COVID-19 and face masks

Do I need to wear a face mask?

In some places, COVID-19 spreads much more easily. Doctors say to wear a face mask when you are in places with lots of people.

Face masks may protect you from COVID-19 when people cough, sneeze, speak or are less than 1.5 metres away from you. Some people don't know they have COVID-19. If you have COVID-19 but don't know it, face masks will keep other people safe.

Important points about face masks:

- Face masks keep you safe when you can't stay 1.5 metres apart from other people. For example, on buses, trains or in shops
- If you are old or have heart disease, diabetes or trouble breathing, COVID-19 can be a lot more dangerous
- If you feel unwell or have a cold, you must stay home
- Sometimes face masks are not enough. You should also do other things to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Important things you can do to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Stopping the spread of COVID-19 is everyone's responsibility. The most important things that you can do to protect yourself and others are to:

- Always stay at home if you are unwell
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser
- Do not touch your face
- Try not to touch surfaces when you are out
- Stay 1.5 metres away from other people. This is called physical or social distancing
- Cover your mouth when you cough. Use your bent elbow or a tissue. Throw the tissue out straight away.

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When you wear a face mask some things to remember are:

HOW TO PUT ON A FACE MASK

1 Wash your hands with soap and water or sanitiser.

2 Hold the mask by the sides. Tie the mask up behind your head or loop the ties around your ears.

3 Make sure the mask covers your mouth and nose. Press the nose piece around your nose to make sure there are no gaps.

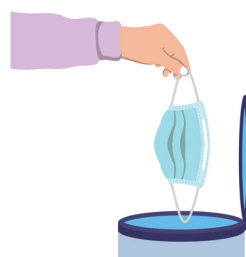**4** Never touch the front of the mask.

HOW TO TAKE OFF A FACE MASK

1 Wash your hands with soap and water or sanitiser.

2 Pull the ties or loops straight forward, away from your face. Take the mask off.

3 If your mask is disposable, throw it in the bin.

4 Wash your hands with soap and water or sanitiser one more time.

Choosing a mask

You can use a cloth mask or a disposable mask. Remember that you can only use a disposable mask once. You can use a cloth mask more than once but you need to wash it. Masks are better than scarves for keeping you safe.

You can buy a mask or make your own cloth mask. It should cover your nose and mouth completely. You can also use a face shield.

Wash your hands before putting on or taking off a mask. Try not to touch your face.

More information about COVID-19:

https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-resources or safetyandquality.gov.au/covid-19

More information about face masks:

https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/face-masks-covid-19

https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/masks

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks

safetyandquality.gov.au