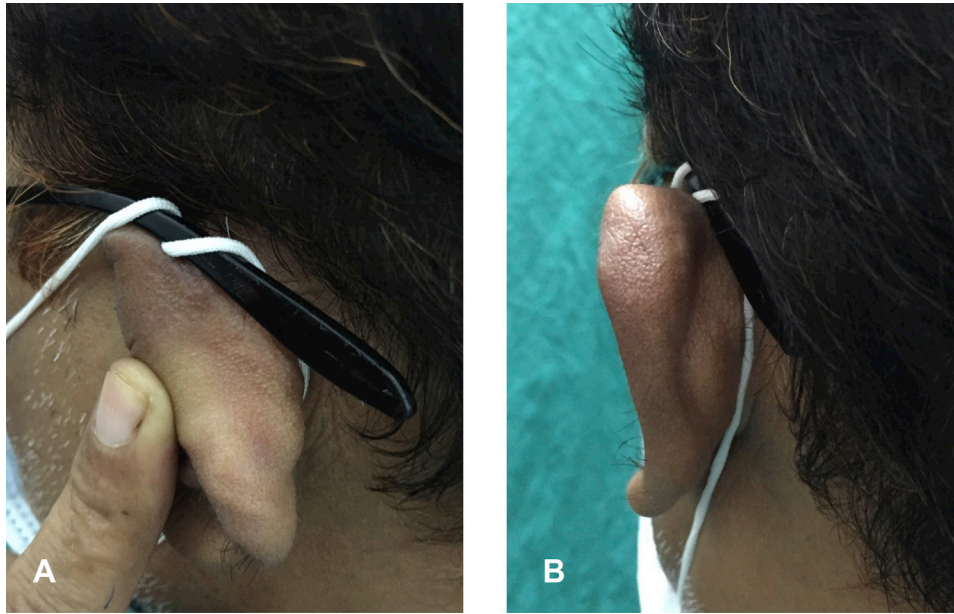


Fig 1. A and B, The ear loop of the face mask is wrapped around the handle of general specs.

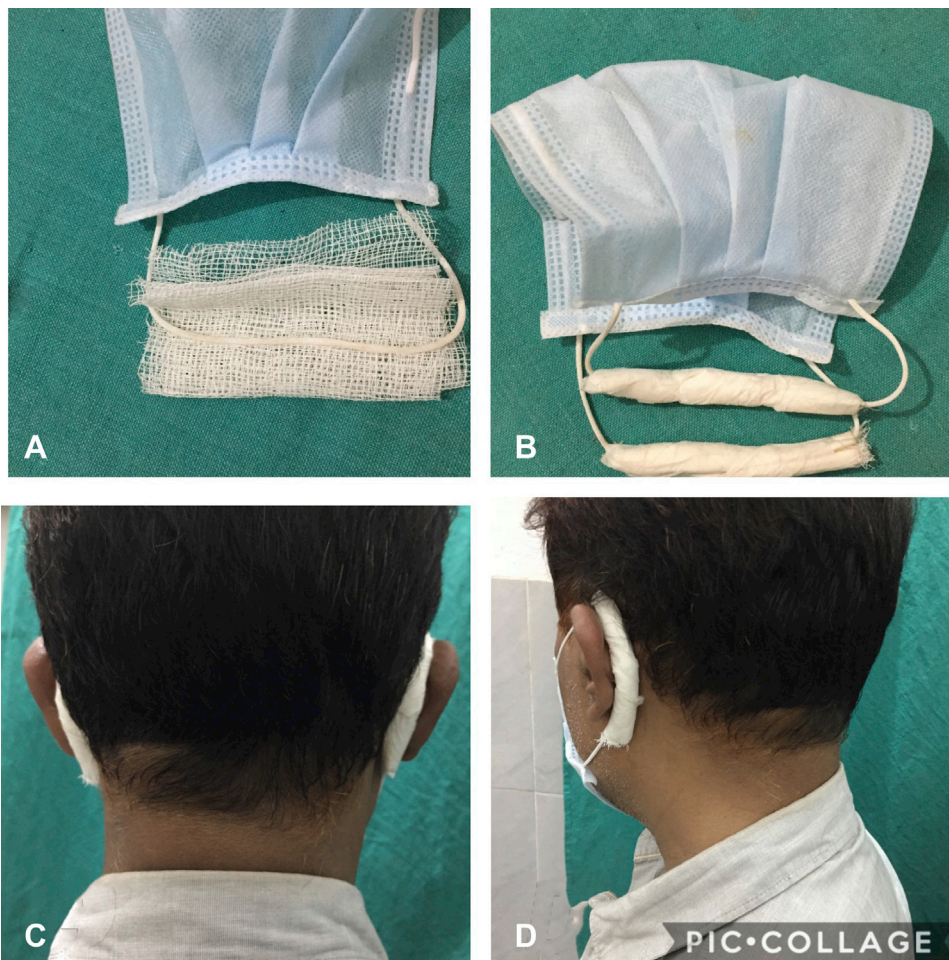


Fig 2. A-D, The ear loop of the face mask is broadened to decrease the pressure per unit area on the ear by increasing the contact area on the ear.