

4/15/2020

**Mecklenburg County Public Health:  
Recommendation on Cloth Face Coverings**

*As new information regarding COVID-19 becomes available, this guidance may change.*

**Why:** We continue to learn more about COVID-19 and how to reduce the spread of it. There is some evidence people without symptoms may be spreading the virus. Droplets from breathing or speaking may spread COVID-19 from person to person. Therefore, the use of cloth face masks may help decrease transmission of the virus.

**Wearing a cloth face mask does not change the importance of complying with the Stay at Home Order.**

**Recommendation:** Mecklenburg County Public Health is advising the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may be transmitting the virus without knowing they have it.

Since the County is experiencing significant community spread, Mecklenburg County Public Health recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies).

Cloth face coverings are cut pieces of cotton fabric sewn together or bandanas worn to cover a person's nose and mouth when in public.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

**Other types of masks (N95s and surgical masks) are still in short supply and should be reserved for our medical providers and first responders.**

**Instructions:**

How do I best use a cloth mask/face covering?

- Routinely wash the face covering daily. **The face covering should be fully dry before using.** Use of washing machine and dryer is recommended.
- Avoid adjusting the mask by touching your face while the mask is on.
- Continue to practice frequent hand hygiene while wearing the mask.
- Be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing the face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.

**Wearing a cloth face mask does not replace the need for:**

- Adhering to the Stay at Home Order.
- Staying home if you are sick.
- Avoiding close contact (within 6 feet)

- Washing your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or with a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoiding touching your nose, mouth and eyes.
- Limiting unnecessary visitors.
- Covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, or cough and sneeze into your upper sleeve. Dispose of tissues in no-touch trash receptacles.
- Washing your hands or use a hand sanitizer after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- Avoiding shaking hands and always wash your hands after physical contact with others.
- If wearing gloves, always washing your hands after removing them.
- Keeping frequently touched common surfaces (for example, telephones, computer equipment, etc.) clean.
- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle; attention to rest, diet, exercise and relaxation helps maintain physical and emotional health.

For more information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>