

YOUR GUIDE TO MASKS



VaccinateWestMI.com

The "go to" site for information on the COVID-19 vaccine.



CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings, at events and gatherings, and anywhere they will be around other people. Effective February 2, 2021, masks are required on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.

How to Select:

When wearing a mask, there are many options. Whatever type you choose, make sure to your nose is covered.

Do Choose masks that



Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric



Completely cover your nose and mouth



Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps



Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask



Wear a gaiter with two layers or fold it to make two layers

DO NOT choose masks that



Are made of fabric that make it hard to break, for example vinyl



Have exhalation valves or vents which allow virus particles to escape



Are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators



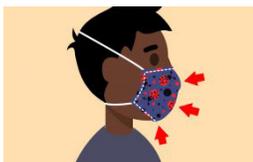
Make sure your nose is covered by the mask



NOT recommended: Evaluation of face shields is ongoing, but effectiveness is unknown at this time.



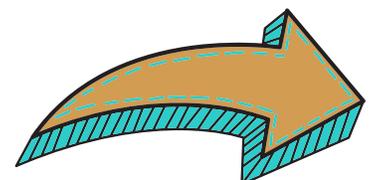
Find a mask that is mad for children to help ensure proper fit.



Check to be sure the mask fits snugly over the nose and mouth and under chin and that there are no gaps around the sides.



Do NOT put on children younger than 2 years old.



About Variants of the Virus that Causes COVID-19

Viruses constantly change through mutation, and new variants of a virus are expected to occur over time. Sometimes new variants emerge and disappear. Other times, new variants emerge and persist. Multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 have been documented in the United States and globally during this pandemic. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a type of coronavirus, a large family of viruses. Multiple variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 are circulating globally:

- The United Kingdom (UK) identified a variant called B.1.1.7. This variant spreads more easily and quickly than other variants. In January 2021, experts in the UK reported that this variant may be associated with an increased risk of death compared to other variant viruses, but more studies are needed to confirm this finding. It has since been detected in many countries around the world. This variant was first detected in the US at the end of December 2020.
- In South Africa, another variant called B.1.351 emerged independently of B.1.1.7. The B.1.351 variant shares some mutations with B.1.1.7. Cases caused by this variant have been reported in the US since the end of January 2021.
- In early January, a variant called P.1 was first identified in travelers from Brazil, who were tested during routine screening at an airport in Japan. This variant contains a set of additional mutations that may affect its ability to be recognized by antibodies. This variant was first detected in the US at the end of January 2021.

These variants seem to spread more easily and quickly than other variants, which may lead to more cases of COVID-19. An increase in the number of cases will put more strain on health care resources, lead to more hospitalizations, and potentially more deaths. So far, studies suggest vaccines in the U.S. from Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech, appear to offer good protection against the new variants mentioned above. What can you do to protect yourself? Stay vigilant and follow the recommendations below:

- Get the COVID-19 vaccine when you are eligible to receive it. [Visit VaccinateWestMi.com](https://www.vaccinatewestmi.com) for more information and to register if eligible.
- Stay 6 feet apart from others who don't live with you as much as possible.
- Wear a mask with at least two layers.
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- Avoid touching your face because the virus is transmitted through mucous membranes in the mouth, nose, and eyes.
- If you are sick, stay home and isolate yourself from others.
- If you have been told to quarantine by a health professional, please follow the guidelines. Quarantine helps prevent spread of the COVID-19 virus. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their local health Department.
- **For more information about variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 visit:**
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant.html>

Kent County Health Department

<https://accesskent.com/News/covid-19.htm>

To serve, protect and promote a healthy community for all.