

# MEDICAL MASKS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS ONLY

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND BUSINESSES TO WEAR CLOTH MASKS

COVID-19

Online Resource & News Portal  
SACoronavirus.co.za



health

Department of Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## APPROPRIATE USE OF CLOTH MASKS

### When to use a cloth mask:

- Using public transport.
- Shopping.
- Attending essential services.

1

### When putting on the mask:

- Wash your hands first.
- Place the inside of a clean mask against your face.
- Cover your nose and mouth.
- Make sure it fits well, don't touch the cloth part.

2

### While wearing the mask:

- Do NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE or fiddle with the mask.
- Remove the mask if it is wet.

3

### When taking off the mask:

- Touch only the straps. NEVER touch the inside.
- Keep it in a container until you wash it.
- Wash your hands, with soap and water or hand sanitiser, after taking it off.

4

5

### Caring for your masks:

- Have two masks so you always have a clean one ready.
- DO NOT share masks with other people.
- Wash the mask with soap and hot water.
- Dry the mask in the sun and iron it to disinfect it.

CLOTH MASKS ARE AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO STOP THE SPREAD, BUT NEVER REPLACE THE FIVE GOLDEN RULES OF HYGIENE.



1. Wash your hands often, for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.



2. Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.



3. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Safely throw away the tissue.



4. Observe physical distancing - keep 1,5 metres apart from others.



5. Stay home if unwell. Contact a hotline or your health care worker.



### ADVICE FOR PARENTS:

When toddlers and children wear masks

- Adults must always assist toddlers and children to put on a mask.
- Follow the rule of always washing hands when touching masks.
- Ensure that toddlers and children are under adult supervision when wearing a cloth mask.
- Ensure that children and teenagers are informed on care, use, and precautions of using a cloth mask.

Please note that medical-grade masks, including N95 respirators and surgical masks, SHOULD ONLY be used by frontline doctors, nurses and community health care workers. Everyone else should use well-made cloth masks.

### A GOOD CLOTH MASK HAS THREE LAYERS:



OUTER LAYER

Made from thick weave cotton like denim, calico, upholstery fabric or afreshwe. Must be water repellent, easy to clean and be quick drying.

MIDDLE LAYER

- Avoid T-shirt material.
- Use fabrics that can be washed in hot water and ironed.
- Use fabrics that DO NOT inhibit breathing.
- Is square with 3 pleats to fit well.
- Covers from above the nose to below the chin and up to the ears.
- Must fasten tightly around the head.

INNER LAYER

Differentiate clearly between inner and outer layers e.g. different patterned fabric. Polyester or nylon preferred. Beware, cotton is water absorbent - you don't want a wet mask.

If you are sick with Coronavirus, or caring for someone who has it, speak to your health worker or hotline about what masks and protection to use.

National Hotline: 0800 029 999

National WhatsApp: 0600 123 456

National Institute for Communicable Diseases website: <http://www.nicd.ac.za>

COVID-19 information website:

<https://sacoronavirus.co.za>