

News Column

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Some Guidance for Face Masks

Will a facemask really help keep me from getting sick? There is evidence that shows that some people with coronavirus do not have symptoms and they could pass the virus to others. To slow the spread of COVID-19, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment recommends that we do cover our face before we go out in public.

Very early in this event, I saw a video of a young lady from I think Romania and her story was “I wear a mask to protect you from me and you wear a mask to protect me from you”. This is not normal for America but we may have to change our ways. Wearing a mask is definitely better than no protection at all.

Even if you do wear a mask, you must also continue to practice social distancing, wash your hands and stay at home. These are still the best ways to slow the spread of the virus. If you are looking for the best information about facemasks, start at KDHE and CDC.gov and there is also a very good article on Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics website about Children and Masks.

When choosing or making a homemade mask follow these guidelines that spell M-A-S-K. M is Multi-layered tightly woven 100% cotton fabric with a thread count of 180+. Sheets and pillowcases are rated with a thread count. A is Avoid your face. Never touch the front of the mask. Always remove it from the back of your head. S is for Scrap it if it is damaged, soiled or doesn't fit. Your mask should be breathable and fit snug against your face. Do not use damp, wet

or dirty masks. K is for Keep it Clean. The mask and your hands! Wash your hands before putting your mask on and after you take it off. Use a clean mask each time you wear one. Masks can be washed in the washing machine and dried in the dryer or placed in the sun to dry.

I have tried out seven patterns that I have found on the internet. There are so many different versions and some believe that elastic loops around the ears are great and others say to use a shoestring or another kind of tie to pull to the back of your head. If you have questions, feel free to email me at bunruh@ksu.edu and I'll be glad to share what I have learned about making homemade masks.

https://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/toolkit/Kansas_Homemade_Mask_Guidance.pdf

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