Jefferson County Health Department

1541 Annex Road ♦ Jefferson, WI 53549
920-674-7275 (Phone) ♦ 920-674-7477 (FAX)
www.jeffersoncountywi.gov
covid19@jeffersoncountywi.gov for COVID-19 Questions

April 8, 2020
A Message from the Director/Health Officer

Guidance on Wearing Cloth Face Covers

Recently the State Department of Health Services released updated guidance on wearing cloth face covers during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This guidance should help answer some common questions that you may have regarding if, and when, you should wear a cloth face cover. Please note, cloth face covers are **not** a substitute for physical distancing and handwashing.

Guidance:
Our best defense against COVID-19 is washing our hands frequently, avoiding touching our eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands, avoiding being around sick people and physical distancing, especially by staying at home. A strong health care delivery system and emergency response system is also an essential core defense to save lives when people do get ill.

There may be a benefit to reducing asymptomatic transmission and reinforcing physical distancing from the use of face covers. However, face coverings may increase risk if users reduce their use of strong defenses, such as physical distancing and frequent hand washing, when using cloth face coverings.

What is a cloth face cover?
A cloth face cover is material that covers the nose and mouth while being secured to the head with ties, straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. These coverings can be made by a variety of materials.

When should I wear a cloth face cover?
- ✓ You should wear a cloth face cover when you are outside the home conducting essential activities such as going to work, to the grocery store, pharmacy, banking and enjoying outdoor activities while maintaining physical distancing.

- ✓ If you are sick (have a cough or are sneezing) or have seasonal allergies you need to wear a cloth face cover when around other people to protect them from your sneezes.

- ✓ Wearing a cloth face cover may be beneficial as it may help to protect others from germs you may be spreading without knowing it. Using a cloth face cover is preferable because that allows more surgical masks and respirators to be used by health care providers and other first responders.

How effective are cloth face coverings at preventing the spread of the virus?
There is limited evidence to suggest that use of cloth face coverings by the public during a pandemic could help reduce disease transmission. Their primary role is to reduce the release of infectious particles into the air when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes, including someone who has COVID-19 but feels well. Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing and washing hands and staying home when ill, but they may be helpful when combined with these primary interventions.

How should I wear a cloth face covering?
To wear a cloth face covering, keep these things in mind:
- ✓ Before putting on a cloth face covering, clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- ✓ Make sure your cloth face covering covers your mouth and nose with no gaps between your face and the cloth face covering.
- ✓ Do not touch your cloth face covering while wearing it; if you do, clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- ✓ Replace the cloth face covering with a new one as soon as it is damp.
- ✓ Always wear your cloth reusable face covering with the same side facing outwards.
- ✓ Keep in mind that a cloth face covering does not provide full protection. Therefore, remember to continue to do the following:
- ✓ Clean your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- ✓ Continue staying at least 6 feet away from other people.
- ✓ Continue following the recommendations for social distancing: avoid crowds, stay at home as much as possible, and just leave for essential tasks (e.g. work, grocery shopping, going to the doctor, getting medications).

How should I clean my cloth face covering?
It's a good idea to wash your cloth face covering frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily. Have a bag or bin to keep cloth face coverings in until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face.

How can I get a cloth face covering?
If you need a cloth face covering but do not have access to one, you may be able to make your own cloth face covering by sewing one. There is no standard design for homemade cloth face coverings, but there are many patterns and instructions online from hospitals and other organizations.

If making your own cloth face covering, keep the following in mind:
- ✓ Build a cloth face covering that tightly encloses the area around the nose and mouth, from the bridge of the nose down to the chin, and extending onto the cheek beyond the corners of the mouth, so no gaps occur when talking or moving.
- ✓ Use cloth face covering material that is tightly woven but breathable. Possibly double-layer the fabric.
- ✓ Cloth face coverings must be made from washable fabric.

- ✓ Choose a fabric that can handle high temperatures and bleach without shrinking or otherwise deforming.
- ✓ The cloth face covering should be tolerant of expected amounts of moisture from breathing.

Suggested materials - outer layer tea cloth, inner layer of a microfleece to wick away moisture, and an inner tea cloth layer. Use an accordion fold to mimic a hospital cloth face covering as much as possible and use a fat woven shoelace type material to bind the sides (such as quilt binding). For straps, use elastic straps that loop behind the ears.

Online instructions and patterns:

Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin: Hand-Sewn Mask Instructions

MakeFaceMasks: https://makefacemasks.com/

The Turban Project: https://turbanproject.com/patterns

SewGoodGoods.org: https://www.sewgoodgoods.org/face-mask-covid-19

Deaconess Health System: How to and a video

Providence Health System: How to and video

YouTube: How to sew a simple Fabric Face Mask

Allina Health: How to make a facemask

Joan Glass: Face Mask Directions

Facemask: A picture tutorial

DIY: Cloth Face Mask

Gail Scott, RN, BSN, Director/Health Officer