



COVID-19: SAFE USE OF FACE COVERINGS

Guidance

Introduction

Wearing a cloth face covering is recommended in situations where it is difficult to practice social distancing, for example, in shops or on busy public transport. Wearing of cloth face coverings may help prevent people who do not know they have the virus from spreading it to others.

If you wear one, you should still do the important things necessary to prevent the spread of the virus.

These include:

- washing your hands properly and often
- covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze
- not touching your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- social distancing (keeping at least 2 metres away from other people)

Cloth Face Coverings

A cloth face covering is a material you wear that covers the nose and mouth.

Wearing a cloth face covering in public may reduce the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in the community. It may help to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets from people infected with COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

Cloth face coverings may help to stop people who are not aware they have the virus from spreading it.

If you have COVID-19 (Coronavirus) or have symptoms of the virus, you must self-isolate. Do this even if you wear a face covering

When to wear one

Wear a cloth face covering:

- when staying 2 metres apart from people is difficult - for example, in shops, shopping centres or public transport
- when visiting anyone who is more at risk from coronavirus - such as people aged 70 or over or people who are medically vulnerable
- in an enclosed space with other people

What they are made from

Cloth face coverings are made from materials such as cotton or silk.

You can buy them or make them at home using items such as scarfs, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.

Who should not wear one

Cloth face coverings are not suitable for children under the age of 13 and anyone who:

- has trouble breathing
- is unconscious or incapacitated
- is unable to remove it without help
- has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering

Do not criticise or judge people who are not able to wear a face covering.

How to wear one

A cloth face covering should cover the nose and go under the chin and:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops

- include at least 2 layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- invite employees to talk about their concerns and suggest ideas for alternatives
- listen to employees' concerns and consider their ideas.

How to wash one

Wash daily in a hot wash over 60 degrees with detergent.

If using a washing machine, you should be able to wash and machine dry it without damage or change to shape.

You do not need to sterilise cloth face coverings. Wash it in a washing machine or by hand as you would any other item of clothing.

Wash hands before and after use.

When to throw it out

You should throw out a cloth face covering when it:

- no longer covers the nose and mouth
- has stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- cannot stay on the face
- has holes or tears in the fabric

How to use a cloth face covering properly

Do:

- clean your hands properly before you put it on
- practice using it so you are comfortable putting it on and taking it off
- make sure it is made from a fabric you are comfortable wearing
- cover your mouth and nose with it and make sure there are no gaps between your cloth face covering
- tie it securely
- carry unused face coverings in a sealable clean waterproof bag, for example, a ziplock
- carry a second similar type bag to put used face coverings in

Don't:

- touch a face covering while wearing it - if you do, clean your hands properly
- use a wet or soiled face covering
- share face coverings
- do not lower your face covering to speak, eat and smoke or vape - if you need to uncover your nose or mouth take the face covering off and put it in the bag for used face coverings
- do not discard face coverings in public places

Taking off a cloth face covering

- remove it from behind - do not touch the front of the face covering
- put in a sealable clean waterproof bag or wash immediately - put disposable masks in a bin straight away
- clean your hands properly

Contact us today for further advice

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