



Face masks:

Guidance for communities

- Community guidance on face mask use should primarily follow known country guidance. Guidance may vary depending on the availability of masks and case information in country.
- The use of a mask alone will not protect community members from COVID-19 transmission. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, community members should do the following:
 - Follow country specific guidance
 - If sick, stay home and isolate if possible. Ensuring that the sick person has access to food and water.
 - If sick, also call a health facility in your area to discuss symptoms, tests, and treatment of symptoms, if possible.
 - Try to maintain a distance of at least one meter when in public and/or avoid crowds.
 - Sneeze and cough into your elbow or another shield (use proper respiratory hygiene.)
 - Wash hands often with soap and water OR hand rub with hand sanitizer.
- Community members should not use medical masks, these should be left for medical professionals.
- Cloth masks can be made at home out of a T-shirt or other cloth. When wearing face masks community members should:
 - Adhere to other COVID-19 guidelines, such as keeping a distance of at least one meter.
 - Make sure the mask covers nose and mouth, with no gaps. However, the person should still be able to breath
 - Avoid touching the masks while wearing it
 - Remove the masks from the back of the head to avoid touching of the face
 - Dispose of single use masks
 - Whenever a person plans to remove the mask, they should first wash their hands
 - Masks that are cloth and can be re-used should be washed in soap and water. Then left to dry before using again.
- Masks are most useful for those that are sick, as they prevent the spread of droplets when coughing.
- Masks should be worn by caregivers of those that are sick.