

Covid-19 Refresher Course – Part 1

With several indoor, in person worship services under our belts, & in light of a number of observations, it seemed that a Covid-19 refresher course was in order.

As of this writing, & based upon the most recent scientific information, Covid-19 remains a virus that is primarily spread by the respiratory route. That tidbit takes me directly to thoughts of face masks. Face masks remain the most important seminal behavior we can practice to help contain Covid-19.

In order for any face mask to be effective it MUST cover BOTH the nose & mouth. All air enters & escapes from our lungs via our nose & mouth. If either is left uncovered by a face mask there is a direct route for virus laden air to either enter or escape from our lungs. This is the proper way to wear a face mask:



This..... is NOT a face mask! This is a chin warmer. A chin warmer is 100% ineffective in providing protection from any airborne disease. Wearing a chin warmer is, in effect, the same as wearing no face mask at all.

Me, whining, “But Mooommm.....”

My mother (wish I had a nickel for every time I heard this!), “Don’t you ‘But Mom’ me!”

Me, still whining, & now with a pouty face, “My glasses fog uuuupppp!”



UPG Parish Nurse, “When it comes to face masks causing glasses to fog up you are barking up the wrong tree here. Permit me to offer a few tricks to help keep that to a minimum.”

Place the bridge of the face mask high on the bridge of your nose & mold the top of the mask against your nose & cheek bones. Drop the nose piece of your glasses so that it is resting on the top of the face mask, like so:



You can use paper tape (it is usually white in color & the adhesive is milder than on other types of skin tape) to tape across the entire area along the top of



the mask. (I did not have any paper tape at home so I used a clear plastic tape with a magic marker line so you can see the tape.) The tape helps to keep any exhaled air from escaping upward. I would caution against using adhesive, or even the plastic tape, I used. The stronger the tape adhesive, the more it sticks to the skin of the face. Use caution, regardless of the type of tape used, when removing the mask from the delicate skin on your face. Trust me, it pulls!

Keep your head up & your face pointed in a forward position to the extent possible: tilting your head down results in exhaled air escaping directly into your glasses.

Research done since the beginning of the pandemic on the effectiveness of different types of face masks has shown that masks with valves are also



ineffective in providing protection. I have observed these masks being worn during worship services. Understand that the valve provides both a direct path of exhaled, potentially contaminated air to escape from the wearer as well as a direct path of contaminated air to be inhaled by the wearer. Please refrain from using this type of mask when attending indoor worship.



Neck gaiters have also been shown to be ineffective. Research has shown that the material used to manufacture neck gaiters actually results in expired respiratory droplets (the size of a pin head or larger) to be aerosolized (reduced to the size of a pin point) by the fabric. Those aerosolized particles then escape through the fabric into the air where they are able to spread further & stay afloat longer.

As stated previously, wearing a face mask is the single most important behavior we can practice in an effort to control the spread of Covid-19. Anytime you will be in a public building (store, school, church, etc.) wear a face mask. Anytime that you are going to be in a building with people from outside the home in which you live, wear a face mask. The life you save may be your own.....

Donna Musselman, RN, CNOR, UPG Parish Nurse

P.S. Peak flu season typically runs from December through February. It takes about 2 weeks before a flu vaccine is effective. If you haven't done so already, now is a great time to get your flu shot!

You, whispering, "Psst.....pull your mask up over your nose!"

Friend, "Why"

You, "The UPG Parish Nurse is watching!"

