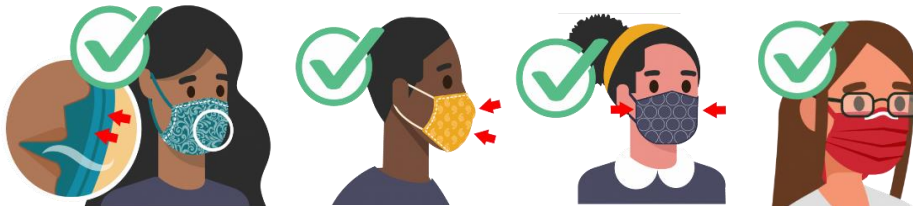


How to Select A Face Mask

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

- DO choose masks that
- Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric
- Completely cover your nose and mouth
- Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps
- Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask



DO NOT choose masks that:

- Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl
- Have exhalation valves or vents which allow virus particles to escape
- Are prioritized for healthcare workers (e.g., N95 respirators labeled as “surgical” or “medical”)



Special Considerations

- Gaiters: Wear a gaiter with two layers, or fold it to make two layers
- Shields Not recommended: Evaluation of face shields is ongoing, but effectiveness is unknown at this time.
- Children: Find a mask that is made for children to help ensure proper fit. Check to be sure the mask fits snugly over the nose and mouth and under the chin and that there are no gaps around the sides. **Do NOT put on children younger than 2 years old.**



Certain types of facial hair, like beards, can make mask fitting difficult. Masks that fit well protect you better. To have a better fit, people with beards can shave their beards or trim their beards close to the face.



Other ways to improve fit

- Use a mask fitter or brace.
- Wear one disposable mask underneath a cloth mask that has multiple layers of fabric. The second mask should push the edges of the inner mask against the face and beard.
- For people with beards that are not trimmed close to the face, masks may fit loosely around the beard. However, people with beards should still wear a mask. Masks designed for people with beards are being evaluated, and information will be provided when it becomes available.
- Wearing a mask does not raise the carbon dioxide (CO₂) level in the air you breathe
- Cloth masks and surgical masks do not provide an airtight fit across the face. The CO₂ escapes into the air through the mask when you breathe out or talk. CO₂ molecules are small enough to easily pass through mask material. In contrast, the respiratory droplets that carry the virus that causes COVID-19 are much larger than CO₂, so they cannot pass as easily through a properly designed and properly worn mask.
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How to Wear Your Masks

Wear a mask **correctly** and **consistently** for the best protection.

- Be sure to [wash your hands or use hand sanitizer](#) before putting on a mask.
- Do **NOT** touch the mask when wearing it. If you have to often touch/adjust your mask, it doesn't fit you properly, and you may need to find a different mask or make adjustments.



How NOT to wear a mask: On your forehead, around your neck, Under your nose, only on your nose, on your chin, dangling from one ear, On your arm



How to take off a mask

- Remove the mask using the ear loops. Fold in half and store. Then wash your hands with soap and water.