



We can protect ourselves and others by using masks and respirators to help prevent the spread of infectious disease like the flu, COVID-19 and other illnesses. This fact sheet provides a quick reference on masks and respirators and the most appropriate way to use them, and information that's important to consider about when to use them.

### Types of masks or respirators

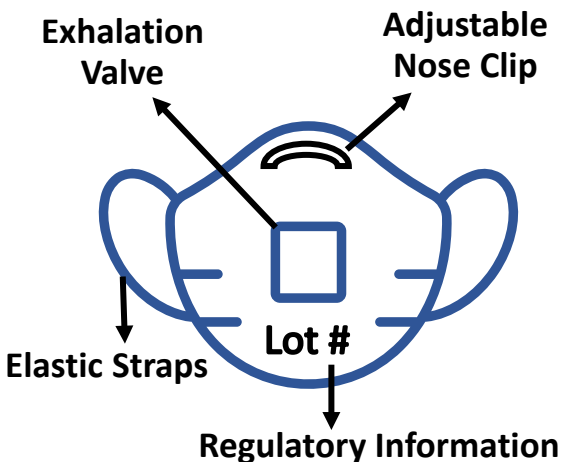
When choosing respiratory protection, you should use protection that best suits your level of risk. You may need to consider cost and activity, but the priority is to keep yourself protected for as long as you need protection.

**Remember: Any mask is better than no mask!** And in some cases, your work may require that you use a certain type of mask or respirator.



Disposable Mask	Cloth Mask	Medical Mask	Respirator (Non-NIOSH Certified)	Respirator (NIOSH Certified)
<p><b>Goal:</b> Limit the spread of the virus.</p> <p>Limited filtration capacity.</p> <p>Manufacturing is not regulated.</p> <p><b>It is thrown out after 1 use.</b></p>	<p><b>Goal:</b> Limit the spread of the virus.</p> <p>Limited filtration capacity.</p> <p>Manufacturing is not regulated.</p> <p><b>It can be reused unless broken or dirty.</b></p>	<p><b>Goal:</b> Limit the spread of the virus.</p> <p>Medium filtration capacity.</p> <p>Manufacturing based on ASTM standards.</p> <p>Example: Surgical Mask.</p> <p><b>It is thrown out after 1 use.</b></p>	<p><b>Goal:</b> Protect the person wearing it.</p> <p>High filtration capacity.</p> <p>Manufacturing based on other jurisdictions standards.</p> <p>Example: Disposable KN95.</p> <p><b>Extended use is possible.</b></p>	<p><b>Goal:</b> Protect the person wearing it.</p> <p>High filtration capacity.</p> <p>Manufacturing based on NIOSH standards.</p> <p>Example: Disposable N95.</p> <p><b>Extended use is possible.</b></p>

### RESPIRATOR AND MASK PARTS



All respirators and masks should have an elastic or adjustable straps and an adjustable nose clip. Some respirators may have exhalation valves.

Respirators also have regulatory information on the front that includes the number indicating efficiency (N95, N99, N100, R95, R99, R100, P95, P99, P100), lot number, approval number (starts with the letters TC) and the letters "NIOSH".

When your workplace requires you to use a respirator, you must be fitted. But you can still use a respirator without being fitted.



## MASK USE

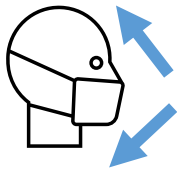
The use of respiratory protection is divided into five main steps: **inspection, donning, use, removal, and storage.**



**1** Inspect your mask and verify that it is not torn, stretched or dirty.



**2** Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. Hold the mask by the strips and place it over the nose and mouth.



**3** Always keep the mask on your nose and mouth. Avoid touching it and remove it completely when eating or drinking.



**4** Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. Hold the mask by the strips and remove it.



**5** Single-use masks must be discarded. Cloth masks should be washed with soap and water and dried. Respirators can be reused by storing them in paper bags and alternating them with others.

## When is it safe to stop wearing respiratory protection?

We have made lots of progress since the start of COVID-19. Vaccines are our best source of protection. But mask and respirators are still needed in many situations to protect ourselves and others. Assessing our exposure risk can help us decide to use a mask or a respirator. This figure below shows some things to think about when selecting what type of mask or respirator to use if you are fully vaccinated.

