

# Using a facemask



***First issued 8th April 2020***

***This is advice based that given by the World Health Organisation on the use of facemasks***

## ***Should I wear a mask to protect myself?***

Only wear a mask if you are ill with COVID-19 symptoms (especially coughing) or looking after someone who may have COVID-19. A disposable face mask can only be used once. Note: this means that if it is removed for any reason, e.g. to eat or drink, the mask should be disposed of and, if required, a new mask should then be used (following the full hand hygiene procedure before handling and fitting it). If you are not ill or looking after someone who is ill then you are wasting a mask. There is a world-wide shortage of masks, so WHO urges people to use masks wisely.

The most effective ways to protect yourself and others against COVID-19 are to frequently clean your hands, cover your cough with the bend of elbow or tissue and maintain a distance, at all times, of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from anyone not living in the same household.

## ***How do I put on, use, take off and dispose of a mask?***

***It is vitally important that you follow the correct procedure for using a mask, or there may be no benefit from using one.***

- Remember, a mask should only be used by health workers, carers, and individuals with respiratory symptoms, such as fever and cough.
- Before touching the mask, clean hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Take the mask and inspect it for tears or holes.
- Orient which side is the top side (where the metal strip is).
- Ensure the proper side of the mask faces outwards (the coloured side).
- Place the mask to your face. Pinch the metal strip or stiff edge of the mask so it moulds to the shape of your nose.
- Pull down the mask's bottom so it covers your mouth and your chin.
- After use, take off the mask; remove the elastic loops from behind the ears while keeping the mask away from your face and clothes, to avoid touching potentially contaminated surfaces of the mask.
- Discard the mask in a closed bin immediately after use. The Government advises is that facemasks or other protective equipment should be double bagged and left for 72 hours before disposing with normal household waste.
- Perform hand hygiene after touching or discarding the mask – You can use alcohol-based hand rub but, if visibly soiled, you should wash your hands with soap and water.

# Best Practice—how to hand wash

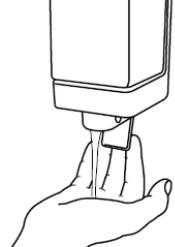
Steps 3-8 should take at least 15 seconds.

1



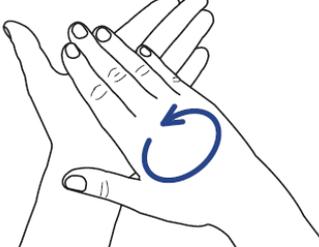
Wet hands with water.

2



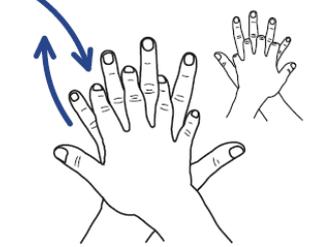
Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces.

3



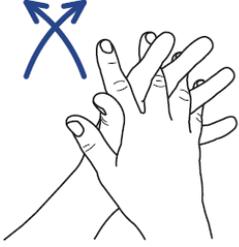
Rub hands palm to palm.

4



Right palm over the back of the other hand with interlaced fingers and vice versa.

5



Palm to palm with fingers interlaced.

6



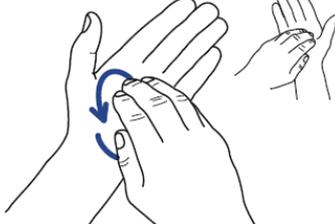
Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.

7



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa.

8



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.

9



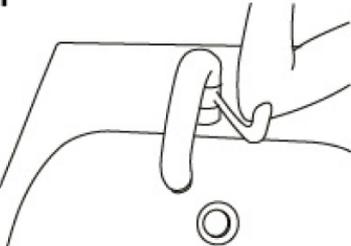
Rinse hands with water.

10



Dry thoroughly with towel.

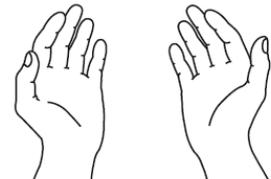
11



Use elbow to turn off tap.

12

⌚ Steps 3-8 should take at least 15 seconds.



...and your hands are safe\*.

\*Any skin complaints should be referred to local occupational health or GP.