Frequently asked Questions regarding Wearing a Mask

Should we wear masks to protect ourselves from COVID-19?

Wearing a non-medical mask (e.g., homemade cloth mask) in the community has not been proven to protect the person wearing it. However, the use of a non-medical mask or facial covering can be an additional measure you can take to protect others around you.

Wearing a non-medical mask is another way of covering your mouth and nose to prevent your respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces. If you have symptoms of respiratory illness (e.g. fever, coughing or sneezing), wearing a mask helps prevent the spread of infection, however if you are ill, you should remain home.

For short periods of time when physical distancing is not possible in public settings (e.g., grocery shopping, in close settings such as public transit), wearing a non-medical mask is one way to protect those around you. Wearing a non-medical mask when in public or other settings is not a replacement for following proven measures such as hand washing and physical distancing.

The use of non-medical masks (e.g., homemade cloth masks) by asymptomatic people in the community may reduce the touching of the nose or mouth with contaminated hands, although one needs to take care to not touch the face as the mask is adjusted or when pulled on and off.

If you choose to use a non-medical mask, it should be well-fitted (non-gaping). People should also be aware that masks can become contaminated on the outside or when touched by hands. Avoid moving the mask around or adjusting it often. Masks should not be shared with others.

Non-medical masks or facial 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.

With the emerging information regarding possible transmission from people without symptoms, the goal is to stop the spread of COVID-19 by all means possible. Wearing a non-medical mask— even if you have no symptoms—is an additional measure you can take to try to protect others around you.