

Superhero support for kids in cancer treatment

Intro: Superheroes come in all sizes. At Mayo Clinic, some of the smallest are kids getting [proton therapy](#) treatment for cancer. Now staffers are giving these patients some special help in this tough fight.

VIDEO	AUDIO
	<i>Sound of a pencil being taken out of a box</i>
Mike Hamilton	"We do this because cancer is a scary thing."
	What these Mayo Clinic radiation therapists do is give kids in a cancer fight some superhero-inspired support.
Title: Mike Hamilton Radiation Oncology Mayo Clinic	"So these masks are used to hold the patient still during their radiation therapy treatments. We use them to immobilize and accurately treat the tumors that are underneath."
Mike Hamilton	"Well, when it's not painted, it's a little scary."
	Enter Mike Hamilton and team.
Mike Hamilton	"Pencil first. Then, I erase the lines and make them permanent."
	When they get done, this scary medical gear gets a powerful makeover.
Title: George Kozan Radiation Oncology Mayo Clinic	"They know once they put the mask on, they're kind of like that superperson, and they can get through the treatment. And it kind of pushes them through."
	"These masks are theirs. There's a lot of pressure to get it right."
	Each reusable mask starts as a flat piece of Kevlar that's warmed, molded and cooled to create a perfect fit for the patient.
	"And these marks are for our alignment for treatment. So, I ... don't want to go over those marks."
	Coloring very carefully, these radiation therapists-

	turned-artists bring all kinds of patient requests to life ...
Mike Hamilton	"Spiderman, I can bust out in 30 minutes."
	... including lots of superheroes, movie characters and cartoons.
Mike Hamilton	"Sometimes they'll let me pick. Most of the time, it's what they want."
Title: Andrew Saunders Radiation Oncology Mayo Clinic	"... between patients, whenever we have some downtime or a break."
Andrew Saunders	"It takes me several hours."
George Kozan	"It does in a way take a bit of practice."
	They can be hours' of work, but, according to all involved, worth every minute.
Mike Hamilton	"They don't get to decide when they come for treatment, what they have done for treatment. This is something they have for them. This is their say."
Mike Hamilton	"Parents love it."
Title: Valentin Rivish Parent of patient	"Our 11-year-old daughter, ..."
Valentin Rivish	"... she has to have a mask to hold her head still during treatments."
Valentin Rivish	"It used to be this off-white-looking, plain mask, you know, that you wear. And now it looks very cool."
	An appreciative parent is a good start, but it's the kids' feedback that really fuels this crew.
George Kozan	"I gotta say, yeah, the smile that I received for one of them said it all."
Andrew Saunders	"The reaction of the patient is really what I want to see — something positive out of something that can be a negative experience."
Mike Hamilton	"It's not easy to wear the mask, but if it makes them brave, makes them get through their treatment a

	little easier, that's ... my goal."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Jeff Olsen.

Tag: When the kids are done with treatment, they get to take home the mask – a reminder of their bravery during a tough time.