

Guidelines for Safe Use of Cloth Face Coverings

IMPORTANT: Cloth face coverings are NOT a substitute for other more effective virus-prevention strategies, such as social distancing and hand washing. But they may be helpful when combined with these primary interventions.

If wearing a mask makes you more likely to go to a crowded grocery store or on a walk with a friend—without maintaining the recommended 6-foot distance—that is bad. Don't let wearing a mask be a cause of relaxing your social-distancing restrictions. Face masks or coverings aren't a substitute for limiting your exposure to other people and minimizing trips outside of the home.

- **When should I wear a cloth face covering?** You may choose to wear a cloth face covering when you must be in public for essential activities, such as shopping at the grocery store. Wearing a cloth face covering does not eliminate the need to physically distance yourself from others.
- **How do I use a cloth face covering?** Practice strict hand washing before and after touching and adjusting the mask. While wearing a mask, you might end up touching your face more often and transferring the virus from your hands to your face. In order to avoid this, wash your hands both before and after adjusting or removing your face mask.

Fit is the most important thing. If there are gaps virus particles can both enter and exit the mask. So, make sure your mask fully covers your nose and mouth and is snug, but still breathable. You should be breathing through the fabric, not by air coming in through gaps on the side. Make sure your mask is comfortable and fits snugly before going out so you can minimize having to adjust it when out. If you do have to adjust it always use the strap rather than touching the mask.

The mask could accumulate the virus on the outside of the mask. If the mask is touched or removed, hands must be washed. Try to avoid touching the mask and your face when you are out and use hand sanitizer if you do. When you go home put the mask away and wash your hands thoroughly. If your mask becomes moist against your skin, viruses could diffuse across the mask and reach your face. Don't share masks, even with family members.

- **Should you sanitize or wash your mask?** It's a good idea to wash your cloth face covering frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily. Have a bag or bin to keep cloth face coverings in until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face.

A HEPA filter has been inserted into this cloth face covering. You should remove the filter when you wash the mask. The filter is good for at least 1 month.

Discard cloth face coverings that: No longer cover the nose and mouth; Have stretched out or damaged ties or straps; Cannot stay on your face; have holes or tears in the fabric.

CLOTH FACE COVERING (MASK) INSTRUCTIONS

HOW TO PUT ON A FACE MASK

1. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching the mask.
2. Determine which side of the mask is the top. The side of the mask that has a stiff bendable edge is the top and is meant to mold to the shape of your nose.
3. Determine which side of the mask is the front. If you mask has a pocket for a filter, this is the side that goes against your face.
4. Follow the instructions below for the type of mask you are using.
 - a. Face Mask with Ear loops: Hold the mask by the ear loops. Place a loop around each ear.
 - b. Face Mask with Ties: Bring the mask to your nose level and place the ties over the crown of your head and secure with a bow.
5. Mold or pinch the stiff edge to the shape of your nose.
6. If using a face mask with ties: Then take the bottom ties, one in each hand, and secure with a bow at the nape of your neck.
7. Pull the bottom of the mask over your mouth and chin.

HOW TO REMOVE A FACE MASK

1. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching the mask.
2. Avoid touching the front of the mask. The front of the mask is contaminated. Only touch the ear loops or ties.
3. Follow the instructions below for the type of mask you are using.
 - a. Face Mask with Ear loops: Hold both of the ear loops and gently lift and remove the mask.
 - b. Face Mask with Ties: Untie the bottom bow first then untie the top bow and pull the mask away from you as the ties are loosened.
4. Throw the mask into a bag or bin for laundering.
5. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.