

## **Local health officials recommend face masks in public settings**

### **Face masks can help slow the spread of COVID-19**

By Karen Moritz, Director

Wearing cloth face coverings in public settings, such as grocery stores and gas stations, where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain is recommended to slow the spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. People can spread COVID-19 even when they don't have symptoms and do not know they are infected. A cloth face covering is an extra layer to prevent the droplets from traveling in the air to other people.

“We encourage people to wear face masks in all public settings such as stores, salons, churches as well as restaurants when not eating or drinking,” said Karen Moritz, Brown County Public Health Director. “Wearing a mask is one of the best ways we can protect our vulnerable neighbors. Your mask protects others and their mask protects you.”

Face masks are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Minnesota Department of Public Health. To learn more about properly wearing face masks, visit the [CDC: How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings](#). Face masks should not be worn by children under 2 years of age. If you do not have a face mask you can make one. [CDC: How to Make a Cloth Face Mask](#)

In addition to wearing a face mask, practice other everyday health habits. Practice social distancing of staying at least 6 feet away from others, stay home when you are sick, cover your cough or sneeze, wash your hands often using 60% alcohol based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Symptoms of COVID-19 may include but are not limited to, Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, excessive tiredness, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Should you experience even one of the above symptoms please consult with your healthcare provider to identify if you should be tested for COVID - 19. Some of our local facilities have a drive up option and will screen you to determine if you are able to utilize drive up testing, or if you need medical consultation.

For the most up to date accurate information about COVID 19 please go to:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/>