

# Using face masks

Most people will not benefit from wearing a surgical mask. Masks will benefit people who are sick because they do not cough or sneeze on others, or to healthcare workers looking after sick patients.

#### If you have been asked to wear a surgical mask:

- Clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water before you put on your mask.
- Cover your mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Avoid touching the front of the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
- Cloth masks or homemade masks are not recommended under any circumstances.
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind (do not touch the front of the mask); throw it in the bin immediately.
- Clean hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash your hands with soap and water.

Cloth masks are not recommended as they retain moisture and can be a breeding ground for bacteria and viruses due to its warm environment caused by the person breathing.

You can see a picture and a video on how to put on and take off a mask if you click these links:

[How to wear a medical mask safely](#)

[Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Advice for the Public. When and How to Use Masks.](#)

#### Reference

Australian Government. Department of Health. 2020. [Information on the use of surgical masks. Should I wear a surgical mask?](#)

World Health Organisation. 2020. [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Advice for the Public. When and How to Use Masks.](#)