

Community Use of Cloth Masks

The CDC recommends community use of masks, specifically non-valved, multi-layer, cloth masks to prevent transmission of SARS-CoV-2.

SARS-CoV-2 infection is transmitted predominantly by **respiratory droplets** generated when people

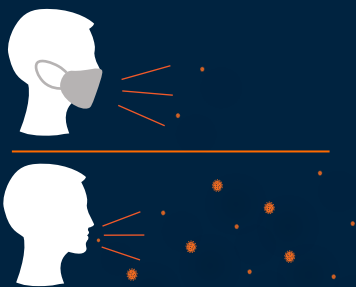


Cloth masks:

Block most large droplets (≥ 20 microns)

Can block fine droplets (≤ 10 microns)

Limits forward spread of droplets not captured



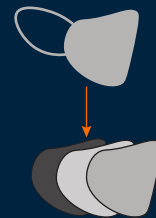
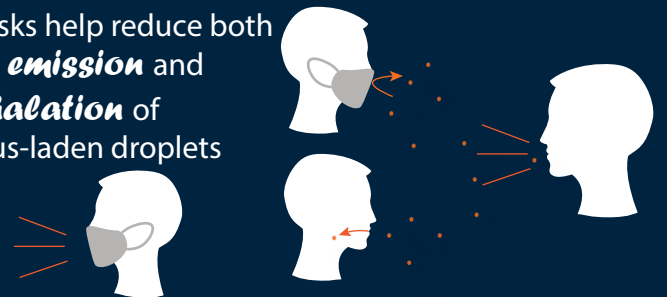
More than

50%



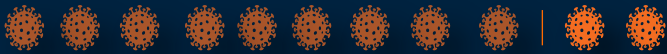
of transmissions are from **asymptomatic** or **pre-symptomatic** individuals who feel well and may be unaware they are infectious

Masks help reduce both the **emission** and **inhalation** of virus-laden droplets

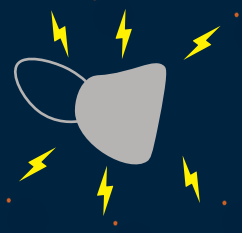


Multiple layers of cloth with higher thread counts have demonstrated superior performance compared to single layers of cloth with lower thread counts

Over **80%** blockage of all respiratory droplets has been measured with the use of **cloth masks**, in some studies being on par with surgical masks as barriers for source control



Some materials such as **polypropylene** may enhance filtering effectiveness by generating triboelectric charge (a form of static electricity) that enhances capture of charged particles



Some materials such as **silk** may help repel moist droplets and reduce fabric wetting and thus maintain breathability and comfort



The community benefit of masking for SARS-CoV-2 control is due to a combination of the above information



Individual prevention benefit increases with increasing numbers of people using masks consistently and correctly



Bottom line: **mask up!**

