COVID-19 Fabric Mask Use - Do's and Don'ts

How to put on a non-medical mask or face covering

1. Ensure the face covering is clean and dry.
2. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before touching the mask.
   - If none is available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
3. Ensure your hair is away from your face.
4. Place the face covering over your nose and mouth and secure to your head or ears with its ties or elastics.
   - Adjust if needed to ensure nose and mouth are fully covered.
5. The mask should fit snugly to the cheeks and there should not be any gaps.
6. [Wash your hands](#) or use [alcohol-based hand sanitizer](#) after adjusting your mask.

While wearing a non-medical mask or face covering, it is important to avoid touching your face. If you do touch your mask or face, you should immediately wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds, or use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

How to remove a non-medical mask or face covering

1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
   - If none is available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
2. Remove the face covering by un-tying it or removing the loops from your ears.
   - Avoid touching the front of the mask when removing it.

3. Store the face covering in a paper bag, envelope, or something that does not retain moisture if you will be wearing it again.
4. After removing the face covering, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.

Cleaning and disposing of non-medical masks and face coverings

Cloth masks or face coverings should be changed and cleaned if they become damp or soiled. You can wash your cloth mask by:

- putting it directly into the washing machine, using a hot cycle, and then dry thoroughly
- washing it thoroughly by hand if a washing machine is not available, using soap and warm/hot water
  - allow it to dry completely before wearing it again

Non-medical masks that cannot be washed should be disposed of properly in a lined garbage bin, and replaced as soon as they get damp, soiled or crumpled. Do not leave discarded masks in shopping carts or on the ground where other people may come into contact with them.

It is important to remember the following when using non-medical masks and face coverings:

- masks with an exhalation valve do not protect others
- never share your non-medical mask or face covering with someone else
- do not handle a non-medical mask or face covering belonging to someone else
- do not allow other people to handle or touch your non-medical mask or face covering

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Do's

- Do wear a non-medical mask or face covering to **protect yourself and others.**
- Do ensure the mask is made of **at least 3 layers, including 2 layers of tightly woven fabric**, with a filter or filter fabric between layers.
- Do inspect the mask for tears or holes.
- Do ensure the mask or face covering is clean and dry.
- Do wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching the mask or face covering.
- Do use the ear loops or ties to put on and remove the mask.
- Do ensure your nose and mouth are fully covered.
- Do replace and launder your mask whenever it becomes damp or dirty.
- Do wash your mask with hot, soapy water and let it dry completely before wearing it again.
- Do store re-usable masks in a clean paper bag until you wear it again.
- Do discard masks that cannot be washed in a plastic lined garbage bin after use.

Don'ts

- Don't wear masks with exhalation valves or vents.
- Don't wear a loose mask.
- Don't touch the mask while wearing it.
- Don't remove the mask to talk to someone.
- Don't hang mask from your neck or ears.
- Don't share your mask.
- Don't leave your used mask within the reach of others.
- Don't reuse masks that are damp, dirty or damaged.

Remember, wearing a non-medical mask or face covering alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. Stay at home if you're sick, wash your hands often and practise physical distancing.