



APPENDIX C: Masks

Personal Protective Equipment should be broken down into the following 3 categories based on risk of exposure levels:

1. Low Risk: tasks where an individual is isolated.
2. Medium Risk: wear disposable gloves, paper/filter mask.
3. High Risk: tasks where individuals cannot maintain social distancing of 6 feet.

Wearing masks if you are healthy

- Medical masks and N95 respirators should be reserved for healthcare workers.
- Wearing a cloth mask is a matter of personal choice.
- Some people can spread the virus when they have very mild symptoms or may be unaware they are infected. In this case, wearing a mask can help in containing your own droplets and protect others but it will not protect you from COVID-19. Masks may give a person a false sense of security and are likely to increase the number of times a person will touch their own face (e.g., to adjust the mask). Any mask, no matter how efficient at filtration or how good the seal, will have minimal effect if it is not used together with other preventive measures, such as frequent hand washing and physical distancing.
- It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect.

Considering the use of homemade masks

- The use of a homemade mask should only be considered by members of the public who are symptomatic, or caring for someone who is symptomatic, as an interim measure if commercial masks are not available.
- If you are making a mask, here is some information to improve the effectiveness of homemade masks:
- Some materials are better than others. Use clean and stretchy 100% cotton t-shirts or pillowcases.
- Ensure the mask fits tightly around the nose and mouth; material that allows droplets to pass through will not work. **Hint - a twist tie at the top, will insure a snug fit over the bridge of the nose.*
- The mask should be comfortable, or you won't want to wear it consistently.
- If the mask makes it a lot harder to breathe, then the seal will not be as good, and the mask will be less effective.
- Clean or change the mask often.

Disposing of used (disposable) masks

- Masks need to be changed frequently. To dispose of masks after use:
 - Wash your hands with soap and water before taking off your mask.
 - Dispose of used masks in a wastebasket lined with the plastic bag.
 - After taking off your mask, wash your hands again with soap and water before touching your face or doing anything else.

- When emptying wastebaskets, take care to not touch used masks or tissues with your hands. All waste can go into regular garbage bins.
- Clean your hands with soap and water after emptying the wastebasket.

Disinfecting

- If possible, use store-bought disinfectants. Familiar brands such as Clorox, Lysol, Fantastik, Microban and Zep have specific products that will work against the COVID-19 virus.
- If store-bought disinfectants are not available, you can mix household bleach with room temperature water (do not use hot water) in specific ratios to disinfect areas in your home. Household bleach should be diluted. It comes in different concentrations so check your label first before you mix (see information in table below).
- Rinsing and drying recommendations are important parts of the disinfection process. For high-touch or heavily soiled areas such as toilets and sinks, leave 1000 ppm bleach solutions wet for one minute before wiping down the surface with a cloth soaked in clean water. Other bleach solutions of 500 ppm should be left wet for five minutes then air drying is fine.