

Mask Wearing Recommendations

How does COVID-19 spread?

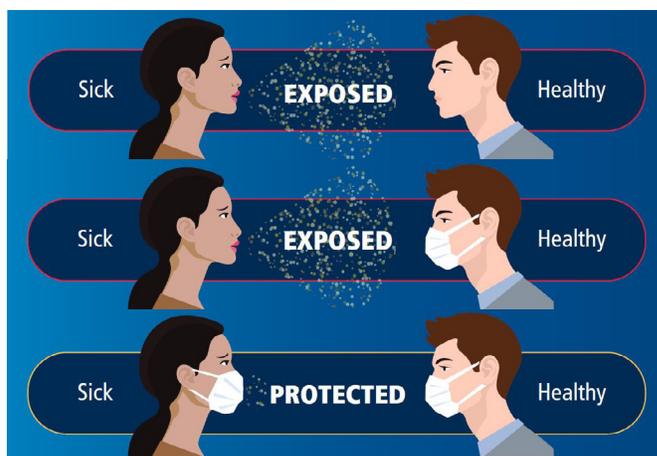
- COVID-19 spreads from person to person through respiratory droplets that are produced when a person talks, coughs or sneezes.
- Respiratory droplets can travel up to six feet in the air, land on the mouth or noses of people nearby or be inhaled into the lungs exposing healthy people to the virus which causes COVID-19 infection.

How do masks help stop the spread?

Masks, or facial coverings, are mainly to prevent the person wearing the mask from generating droplets from breathing, talking, coughing or sneezing. A mask or facial covering provides an extra layer to prevent these respiratory droplets from traveling through the air and onto others.

But I'm just not that worried about catching COVID!

Wearing a mask isn't just about protecting you: it's about protecting the people around you from the virus *you may not know you have*. People who are not yet showing any symptoms of infection can still shed virus through respiratory droplets, so wearing a mask or face covering helps prevent people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting COVID-19 to others.



Okay, what else do I need to know about masks and stopping the spread?

- People who know they have a COVID-19 infection or who have flu-like symptoms should stay home and out of the public.
- The New York State Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control recommend that all persons wear a cloth face covering **that covers both the nose and mouth** when out in a public place where it is difficult to remain six feet apart from others.
- Children under the age of 2 years or those who cannot medically tolerate a face mask (those who have trouble breathing, are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to a remove a mask without assistance) should not wear face masks.
- Maintaining six feet social distancing remains critically important to slowing the spread of the virus; wearing a mask is the next best strategy for preventing the spread when you can't maintain social distancing.
- Click [here](#) for the CDC resource on how to safely wear a cloth face mask.