**Fact sheet**

**COVID-19 How to correctly fit and wear a face mask**

A mask acts as a barrier to prevent the spread of the virus. Masks must be fitted and used correctly and always combined with other measures to protect yourself and everyone else. Always limit physical contact, keep at least 1.5 m apart where possible, wash your hands regularly, and clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. Avoid touching your face and cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Stay home if you have symptoms, get tested.

Follow your local health authorities’ advice on the use of masks and check this web site for advice on substandard or fake masks:

[Safety Alert-Supply of fake face masks](#)

Surgical masks are fluid resistant and prevent large droplets and some aerosols from spreading from you. They also prevent large droplets from others reaching your nose or mouth. They do not prevent smaller, lighter droplets (aerosols) being breathed in. P2 and N95 masks (without valves), when fitted correctly, protect you and others from both large droplets and aerosols.

**NOTE:** People with chronic respiratory conditions should seek medical advice before using a mask.

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Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser before touching the mask.

Inspect the mask to ensure it is not damaged. Always use your own mask and do not share it with others.

Turn the mask so the coloured side is facing outward.

Put the mask over your face and if there is a metallic strip, press it to fit the bridge of your nose.

Pull the loops around each of your ears or tie the top and bottom straps.

Make sure it covers your nose and mouth and fits snugly under your chin, over the bridge of your nose and against the sides of your face.

Press the metallic strip again so it moulds to the shape of your nose; and wash your hands again.

Don’t touch the mask while you’re wearing it.

If you do, wash your hands.

The masks are single use, <4 hours.

Don’t wear the mask if it gets wet or is dirty as they are less effective if damp or dirty.

Don’t reuse the mask.

Follow correct procedure for removing the mask.

To remove the mask, first wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

Lean forward to remove your mask. Touch only the ear loops or ties, not the front of the mask. Dispose of the mask immediately in the bin.

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If you don’t have soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

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Source: Content and graphics adapted from Worksafebc.com: Help prevent the spread of COVID-19: How to use a mask