



## Ministry of Health

### Interim guidance for public use of face masks to reduce droplet transmission for COVID 19 10<sup>th</sup> April 2020

As the COVID-19 continues to spread across the country, new cases among locals without history of travel are increasingly being recorded. This means that there is an ongoing local transmission. As the COVID-19 situation evolves, recent studies have shown that significant portion of individuals with coronavirus lack symptoms (“asymptomatic”) and that even those who eventually develop symptoms (“pre-symptomatic”) can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in proximity (for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing) even if those people are not showing symptoms. Therefore, it is important to implement measures across board for those tested positive and those who may have the virus and not yet showing any symptoms (asymptomatic).

#### MoH guidance to the public

The Kenya Ministry of Health continues to offer guidance based on available evidence both locally and internationally. Considering the new evidence (asymptomatic people transmitting coronavirus), Kenya Ministry of Health recommends wearing of face masks or cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g. supermarkets, shops, markets, matatu, buses, boda boda). These masks will prevent the droplets from spreading further and thus protecting others.

The government has engaged local manufacturers to ensure that the masks are available at low costs and of good quality. It is also possible to make a simple mask at home using available materials. The following guidance applies:

- **Fabric:** Double layer of 100% cotton cloth, this is breathable and easy to use for making a mask at home.
- **Size:** The pieces should be at least 10”by 6” to adequately cover the nose and mouth
- **Packaging:** The masks should be packaged for single users and distributed from authorized distribution points to safeguard hygiene, safety and quality
- **Use:** The masks will be for each individual and should not be tried on for fit and returned or shared at any one point.

- **Cleaning:** These cloth masks will be re-usable and washable daily using hot water and soap.
- One will need to always wash hands before and after handling their mask.
- The medical masks (surgical and N-95) **SHOULD NOT** be used by the general public but preserved for health workers.
- Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current MoH guidance.
- Cloth face masks should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Maintaining 6-foot social distancing remains important to slowing the spread of the virus as well as hand washing/use of sanitizers for hand hygiene.

### **General information on Mask Use**

Masks are effective only when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water. If you wear a mask, then you must know how to use it and dispose of it properly.

- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the face masks.
- The masks should
  - Fit snugly, mask should fit your face well and there are no gaps on the sides
  - be secured with ties or ear loops
  - allow for breathing without restriction
  - be able to be laundered and dried without damage or change to shape
- Avoid touching the inside of the face masks.
- Replace masks as soon as they become damp with a clean, dry mask.
- You must never reverse the mask for reuse.
- **Disposable masks should not be washed and re-used.**

## How to Safely Wear a Mask

1. Wash your hands with soap and running water or use a hand sanitizer
2. Select appropriate type and size
3. Tie the upper strap first followed by the lower strap
4. Inspect for nonconformities
5. Place over nose, mouth and chin
6. Fit flexible nose piece over nose bridge
7. Secure mask with ties or elastic as shown on the picture
8. Adjust to fit snugly
9. Wash your hands with soap and running water or use a hand sanitizer



Step 3



Step 8

## How does one safely remove a used cloth face covering?

- Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately after removing the face mask.
- Never reverse the mask for reuse. Always thoroughly wash masks in hot soapy water
- Visually inspect the Cloth face masks to determine if its integrity has been compromised after washing
- Check that components such as the straps, and nose lining, material did not degrade, which can affect the quality of the Cloth face masks.

## How to Safely Remove a Mask

1. Wash your hands with soap and running water or use a hand sanitizer
2. Untie the bottom, then top tie
3. Remove from face without touching the front of the mask
4. Discard in a specific closed bin for single use masks or if reusable drop in a bucket with hot water and soap, wash and dry in the sun for approximately 5 hours.
5. Wash your hands with soap and running water or use a hand sanitizer



Step 2



Step 4

### Important Precautions

| Before using the handmade mask   | When removing the mask   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Thoroughly wash and clean the mask (as shown in next page) before wearing it.</li> <li>✓ Wash your hands thoroughly before wearing the mask.</li> <li>✓ As soon as the mask becomes damp or humid, switch to another mask and clean the used mask.</li> <li>✓ Never reuse a mask after single use without cleaning it.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not touch the front or any other surface of the mask, remove it only by untying the strings behind</li> <li>• Always untie the string below and then the string above</li> <li>• After removal, immediately clean your hands with 70% alcohol-based hand sanitizer or with soap and water for 40 seconds</li> <li>• Wash and sanitize this mask after every single use</li> <li>• Drop it directly into a soap solution or boiling water to which salt has been added</li> </ul> |



