MASK WEARING

TIPS

When should you wear a face mask?

The World Health Organization (WHO)Trusted Source recommends using surgical masks only if you:

- Have a fever, cough, or other respiratory symptoms
- Are well but caring for someone with a respiratory illness — in this case, wear a mask when you're within 6 feet or closer to the person who is ill

Although a surgical mask helps trap larger respiratory droplets, it can't protect you from contracting the novel coronavirus, which is known as SARS-CoV-2. That's because surgical masks:

- Don't filter out smaller airborne particles.
- Don't fit snugly on your face, so airborne particles can leak in through the sides of the mask.

Some studies have failed to show that surgical masks effectively prevent exposure to infectious diseases in community or public settings.

At present, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)Trusted Source doesn't recommend that the general public wear surgical masks or N95 respirators to protect from respiratory illnesses like

COVID-19. Healthcare providers and first responders need these supplies, and there's currently a shortage of them.

Steps to putting on a face mask

1. Before putting on the mask, wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or rub your hands together thoroughly with alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2. Check for defects in the face mask, such as tears or broken loops.

3. Position the colored side of the mask outward.

4. If present, make sure the metallic strip is at the top of the mask and positioned against the bridge of your nose.

5. If the mask has:

   - Ear loops: Hold the mask by both ear loops and place one loop over each ear.

   - Ties: Hold the mask by the upper strings. Tie the upper strings in a secure bow near the crown of your head. Tie the bottom strings securely in a bow near the nape of your neck.

- Dual elastic bands: Pull the top band over your head and position it against the crown of your head. Pull the bottom band over your head and position it against the nape of your neck.

6. Mold the bendable metallic upper strip to the shape of your nose by pinching and pressing down on it with your fingers.

7. Pull the bottom of the mask over your mouth and chin.

8. Be sure the mask fits snugly.

9. Don't touch the mask once in position.

10. If the mask gets soiled or damp, replace it with a new one.

Steps to taking off a face mask

1. Before you take off the mask, wash your hands well or use hand sanitizer.

2. Avoid touching the mask itself, as it could be contaminated. Hold it by the loops, ties, or bands only.

3. Carefully remove the mask from your face once you:

- ○ unhook both ear loops, or
- ○ untie the bottom bow first, followed by the top one, or
- ○ remove the bottom band first by lifting it over your head, then do the same with the top band

4. Holding the mask loops, ties, or bands, discard the mask by placing it in a covered trash bin.

5.After removing the mask, wash your hands thoroughly or use hand sanitizer.

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