

Face Mask Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions April 5, 2020



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) recently updated its prevention protocol regarding the spread of COVID-19 to recommend the public start wearing cloth face masks in situations where social distancing is difficult, like in grocery stores or pharmacies, and areas that have high numbers of community-based transmission of the virus. While ODH recommends wearing cloth face masks in public to help stop spread of the coronavirus, they want to be clear that wearing a face mask is not a replacement for social distancing.

WHY NOW? AND WHAT'S THE BENEFIT

The CDC continues to study the spread and effects of the novel coronavirus across the United States. They now know from recent studies that a significant portion of individuals with coronavirus lack symptoms ("asymptomatic") and that even those who eventually develop symptoms ("pre-symptomatic") can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity—for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing—even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms. In light of this new evidence, CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. It is critical to emphasize that maintaining 6-foot social distancing remains important to slowing the spread of the virus. The CDC is additionally advising the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. For further details please click on the following links:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

CLOTH FACE MASK

Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure. The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance. Please see the link below for instructions on the use, cleaning, and making of cloth face mask:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

WEARING AND REMOVING FACE MASK

- When putting on a mask • Secure ties or elastic bands at middle of head and neck • Fit flexible band to nose bridge • Fit snug to face and below chin
- When removing a face mask • front of mask is contaminated — DO NOT TOUCH! • If your hands get contaminated during mask removal, immediately wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer • Grasp bottom ties or elastics of the mask, then the ones at the top, and remove without touching the front • Discard in a waste container or place to be washed if cloth face mask
- **WASH HANDS OR USE AN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZER IMMEDIATELY AFTER REMOVING YOUR MASK**