

# DO'S AND DON'TS FOR WEARING A CLOTH FACE COVERING IN NON- SURGICAL HEALTH CARE SETTINGS



## DO

- Check to make sure the mask has no defects, such as a tear, torn strap or ear loop.
- Bring both top ties to the crown of the head and secure with a bow; tie the bottom ties securely at the nape of neck in a bow.
- For an ear loop mask, remove the mask from the side with your head tilted forward. For tied masks, remove by handling only the ties. Untie the bottom tie, followed by the top tie.
- Properly remove cloth mask by touching only the ear loops or the ties. Perform hand hygiene before and after removing a surgical mask or any type of personal protective equipment.
- Cloth face coverings should be routinely washed in a washing machine, depending on frequency of use.



## DO NOT

- DO NOT wear if wet or soiled; get a new mask.
- DO NOT crisscross ties.
- DO NOT leave a mask hanging off one ear or hanging around your neck.
- DO NOT touch the front of the mask, as it is contaminated after use.
- DO NOT tuck the mask under your chin.

## Guidance on Cloth Face Coverings for COVID-19

Note: The situation regarding COVID-19 is rapidly changing as is our knowledge of this new disease. This guidance is based on the best information currently available and does not constitute medical advice or advocate specific treatments or approaches. Additional information regarding use of cloth face coverings can be found at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html).

### What is being recommended?

In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, individuals may choose to wear a cloth face covering when in a public setting where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. Due to a nationwide shortage of face masks (also known as surgical masks) and N-95 respirators, these should be reserved for healthcare workers and others in direct contact with known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

### How should I wear a cloth face covering?

A cloth face covering should fit snugly but comfortably over the mouth and nose and against the side of the face and be secured with ties or ear loops.

### How do I take off and clean my face covering?

Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, or mouth when removing their cloth face covering. Remove when hand washing or hand sanitizer is available to immediately perform hand hygiene after removing. Routine laundering of the face covering is recommended.

### What else should I be doing to limit the spread of COVID-19?

Individuals should avoid leaving their homes or places of residence except as needed. If you must be in public settings, face coverings should be used in conjunction with the other health recommendations already in place, such as maintaining 6 feet distance from other people, using proper cough/sneeze etiquette, frequent hand-washing, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Individuals who are sick, or have close contact with someone who is sick, should stay home.

### What precautions should I know about?

Even simple cloth face coverings can make it harder to breathe. Individuals should take care not to use materials or excessive layers that restrict breathing ability. All individuals should take care to monitor their own health while wearing a mask or face covering, and consult a doctor with any concerns.

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.

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. If you are a caregiver for an individual with the virus, every attempt should be made to get a surgical facemask or N-95 respirator.

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)

**For more information: [www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus](http://www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus)**

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