



Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings, Especially in Areas of Significant Community-Based Transmission

CDC continues to study the spread and effects of the novel coronavirus across the United States. We now know from [recent studies](#) that a significant portion of individuals with coronavirus lack symptoms (“asymptomatic”) and that even those who eventually develop symptoms (“pre-symptomatic”) can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity—for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing—even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms.

In light of this new evidence, CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Source of Exposure:

Remember that the majority of COVID-19 cases are still under investigation as to the source of exposure according to the CDC. 97% of cases are not yet attributable to either travel or close contact as the source of exposure. Following all the CDC and WHO guidelines are helpful and not conclusive to reduce exposure.

Cases of COVID-19 Reported in the US, by Source of Exposure*†

Cases of COVID-19 Reported in the US, by Source of Exposure

Travel-related	1,388
Close contact	4,325
Under investigation	233,566
Total cases	239,279

* Data include both confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported to CDC or tested at CDC since January 21, 2020, with the exception of testing results for persons repatriated to the United States from Wuhan, China and Japan. State and local public health departments are now testing and publicly reporting their cases. In the event of a discrepancy between CDC cases and cases reported by state and local public health officials, data reported by states should be considered the most up to date.

When and how to wear medical masks to protect against coronavirus

- If you are healthy, you only need to wear a mask if you are taking care of a person with suspected 2019-nCoV infection.
- Wear a mask if you are coughing or sneezing.
- Masks are effective only when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- If you wear a mask, then you must know how to use it and dispose of it properly.
- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Cover mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.

- Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind (do not touch the front of mask); discard immediately in a closed bin; clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.