

Facts & DETAILS

Cloth Face Coverings for the General Public

To protect others from getting sick, everyone in a public setting where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) is recommended to wear a cloth face covering.*

Cloth face coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

Use this acronym when considering safe homemade mask use:

- **Multi**-layered, tightly-woven 100% Cotton. Use a thread count of 180 or higher. Don't buy surgical or N95 masks.
- **Avoid** your face and remove it from behind. Never touch the front of the mask, and always remove it from behind your head.
- **Scrap** it if it's damaged, soiled, or doesn't fit. Make sure it's breathable and fits snugly. Don't use it while it's damp, wet, or dirty.
- **Keep** the mask and your hands clean. Wash your hands before you put the mask on/after you take it off. Wash or dispose the mask after every use.

Who should not wear a cloth face covering?

- Any child under the age of two years.
- Anyone who has trouble breathing.
- Anyone who is unconscious 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 be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance. Please refer to the cloth face covering and respirator comparison chart on the back of this fact sheet for more information.

For more information on a simple sewing and/or non-sewing method for making a homemade mask, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)

For More Information:

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MASK AND RESPIRATOR COMPARISON CHART



Health Department

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	CLOTH MASK	SURGICAL MASK	N95 RESPIRATOR
INTENDED USER	General public	Healthcare personnel performing routine services	Healthcare personnel who may be exposed to COVID-19
INTENDED USE	Daily use to create a barrier and limit disease spread when maintaining a 6-foot social distance is difficult or uncertain	Provides wearer protection against splashes and sprays during routine patient interactions	Reduces exposure to small particle aerosols when caring for a client with a known or suspected COVID-19 infection
SOURCE CONTROL (reduces my mouth droplets from getting to others)	Yes	Yes	Yes
DROPLET PROTECTION (protects me from other people's mouth droplets)	No, unless made from fluid resistant materials	Yes	Yes
RESPIRATORY PROTECTION (filters out viruses and other contaminants)	No	No	Yes, filters 95% of particles
FIT STYLE	Should fit snugly but comfortably against the sides of the face, be secured with ties or ear loops, allow for breathing without restriction	Should fit snugly but comfortably against the sides of the face, be secured with ties or ear loops, allow for breathing without restriction	Snug, sealed fit to the face secured with elastic straps
TESTING AND APPROVAL	None	FDA	NIOSH
USE LIMITATIONS	Can be washed and re-used	Disposable; should be discarded after use	Disposable; should be discarded after use

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