## Ministry of Health

### Ministry of Health Guidance on Use of Gloves in Public Places

#### Interim Guidance 10<sup>th</sup> April 2020

While the intentions of wearing gloves in public places like supermarkets and public transport, are good, use of gloves in public places to prevent transmission of COVID-19 virus has not been proven to be useful, therefore, it is not recommended. Covid-19 can attach to gloves the same way they attach to hands. The most useful thing to do is to clean hands frequently especially when one suspects their hands are contaminated (dirty) for example after touching surfaces, even if they are not physically dirty. Avoid touching your face **Proper glove use is key**

Over-reliance on gloves can lead to complacency and not washing hands frequently. Wearing gloves can give users a false sense of security and leads to wearing disposable gloves beyond their intended single use. Hand can also get contaminated while removing gloves, therefore washing of hands is essential after removing gloves. **Gloves can give a false sense of security.**

Wearing of gloves throughout could lead to disastrous outcomes with transmission of many other infections that may be acquired by touching self, items or surfaces with dirty gloves. The risk of one touching their face with dirty gloves is high given that research finds that unintentional face touching occurs up to an average 25 times with an hour. Gloves can be torn easily and may go unnoticed or they may have tiny holes which compromises their integrity and the protection intended by the one wearing, thereby placing the person at risk.

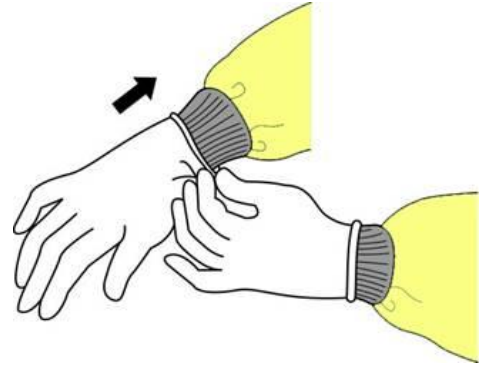
#### **Not touching anything? No need for gloves**

If you're are walking and staying at least 6 feet from people, there's no need to wear gloves. Gloves must not be treated as an alternative to cleaning of hands using soap and running water, or alcohol based sanitizer. Gloves cannot be re-used or washed. Wash hands with soap and running water or sanitize hand with alcohol-based hand rub following the right technique and for correct length of time, particularly after visiting the supermarket, pharmacy or have been on public transport. When one is engaged with activities considered high risk for contamination of hands e.g. handling money, gloves should be changed hourly with hand washing performed before and after removing gloves. If gloves are not in use, they should sanitize their hands with alcohol-based hand rub more frequently and with soap and running water every half an hour and avoid touching eyes, mouth and nose.

**Wearing disposable gloves in public is not recommended for daily use. Gloves must not be treated as an alternative to cleaning of hands using soap and running water, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.**

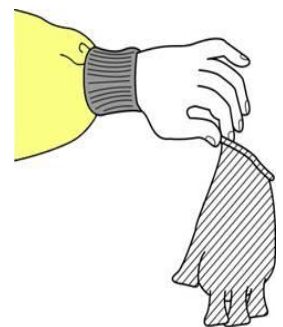
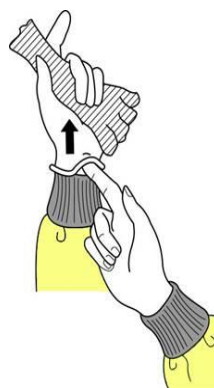
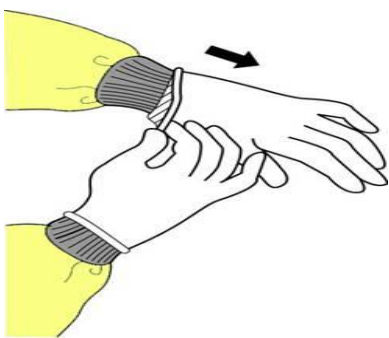
## How to Wear Gloves

1. Wash your hands with soap and running water or hand sanitizer
2. Select appropriate type and size
3. Inspect for nonconformities
4. Insert hands into gloves
5. Extend gloves over long sleeve clothing



## How to Remove Gloves

1. Grasp outside edge near wrist
2. Peel away from hand, turning glove inside-out
3. Hold in opposite gloved hand
4. Slide ungloved finger under the wrist of the remaining glove
5. Peel off from inside, creating a bag for both gloves
6. Discard appropriately in a designated foot operated bin
7. Wash your hands with soap and running water or hand sanitizer



## References

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