

Secure Tomorrow

Minet

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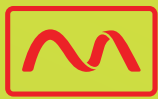
# Face Masks

The recent pandemic of the COVID19 has necessitated the use of face masks as one of the measures of preventing the spread of the virus as it has been proven to be airborne for up to 3 hours.

Following the Government's advisory for use of masks in public places, matatus and motorbikes (bodabodas), please note that wearing a face mask is certainly not a guarantee that you won't get infected. Viruses can also be transmitted through the eyes and tiny viral particles, known as aerosols which can penetrate masks. However, masks are effective at capturing droplets, which is a main transmission route of coronavirus, and some studies have estimated a roughly five-fold protection versus no barrier alone.

## **Please see below on when to use masks generally.**

- If you are healthy, you only need to wear a mask if you are taking care of a person with the suspected 2019-nCoV infection.
- Wear a mask if you are coughing or sneezing.
- Masks are effective only when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- If you wear a mask, then you must know how to use it and dispose of it properly.



Below is a review of various masks that can be used.



### 1. Cloth Mask

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people wear homemade face coverings to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus as this helps people who may have the virus unknowingly not to transmit to others. But this is the least effective of all masks. This can be made from hand-sewn cloth to bandanas and rubber bands.



### 2. Surgical Masks

Surgical masks are loose, single-use cloth masks designed to provide protection against large droplets (e.g. COVID 19), splashes or sprays of bodily or other hazardous fluids. These types of masks experience leakage around the edges when the user inhales, and do not provide a reliable level of respiratory protection against smaller airborne particles. The primary recommended medical function of these types of disposable masks is for infected individuals who want to decrease the risk of transmitting the disease to others in their vicinity, and they are not a substitute for a respirator mask and their primary function is not to protect the wearer of the mask.



### 3. N95 Masks

N95 Respirator masks are sealed, tight-fitting masks that force all air through a filter designed to block 95% or of the particles. Disinfection can be done through warm humid heat although this causes some degree of degradation on the mask integrity. The use of hydrogen peroxide vapour (HPV) has been found to maintain mask integrity while achieving sterilization.



### 4. FFP2 Mask

These disposable masks have a minimum of 94% filtration percentage and maximum 8% leakage to the inside. They are mainly used in construction, agriculture, and healthcare professionals against influenza viruses. They are currently used for protection against the coronavirus.

## How to wear, remove & dispose of a face mask

- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Cover mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind (do not touch the front of the mask); discard immediately in a closed bin; clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

## References

CDC; WHO; consolidated sterilizer systems;emag.medicaexpo.com.

