

# Should I double mask?



COVID-19 spreads primarily from person to person through respiratory droplets that spread into the air when you cough, sneeze, talk, shout, or sing.

Cloth masks reduce the spray of droplets when worn over the nose and mouth.

## INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS

**Use multiple layers of fabric or double mask.** Use fabric combinations like cotton-silk, cotton-chiffon, or cotton-flannel. High thread count fabrics are most effective. Wearing two masks can increase effectiveness. Wearing a cloth mask on top of a surgical mask mimics the filter-cloth combo found to be more protective in studies. The surgical mask acts as a filter and the cloth mask provides an additional layer of protection while improving the fit.

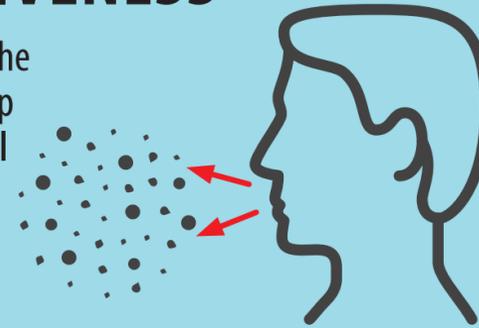


**Keep your mask clean.** Wash your cloth mask whenever it gets dirty or at least daily. Include your mask with your regular laundry. Use regular laundry detergent and the appropriate settings according to the fabric label.



## MASK EFFECTIVENESS

Many people infected with the COVID-19 virus never develop symptoms, but they may still transmit the disease. Others who become sick can transmit the disease before any symptoms begin.

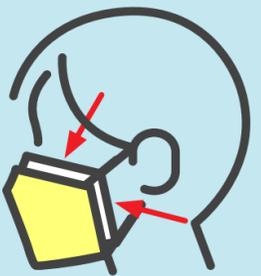


Masks are proven effective at protecting both the wearer and everyone around them. Combined with social distancing, masks offer the most effective method at slowing the spread.



## AVOID

**GAPS:** Your mask should fit snugly but not so tight that it impairs your breathing. The idea is to trap your droplets inside the mask and to not let them seep out the sides of the mask. This is why it is so important to wear it over your nose and mouth as they produce the droplets.



**VALVES:** Do not use masks with exhalation valves. The valve makes it easier to breathe out, but it also releases your droplets into the air, so it doesn't protect others if you're contagious. Protecting others is the primary reason to wear a mask.



Children under 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the masks without help should **NOT** use cloth face coverings.

**Remember, face coverings should cover both the nose and mouth and fit snugly but comfortably against the sides of the face.**

**Test your mask fabric by holding it up to the light.** If you can easily see the outline of the individual fibers, it's not going to make a great filter.



ORANGE COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

[www.orangecountync.gov/Masks](http://www.orangecountync.gov/Masks)