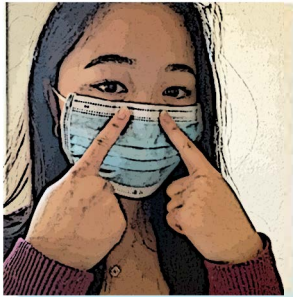


# SURGICAL MASKS

## GUIDANCE FOR THE PUBLIC\*



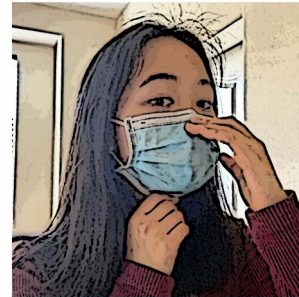
### 1. PUTTING ON



1. With *clean hands*, put on the mask with the bendable edge (if the mask has one) over the bridge of your nose.

Usually, the mask is colored on the outside with straps attached to the interior surface.

Bend the nosepiece to fit your face and reduce the gaps between your nose and eyes.



2. Pull the mask down past your chin.

Ensure that your nose, mouth, and chin are covered.

### 2. WEARING

**TIP:** To prevent fogging, wash glasses with soap and water before putting on the mask.<sup>4</sup>



DO NOT touch the front of your mask or your face.

**Your hands may be contaminated!**



DO NOT pull the mask down past your nose, even to speak!

This will increase the risk of spreading the virus.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. TAKING OFF



1. With *clean hands*, remove the mask by the ear loops or straps.

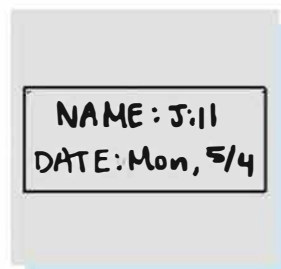
DO NOT touch the outside or inside of the mask, which could be contaminated with virus from others' breath (outside) or your breath (inside).



2a. The safest practice is to discard the mask in the trash. Wash your hands and face immediately afterward.

**TIP:** When handling used masks, handle them by the ear loops only. Treat them as if they were contaminated!

OR



2b. If the mask needs to be reused and (1) is not visibly contaminated and (2) has not been at high risk of virus exposure, put the mask in a clean, breathable container where it *will not be touched for at least 7 days*.<sup>6</sup>

To keep track of mask rotation, label each container with the date used. Discard or decontaminate the container (using soap and water) after the mask is taken out for reuse.

\*| Studies on risk reduction from use of masks by the general public have shown mixed results, some with a benefit and some with no effect.<sup>3,7,8,9,10,11,12,13</sup>

**CAUTION:** Surgical style masks vary greatly in quality of filtration efficiency, fluid resistance, and fit.<sup>14,15</sup> The highest quality are rated as ASTM Level 1 or higher and are usually marketed as surgical or medical masks.<sup>14,16</sup> Lower quality masks are not ASTM rated, and may be marketed as surgical, medical, procedure, dental, isolation, or laser masks.<sup>14,16,17</sup>

#### SUPPORTING RESEARCH

[1] [CDC 2019](#); [2] [Lai, et al 2011](#); [3] [Prather, et al 2020](#); [4] [Malik & Malik 2011](#); [5] [Stadnytskyi 2020](#); [6] [Chin, et al 2020](#); [7] [Sande 2008](#); [8] [N95DECON 2020](#); [9] [Jefferson, et al 2011](#); [10] [WHO 2020](#); [11] [Xiao, et al 2020](#); [12] [MacIntyre 2009](#); [13] [Jefferson, et al 2020](#); [14] [Thomas 2020](#); [15] [FDA 2020](#); [16] [Haylard Health 2019](#); [17] [CDC 2009](#)

