

PROTECTING YOURSELF DURING COVID-19

What is the difference between a cloth mask, a surgical mask, and a respirator?

This document describes the differences between cloth masks, surgical masks, and respirators. The information is based on guidelines and recommendations from The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Cloth Masks



Surgical Masks



N95 Respirators



WHAT IS IT?

- ▶ A cloth mask is made of multiple fabric layers
- ▶ Not a surgical mask or a respirator
- ▶ Do not use for children under age 2

WHY SHOULD I WEAR ONE?

- ▶ Wear when cannot stay 6' from others (like going to the store)
- ▶ Protects those around you
- ▶ Helps those who may have the virus and not know from infecting others
- ▶ Will save masks for healthcare workers and first responders

HOW DO I USE IT?

- ▶ Do not touch the front of the mask when removing
- ▶ Wash hands immediately after use

HOW DO I CARE FOR IT?

- ▶ Clean after each use with soap and water
- ▶ Can be cleaned in washing machine
- ▶ Do not use bleach, it can damage the mask.

HOW DO I MAKE ONE?

- ▶ Patterns for sewn and no-sew here: <https://go.umd.edu/masks>

WHAT IS IT?

- ▶ A surgical mask is worn mostly by healthcare employees and first responders.

IS IT A RESPIRATOR?

- ▶ A surgical mask is NOT a respirator because of its loose-fitting face seal

HOW DOES IT PROTECT?

- ▶ Blocks large particles and splashes from reaching your mouth and nose.
- ▶ Protects those around you

CAN I RE-USE A SURGICAL MASK?

- ▶ Surgical masks need to be thrown out when contaminated.
- ▶ Read FDA guidance for extending the use of surgical masks in short supply.
- ▶ This includes the reuse of masks in low transmission areas where there is not a risk for the healthcare provider or patient.
- ▶ Guidance is detailed here: <https://go.umd.edu/mask-reuse>

WHAT IS IT?

- ▶ A mask evaluated, tested, and approved to wear as a respirator.
- ▶ A respirator has a tight-fitting face seal fit.
- ▶ Recommended for use by healthcare workers and first responders due to supply shortages.

HOW DOES IT PROTECT?

- ▶ Reduces exposure to particles, including small and large droplets

DO I NEED SPECIAL TRAINING?

- ▶ If the N95 use is required, employees need training, medical clearance, and a fit test before wearing it.
- ▶ Can be worn voluntarily. Read and understand the OSHA voluntary use requirements here: <https://go.umd.edu/respirator>

HOW DO I USE IT?

- ▶ Inspect before use.
- ▶ Get a new one if it is damaged.
- ▶ Perform a user seal check.
- ▶ Do not touch the front of the respirator when removing.

