

# Advice from experts on double masking against COVID-19



**Dr. Fernando Castilleja**, the director of Wellness and Prevention at [TecSalud](#), recommended **wearing two face masks** to offer **greater protection** against airborne transmission of **COVID-19**.

*“Carry on wearing face masks. **Two cloth face masks** are currently being recommended to enhance protection (against COVID-19), particularly in crowded places.*

*“For example, if you have to go to the supermarket **when there are a lot of people, put two face masks on**. You already put one on, so put another on. **It won’t hurt you, and it does increase your protection,**” he said.*

This recommendation is based on a [study](#) by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), which determined that **this method** increases **protection** to **about 95%**.



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The same study revealed that a **multi-layered face mask**, correctly **fitted** to the face with **knotted** ear loops, increases its **protection efficiency** to the **same percentage**, similar to a **KN95 mask**.

On February 10, 2021, the **CDC** updated its recommendations on the **use of face masks** due to **leakage at the sides**, where air can get in and/or out.

This study takes place at this **stage of the pandemic**, due to [new variants](#) that appear to be **more contagious**.

***“If you have to go to a crowded place, put two face masks on. You already put one on, so put another on. It won’t hurt you, and it does increase your protection.”***

**The recommended way of double masking What you should do:**

- First, put a **disposable face mask** on.
- Place a multi-layered **cloth mask** over the **disposable one**.
- The second face mask **should cover the edges** of the first, to avoid leaving gaps. Check that **it’s correctly adjusted**.

- Make sure you can see and breathe properly.

### **What you shouldn't do:**

- **Don't combine two disposable face masks**, since they weren't designed to be adjusted tightly.
- **Don't combine a KN95 mask with any other face mask**. In this case, you should only wear one mask.

### **How does a face mask protect you?**

One of the [ways in which COVID-19 is transmitted](#), is when **people inhale the respiratory droplets (aerosols)** that infected people exhale.

An example of an **aerosol** is the “**cloud**” of **invisible microparticles**, such as **droplets of saliva**, that people release when **they breathe, speak, sing, cough, or sneeze**.

The [correct use of a face mask](#) or **KN95 mask** reduces the **possibility** of either a healthy person **inhaling these aerosols** or an infected person spreading them.

<https://tec.mx/en/news/national/health/whats-correct-way-wear-face-mask>

### **Don't forget to correctly adjust your mask!**

You can adopt the following **procedure** to make sure that your mask **fits tightly over your nose, mouth, and chin**:

- **Check for physical gaps.**

Place your hands around the outer edges of the mask to check this.

- **Check for “leaks”.**

Make sure that **no air is escaping** near to your eyes or from the sides of the mask.

- **Let your mask “breathe” with you.**

One sign that your mask is well-fitted is that you'll feel warm air entering the front of the mask and you may be able to see it **move in and out** when you breathe.

- **Use fitting accessories.**

Preferably, you should use face masks that have a **nose wire** or that **come with accessories to adjust it** to your face, such as “**fitters**”, which are made of plastic and are placed over the face mask and go around your ears.

## Other recommendations

- The **CDC** recommends using a **plain cloth mask** over a three-layer **surgical mask**, because it adheres better to the wearer's face, although the surgical mask has better filtration.

- **Wash your cloth mask** at the end of the day and **discard the surgical mask** once it gets wet or dirty.

**Don't wear face shields without a face mask**, as their effectiveness is so far unknown.



width="900" loading="lazy"> **Knot the ear loops.**

If you have a **3-layer mask**, we recommend **tying it** as follows:

- *Fold the mask in half lengthwise.*
- *Tie a knot in the elastic loops on one side of the mask so that they're as close to the fabric of the mask as possible.*
- *Repeat on the other side.*
- *Tuck the excess fabric on the sides toward the inside of the mask.*

You can see how to tie the ear loops on a face mask by [clicking here](#).

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