

Masks: Why, When, & How

WHY should we wear cloth masks?

- Viruses from our respiratory tracts can spread when we talk, cough, sneeze, etc.
- If we wear cloth masks, it is much harder for viruses from our mouths and noses to get into the air and infect someone else. Therefore, cloth masks work as a physical barrier to **decrease the spread of the viruses**. We need people to use them widely to slow down the spread of COVID-19.

WHEN should we wear cloth masks?

- When you are **in an indoor space in public** (in a shop, in a hospital, in an elevator, etc.)
- When you are **riding on public transit**
- When you are **waiting in line (even if you are outdoors)**
- Anywhere when it might be hard to stay 6 feet apart from someone you don't live with, even when you are outdoors
- Who should not wear a mask?
 - Children under 2 years old
 - Anyone who is unable to remove the mask without help

HOW should we use masks?

Putting on a mask

- First, **wash your hands** with soap & water or with hand sanitizer.
- Get a **clean** mask, and pull the loops of the mask behind your ears.
- **Make sure the mask covers both your nose and mouth. Wearing the mask any other way does not help!**
- **Don't touch the mask when you are wearing it.** Whenever you and the mask have been around people, the outside/front of the mask should be considered to have virus on it!

Taking off the mask

- First, **wash your hands** with soap & water or with hand sanitizer.
- Use the loops of the mask to pull it **away from your face**.
- **Do not touch the front of the mask.**
- Wash your hands after you take off the mask.
- Wash the mask after use with soap & hot water at least once a day.

Check out the World Health Organization's short [video](#) about masks. In USA, the CDC advises people to save surgical and N95 masks for healthcare workers, and use **cloth masks** in their daily lives.

Check out this [video](#) by Bill Nye to see how effectively face masks work.



In addition to using masks, please:

- Stay home as much as possible
- Wash your hands with soap and water (or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer)
- Don't touch your face until you have washed your hands properly
- Stay 6 feet away from others when you go out