What mask should I wear?

Experts recommend upgrading your mask for optimal protection

No mask or improper use

- Masks should fit over your nose and mouth and be snug against your face with no gaps.
- Don’t use masks that are damp, dirty or damaged.
- Don’t wear masks with exhalation valves, which allow virus particles to escape.

Cloth masks

- Washable and reusable.
- Masks should be washed at least once a day or as soon as they become dirty.
- Multiple layers of woven, breathable fabric.

Surgical masks

- Disposable, intended for one-time use.
- Multiple layers of non-woven material.
- Provides protection against large droplets.

High-filtration masks

- Varies by mask type, but reusable up to 5 times with proper care.
- Filters up to 95% of particles in the air.
- Seals tightly to the face when fitted properly (some facial hair can interfere with the seal).
- Designed and regulated to meet international standards.
- Check lists of trusted manufacturers from the CDC and Project N95 to avoid counterfeit masks.

If you don’t have access to a high-filtration respirator mask (N95, KN95, KF94), double up.

Single-layer masks, such as bandanas and gaiters, are less effective, so wear a cloth mask with multiple layers over a surgical mask. Be sure your mask fits properly — nose wires improve fit.

Find trusted manufacturers of high-filtration masks at www.ProjectN95.com and www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/respirators/testing/NonNIOSHresults.html