How to Use a Face Mask

General Guidelines

Wear a mask and seek medical help if you have flu-like symptoms (cough, fever, difficulty breathing, etc.) You should also wear a mask when you are near or caring for a person with flu-like symptoms. **Always use a new or properly sterilized mask.** Always combine with proper handwashing and social distancing hygiene practices.

See detailed instructions below.

Putting on a mask

1. Ensure you are using a clean mask.
2. Wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer before touching mask.
3. Pick up mask by touching ear loops (or ties) only.
4. Avoid touching mask itself.
5. Hold both ear loops and place a loop around each ear.
6. Fit mask around mouth, nose, and chin.

While wearing a mask

- Mask should be either completely on or off; do not wear or rest under chin.
- Never wear mask inside-out.
- Remove mask if soiled or damp; do not reuse a single-use mask.
- Do not touch mask, face, or adjust mask while it is on.
- If you touch mask, wash hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer right away.
- Always follow social distancing and good hygiene practices.
Removing a mask

1. Grab ear loops only and lift the mask off ears.
2. Pull bottom of mask off and away from mouth and chin.
3. Discard in appropriate receptacle (can be closed or sealed shut).
4. Clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Cleaning instructions for reusable cloth masks

1. To wash, launder the mask often in your washing machine in HOT water (160°F) using soap or detergent that leaves no residue.
2. Rinse well with fresh water and hang to air-dry.

1. You may choose to disinfect masks by soaking for five minutes in a solution of two tablespoons of bleach per quart (liter) of water or 1/3 cup (80 ml) of bleach per gallon (3.84 liter) of water.
2. Rinse well with fresh water and hang to air-dry.