

Important Information About Your Cloth Face Coverings

As COVID-19 continues to spread within the United States, CDC has recommended additional measures to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. In the context of community transmission, CDC recommends that you:



Stay at home as much as possible



Practice social distancing (remaining at least 6 feet away from others)



Clean your hands often



In addition, CDC also recommends that everyone wear cloth face coverings when leaving their homes, regardless of whether they have fever or symptoms of COVID-19. This is because of evidence that people with COVID-19 can spread the disease, even when they don't have any symptoms. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

How cloth face coverings work

Cloth face coverings prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading respiratory droplets when talking, sneezing, or coughing. If everyone wears a cloth face covering when out in public, such as going to the grocery store, the risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 can be reduced for the community. Since people can spread the virus before symptoms start, or even if people never have symptoms, wearing a cloth face covering can protect others around you. Face coverings worn by others protect you from getting the virus from people carrying the virus.



How cloth face coverings are different from other types of masks

Cloth face coverings are NOT the same as the medical facemasks, surgical masks, or respirators (such as N95 respirators) worn by healthcare personnel, first responders, and workers in other industries. These masks and respirators are personal protective equipment (PPE). Medical PPE should be used by healthcare personnel and first responders for their protection. Healthcare personnel and first responders should not wear cloth face coverings instead of PPE when respirators or facemasks are indicated.



N95 respirator



Cloth covering

General considerations for the use of cloth face coverings

When using a cloth face covering, make sure:

- The mouth and nose are fully covered
- The covering fits snugly against the sides of the face so there are no gaps
- You do not have any difficulty breathing while wearing the cloth face covering
- The cloth face covering can be tied or otherwise secured to prevent slipping



Avoid touching your face as much as possible. Keep the covering clean. Clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately, before putting on, after touching or adjusting, and after removing the cloth face covering. Don't share it with anyone else unless it's washed and dried first. You should be the only person handling your covering. Laundry instructions will depend on the cloth used to make the face covering. In general, cloth face coverings should be washed regularly (e.g., daily and whenever soiled) using water and a mild detergent, dried completely in a hot dryer, and stored in a clean container or bag.

For more information, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-faq.html>

