

CHEM -SOP- 01	Revision #: 03	Implementation Date: Mar-2022	Last Reviewed/ Update: Mar-2022	Page #: 1 of 4
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## PROPER USE OF MEDICAL AND NON-MEDICAL FACE MASKS

Masks are required to be worn in all indoor University spaces.

**IMPORTANT:**

- **Non-medical face masks must not be used instead of medical-grade masks** (e.g. N95 or surgical masks) where required by EHS to either conduct research.
- To wear N95 you must be fit tested! Contact EHS and book an appointment.
- The use of cloth face masks is allowed when handling chemicals with the exception of handling **flammable and pyrophoric** chemicals  
If you are working with flammables and or pyrophoric chemicals, your cloth mask should have at least as high a flame resistance rating as your lab coat. For example, if your lab coat needs to be Nomex, your mask's outer layer should also be Nomex. **Chemistry is not providing this type of masks.** Please use the [General Laboratory PPE Assessment Tool](#) to determine what your lab coat material type should be and place a request for PPE Nomex masks, if appropriated via email to [ehs.ppe@utoronto.ca](mailto:ehs.ppe@utoronto.ca). Please use subject line: LAB PPE Needs Assessment – Division/Faculty name

**1. Purpose:** to provide detail instructions on how to wear face masks when entering common spaces (labs, office, group meeting rooms) and all the service units

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**2. Scope:** applies to everybody working at Lash Miller

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**3. Prerequisites:** Understanding of Social Distancing principles and COVID19 transmission (refer to Public Health Ontario for further information)

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4. **Responsibilities:** Principal investigators are responsible to facilitate the implementation of this SOP and lab-personnel are responsible to comply

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**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

**Face mask: must wear while sharing the space with others if deemed so by a risk assessment (physical distancing cannot be ensured). Face shield is optional**



6. **Procedure:**

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**NOTE:** Supervisors can solicit a risk assessment from EHS before deciding to implement the use of non-medical face masks.

### ***Appropriate use of medical mask***

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Medical masks are recommended for all employees, students, visitors and contractors in common use areas of University buildings.

Medical masks, also called surgical or procedural masks, should hold a rating of ASTM Level 2 or 3.

Layering a cloth mask over a medical mask or knotting and tucking your medical mask may improve fit and add protection.

Masks should fit snugly against the face and chin and must fully cover the nose and mouth.

### ***Appropriate use of non-medical mask or face covering***

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When worn properly, a person wearing a non-medical mask or face covering can reduce the spread of his or her own infectious respiratory droplets.

Non-medical face masks or face coverings **should**:

- allow for easy breathing
- fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- maintain their shape after washing and drying
- be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty
- be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment
- be made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric (such as cotton or linen)
- be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping

Non-medical masks or face coverings **should not**:

- be shared with others
- impair vision or interfere with tasks
- be placed on children under the age of 2 years
- be made of plastic or other non-breathable materials
- be secured with tape or other inappropriate materials
- be made exclusively of materials that easily fall apart, such as tissues
- be placed on anyone unable to remove them without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing

**Face Mask Poster**

[How to Put on or Take Off Surgical Masks and Gloves](#)

## ***How to put on a non-medical mask or face covering***

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1. Ensure the face covering is clean and dry.
2. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before touching the mask.
  - If none is available, use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.
3. Ensure your hair is away from your face.
4. Place the face covering over your nose and mouth and secure to your head or ears with its ties or elastics.
  - Adjust if needed to ensure nose and mouth are fully covered.
  - The mask should fit snugly to the cheeks and there should not be any gaps.
5. Repeat Step 2.

While wearing a non-medical mask or face covering, it is important to avoid touching your face. If you do touch your mask or face, you should immediately wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. You can also use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.

Wearing a face shield will improve your chances of not touching your face

## ***How to remove a non-medical mask or face covering***

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1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
  - If none is available, use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.
2. Remove the face covering by un-tying it or removing the loops from your ears.
  - Avoid touching the front of the mask when removing it.
  - It can be placed in a plastic bag temporarily if you are not at home.
    - Make sure you close or zip seal the bag while storing it.
3. After removing the face covering, repeat Step 1.

## ***Cleaning and disposing of non-medical masks and face coverings***

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If you plan to reuse the mask, wash it before wearing it again. Change your cloth mask as soon as it gets damp or soiled by:

- putting it directly into the washing machine
- washing it with other items using a hot cycle, and then dry thoroughly
- Alternatively: hand wash and then boil it for 5 minutes.

### ***Resources:***

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<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html>