



衛生防護中心  
Centre for Health Protection

## Infection Control Branch

### Use Mask Properly

Face mask provides a physical barrier to fluids and large particle droplets. Surgical mask is a type of face mask commonly used. When used properly, surgical masks can prevent infections transmitted by respiratory droplets.

2. People should wear a surgical mask when they have respiratory infection; when taking care of patient with respiratory infection; or when visiting clinics or hospitals during pandemic or peak season for influenza in order to reduce the spread of infection.

3. Masks with exhalation valve or vents which allow exhaling air to escape should not be used due to the fact that exhaled air are unfiltered and may pose a risk to surrounding people if the wearer is infected with COVID-19 or other respiratory infectious diseases.

#### Points to note on wearing a surgical mask:

- (a) Choose the appropriate mask size. Child size is available for selection as indicated.
- (b) For safety reasons, mask-wearing is not recommended for
  - children below age of 2 without supervision.
  - people with difficulty breathing.
  - people need assistance to remove the mask.
- (c) Perform hand hygiene before putting on a surgical mask.
- (d) The surgical mask should fit snugly over the face:

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- (i) Most surgical masks adopt a three-layer design (Annex I) which includes an outer fluid-repelling layer, a middle layer serves as a barrier to germs, and an inner moisture-absorbing layer. Mask without the above-mentioned three-layer features is not recommended as it cannot provide adequate protection against infectious diseases transmitted by respiratory droplets. Wearer should follow the manufacturers' recommendations when using surgical mask, including proper storage and procedures of putting on surgical mask (e.g. determine which side of the mask is facing outwards). In general, the coloured side/the side with folds facing downwards of the surgical mask should face outwards with the metallic strip uppermost (**Image 1**).
- (ii) For tie-on surgical mask, secure upper ties at the crown of head. Then secure lower ties at the nape (**Image 2**). For ear-loops type, position the elastic bands around both ears.
- (iii) Extend the surgical mask to fully cover mouth, nose and chin (**Image 3**).
- (iv) Mould the metallic strip over nose bridge and the surgical mask should fit snugly over the face (**Image 4**).
- (e) Avoid touching the surgical mask after wearing. Otherwise, should perform hand hygiene before and after touching the mask.
- (f) When taking off tie-on surgical mask, unfasten the ties at the nape first; then unfasten the ties at the crown of head (**Image 5**). For ear-loops type, hold both the ear loops and take-off gently from face. Avoid touching the outside of surgical mask during taking-off as it may be covered with germs.
- (g) After taking off the surgical mask, discard in a lidded rubbish bin and perform hand hygiene immediately.
- (h) Change surgical mask timely. In general, surgical mask should not be reused. Replace the mask immediately if it is damaged or soiled.



**Image 1**

**Image 2**

**Image 3**

**Image 4**

**Image 5**

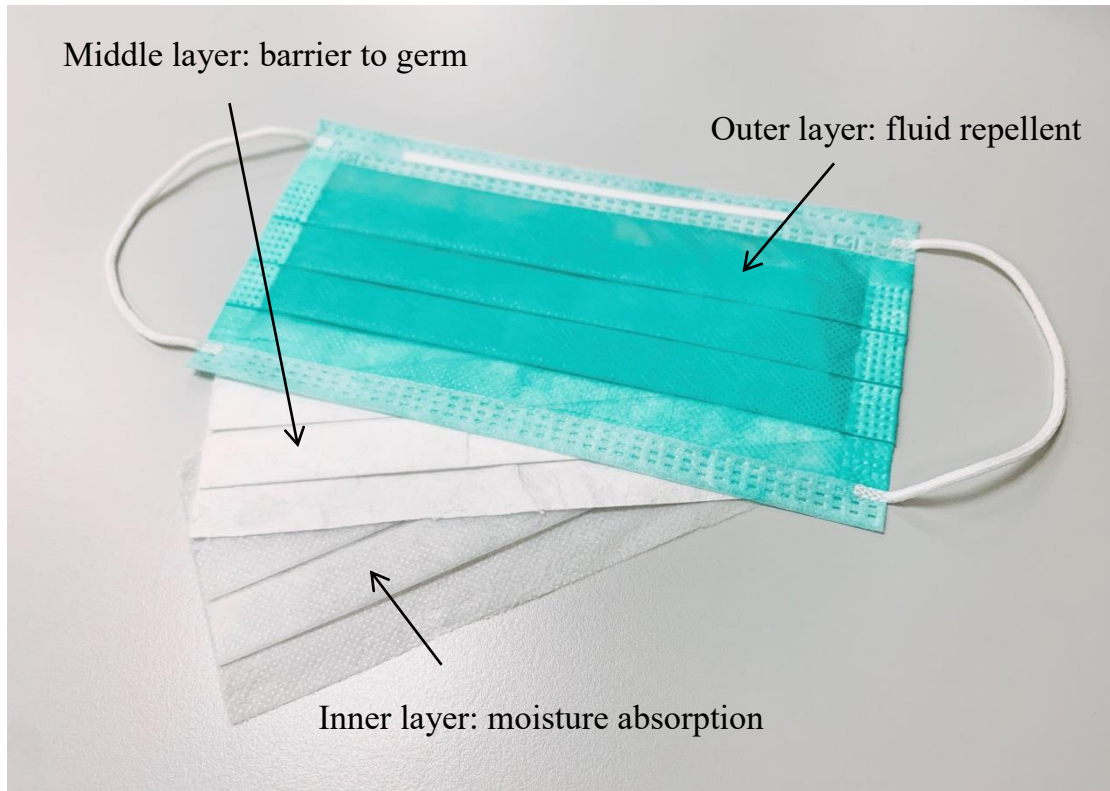
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### Illustration of Three-layer Design Surgical Mask



## **Recommendations on Use of Surgical Mask during Pandemic in the Community Setting**

During Pandemic, apart from using surgical mask properly, we should adopt the following preventive measures vigilantly to minimize the risk of getting infection:

- (a) Perform hand hygiene frequently and properly.
- (b) Perform hand hygiene before touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- (c) Maintain respiratory etiquette/cough manners (Picture below).
- (d) Stay at home if got sick and minimize contact with others.
- (e) Stay away from possible sources of infection:
  - (i) Minimize unnecessary social contacts and avoid visiting crowded places. If this is necessary, minimize the length of stay whenever possible. Moreover, person at a high risk of having infection-related complications, e.g. pregnant woman or persons with chronic illnesses are advised to wear surgical mask.
  - (ii) Avoid close contact with the infected persons.

# 咳嗽要講禮

## Maintain Cough Manners



打噴嚏或咳嗽時  
應掩著口鼻  
Cover your mouth  
and nose while  
coughing or  
sneezing

如出現呼吸道感  
染病徵，應佩戴  
口罩  
Wear a surgical  
mask when  
having respiratory  
symptoms

使用梘液和  
清水洗手  
Wash hands with  
soap and water

正確棄置  
已染污的紙巾  
Dispose of  
soiled tissue  
paper properly

