# About non-medical masks and face coverings

## What is an appropriate non-medical mask or face covering

When worn properly, a person wearing a non-medical mask or face covering can reduce the spread of his or her own infectious respiratory droplets.

Non-medical face masks or face coverings **should:**

- be made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric (such as cotton or linen)
- be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping
- fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- allow for easy breathing
- be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment
- be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty
- maintain their shape after washing and drying

Some masks also include a pocket to accommodate a paper towel or disposable coffee filter, for increased benefit.

If possible, use different fabrics for each side of the mask, so you know which side faces your mouth and which side is out.

Non-medical masks or face coverings **should not:**

- be placed on children under the age of 2 years
- be placed on anyone unable to remove them without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing
- be made of plastic or other non-breathable materials
- be made exclusively of materials that easily fall apart, such as tissues
- be secured with tape or other inappropriate materials
- be shared with others
- impair vision or interfere with tasks

## How to put on a non-medical mask or face covering

1. Ensure the face covering is clean and dry.

2. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before touching the mask.
   - If none is available, use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.

3. Ensure your hair is away from your face.

4. Place the face covering over your nose and mouth and secure to your head or ears with its ties or elastics.
   - Adjust if needed to ensure nose and mouth are fully covered.
   - The mask should fit snugly to the cheeks and there should not be any gaps.

5. Repeat Step 2.

While wearing a non-medical mask or face covering, it is important to avoid touching your face. If you do touch your mask or face, you should immediately wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. You can also use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.

## How to remove a non-medical mask or face covering

1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
   - If none is available, use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.

2. Remove the face covering by un-tying it or removing the loops from your ears.
   - Avoid touching the front of the mask when removing it.
   - It can be placed in a plastic bag temporarily if you are not at home.
   - Make sure you close or zip seal the bag while storing it.

3. If you plan to reuse the mask, wash it before wearing it again.
   - It can be washed with hot, soapy water, or it can be washed with your other laundry.

4. If throwing it out, place it into a garbage bin or plastic bag.
   - After removing the face covering, repeat Step 1.