Guidance on use of Personal Facemask (surgical mask or cloth facemask)

Social distancing is still the key to slowing the virus. The CDC has advised all Americans to wear cloth masks in public. A cloth facemask or surgical mask is a recommendation when you are on campus.

This document provides general instructions on the use of a face mask or surgical mask on campus (in non-healthcare applications) and includes sections on donning, doffing, storage, re-use and cleaning.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

• Personal masks must fit tightly and enclose nose and mouth. Mask may be secured either around the ears or behind the head.
• Facemask materials should be constructed of materials that can catch water droplets, such as a fine mesh material. Damaged (holes) or porous materials are inappropriate. Scarfs are not acceptable for this use.
• Facemasks should be removed and washed if soiled, or discarded if damaged or hard to breathe through.

DONNING (putting on the mask)

1. Face Mask with Ties:
   • Using the thumb and forefingers of each hand, locate the center of the mask while feeling the nose wire. Gently form (do not pinch) the nose wire into a U shape.
   • Place the formed nose wire over the bridge of the nose so it extends across the upper cheekbones, and form the nose wire across the face using both hands.
   • While holding the mask in place with one hand, grasp the bottom of the mask, separating the fold(s), and fit the bottom of the mask under the chin towards the neck.
   • Grasp the top ties (one in each hand) and pull to the crown of the head. Tie the upper ties snugly so the mask is secure and does not slip down the face.
   • Grasp the lower ties (one in each hand) and pull behind the neck. Tie the lower ties snugly and securely so the mask will not ride up the face.
   • With both hands gently reform the nose wire over the nose and cheekbones. This will ensure a proper and secure fit.

2. Face Mask with Ear Loops
   • Hold the mask by the ear loops. Place a loop around each ear with mask covering the nose and mouth.
   • Separate any folds in the mask by pulling down toward the chin/neck.

3. Face Mask with Bands (around head)
   • Hold the mask in your hand with the nosepiece on top of the mask at fingertips, allowing the headbands to hang freely below hands.
   • Bring the mask to your nose level and pull the top strap over your head so that it rests over the crown of your head.
   • Pull the bottom strap over your head so that it rests at the nape of your neck.
**DOFFING** (removing the mask)

Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching the mask. Avoid touching the front of the mask. The front of the mask is potentially contaminated. Only touch the ear loops/ties/band. Follow the instructions below for the type of mask you are using and then repeat washing your hands.

1. **Face Mask with Ties:**
   - Untie the bottom bow first, then untie the top bow and pull the mask away from you as the ties are loosened.
   - Carefully fold the mask so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage.

2. **Face Mask with Ear Loops:**
   - Hold both of the ear loops and gently lift and remove the mask.
   - Carefully fold the mask so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage.

3. **Face Mask with Bands:**
   - Lift the bottom strap over your head first, then pull the top strap over your head.
   - If you are doffing your mask for lunch or any other reason, carefully untie (do not break the ties) or unhook the straps.
   - Carefully fold the mask so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage.

**STORAGE**

Store folded mask between uses in a clean paper or ziplock bag. Long-term storage of a moist facemask in a plastic/ziplock bag can result in mildew growth.

**RE-USE**

- Cloth facemasks can be re-used but should be washed and dried between shifts.
- Not all facemasks can be re-used.
  - Facemasks that fasten via ties may not be able to be undone without tearing and should be considered only for extended use rather than re-use. If you are able to untie and remove the mask without damaging it, the mask may be re-used.
  - Facemasks with elastic ear hooks may be more suitable for re-use.

**WASHING/DISINFECTION**

- Cloth facemasks should be cleaned based on the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Surgical masks cannot be disinfected with chemical wipes.