



MASK FACTS VS. FICTION

FICTION Cloth face coverings/masks don't protect you.

FACT **Cloth face masks are effective.** A cloth mask creates a barrier between your mouth and nose and other people around you. This barrier makes it more difficult for the droplets that spread coronavirus to spread to others through talking, singing, coughing and sneezing. This is important because if you are unknowingly infected with the virus, this prevents you from spreading the disease to others.

There are a number of types of masks available however, a cloth mask is highly effective for the general public because it provides a barrier between the person wearing it and others.

FICTION Wearing a cloth face covering/mask will decrease my oxygen level or make me sick.

FACT For many years, healthcare providers have worn masks for extended periods of time. Surgical and cloth masks are designed to be breathable.

If you suffer from a preexisting lung condition, discuss your concerns with your healthcare provider.

FICTION How I'm wearing my mask is not important.

FACT According to the CDC, wearing a mask is highly effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19. In order for the mask to be effective, it should:

- Cover both the nose and mouth
- Be comfortable and snug against the sides of the face
- Be securely tied either with ties or ear loops around your ears
- Be made of multiple layers of fabric
- Allow the person wearing it to have unrestricted breathing

FICTION You only need to wear a mask if you feel sick.

FACT Studies by the CDC suggest many people who have COVID-19 are asymptomatic, meaning they show no symptoms. With such a large percentage of people being asymptomatic, it's important to take measures, such as wearing a mask, to avoid unknowingly spreading it to others.

FICTION I'm at home, I don't need to wear a mask.

FACT **If you live alone, it's okay to not wear a mask while at home.** However, if you live with others and are feeling sick and have mild symptoms, it's important to wear a mask to protect them. It is also important to not leave your home and to isolate yourself from others, as much as possible.

FICTION If you've had the coronavirus, you don't need to wear a mask.

FACT **When someone has a COVID-19 infection, their body will generate an immune response to the virus.** What is unclear at this time, is how long the immunity will last, and what levels of antibodies are needed to achieve immunity. Until we know more about immunity to COVID-19, wearing a mask will ensure that the individual is protected.

FICTION If I'm wearing a mask, I don't need to stay home.

FACT **Wearing a mask is just one way we can all do our part in preventing the spread of COVID-19.** Masks are highly effective in protecting you and others while in public. It's important to also continue practicing prevention measures such as social distancing when around others, good hand hygiene and if you are sick to stay home and connect with your healthcare provider, if needed.

FICTION Face shields and gaiters are effective without a mask.

FACT **One study. Best practice is to ensure your face covering covers your nose and mouth and is made of multiple layers of fabric.** Face shields can be helpful for certain situations but should be worn with a mask or in conjunction with social distancing.

FICTION Outdoor play or sports don't require face masks.

FACT **If social distancing cannot be practiced or maintained, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends wearing face coverings during outdoor play and sports.** These face coverings should cover the nose and mouth and be made of multiple layers of fabric. There is caution against use of face masks for highly vigorous activity and with children under the age of 2 or for individuals with other serious medical conditions as noted by the CDC.

SOURCES

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