Who Needs a Facemask and Why?

Types of Facemasks
- Medical (or surgical) masks – for general public use
- N95 particle respirator masks – for health care professionals

What Are Medical Masks?
- Medical masks are disposable surgical masks (sometimes called "surgical masks").
- They prevent sick people from spreading their germs through the air.
- Medical masks block large-particles of viruses and bacteria that travel through coughs and sneezes.
- These masks fit loosely but completely cover your mouth and nose.

When you have symptoms of cold, flu, COVID-19 or other infections, wear a facemask to protect others, including health care providers, from catching your illness.

Here are the CDC directions for putting a mask on and taking it off safely.

How to Put the Mask On
1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Dry your hands with a clean paper towel and throw the paper towel away.
2. Check the mask for any defects such as a tear or missing tie or ear loop. Throw away any that are defective.
3. Make sure the blue side of the mask is facing out, away from your face.
4. Place the mask on your face with the blue side facing out and the stiff, bendable edge at the top by your nose.
5. If the mask has ear loops, put one loop around each ear.
6. If the mask has ties, pick up the mask by the ties and tie the upper ties behind your head with a bow.
7. Once the mask is in place, use your index finger and thumb to pinch the bendable top edge of the mask around the bridge of your nose.
8. If the mask has a lower tie, then once the mask is fitted to the bridge of your nose, tie the lower ties behind your head with a bow.
9. Make sure the mask is completely secure. Make sure it covers your nose and mouth so that the bottom edge is under your chin.
10. Wash your hands.

Removing the Mask
1. Wash your hands before removing the mask.
2. Do not touch the front of the mask (the part over nose and mouth). It may be contaminated from your

breathing, coughing or sneezing.
3. Untie or remove the ear loops and remove the mask by the straps.
4. Throw the mask in the trash.
5. Wash your hands.

Please Note: If you are using a reusable cloth mask, at the end of the day, take the mask off from the straps (not touching the front), place in a pillowcase to keep the ties with the mask. Wash it in the washing machine with hot water and completely dry on medium or high heat.

N95 Respirators
- N95 respirators are masks that can prevent a person from inhaling infectious particles.
- They must be fitted to each person and tested to assure that they are effectively preventing inhalation of infectious particles.
- The CDC does NOT recommend the general public wear this mask.
- The CDC recommends health care workers wear the N95 facemask.
- Blocks 95 % of small particles
- Fits securely on your face and against your skin
- Not designed for children or people with facial hair
- Some have exhalation valve to reduce condensation build-up
- Follow instructions that come with this mask

Talk with your doctor if you have questions about wearing a facemask.

Visit our website for more information about support groups, clinical trials and lifestyle information.

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