



**NEVADA  
HEALTH  
RESPONSE**

**Nevada Medical Advisory Team:**  
**Guidance on Improvised Facial Coverings**  
**April 3, 2020**

**Summary:** As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our health care systems, both nationally and right here in Nevada, it has become increasingly important to slow the spread. In response to this, the State's medical experts have weighed in to provide everyone with information on how to both protect ourselves and others with improvised masks. Keep in mind, FDA regulated PPE is currently in short supply and should be reserved for those working on the front line to combat this disease. They need it constantly and more than we do. However, there are several alternatives to protecting yourself. Below is some general guidance on the why, who, where and when, what, and how, on face coverings.

**Why should we wear a face covering?:** Although research is still being conducted on whether improvised face coverings can stop the contraction of the disease, it's been established that even improvised homemade face coverings can reduce the spread of the virus from infected individuals. Some people who are infected don't show any symptoms at all and by wearing a face covering they can reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

**Who else should wear an improvised face covering?:** This virus can impact everyone, regardless of your age or gender. Many of those who've contracted the virus may be asymptomatic, so it's critical we all take precautions to limit the spread. No matter how tough you think you are, COVID-19 doesn't care. It can impact even the strongest of us.

### **When and where should I wear an improvised face covering?:**

Nevadans who wish to utilize some type of precautionary measure are encouraged to use an improvised face covering whenever they leave their residence to obtain any essential good or service.

**What improvised face covering should I wear?:** Whatever one works and fits best for you, based on a few design principles provided by our knowledgeable medical team. To assist you in that, they've provided some basic design principles, ideas, and information on caring for your new face covering.

### **What are the basic design principles for an improvised face covering?:**

Here's a list of the basic design principles you should follow:

- 1) When creating an improvised face covering, make sure it fits snugly around the nose and mouth, from the nose to the chin, and all the way to the cheeks past the corners of your mouth. There should be no openings.
- 2) Use breathable, but tightly woven fabric.
- 3) The material should be washable, so you can reuse the face covering. You'll want to wash it thoroughly after use.
- 4) Tough fabric is the best. When you wash it, you'll want to use high temperatures and a cleaning product – preferably bleach – so the material will need to hold up.
- 5) You're going to be breathing through the material, so it should be able to handle the amount of moisture you produce when breathing.
- 6) Make sure it's securely fastened behind your ears. Elastic typically works, especially when it's looped behind the ears.
- 7) Always remember a few key things about your alternate or improvised face covering:
  - a) The face covering should always be properly put on and taken off to avoid self-contamination – avoid touching the front of the face covering

- b) Change out your face covering and wash it when it becomes saturated from breathing into it, or if you think you might have been in a contaminated situation
- c) Don't share! Even with members of your household!!! Keep them separated, clearly labeled, and in separate containers.

**How do I care for my improvised face covering?:** Wash your face covering often. It is recommended that you wash in between uses in hot water – regular laundry detergent works great – and always dry completely on the hottest setting possible.

**How do I make an improvised face covering?:** Although there is no standard design for a homemade face covering, check out the links below for design considerations. Also remember, innovation using the design principles above is encouraged.

**Example Designs to get you started:**

- <https://vimeo.com/399324367/13cd93f150>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xN0HH2Zb2hY>
- <https://www.allinahealth.org/-/media/allina-health/files/mask-sewing-how-to.pdf>
- <https://www.leadingagewa.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/296/2020/02/Instructions.pdf>
- <https://buttoncounter.com/2018/01/14/facemask-a-picture-tutorial/>
- <https://smartairfilters.com/en/blog/best-materials-make-diy-face-mask-virus/>
- <https://www.instructables.com/id/DIY-Cloth-Face-Mask/>