



3.30.2022

Stephen Petty
President
EES Group, Inc.
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Pompano Beach, FL 33060

Dear Stephen Petty:

Thank you for your letter to Senator Ronald H. Johnson, White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator Jeffrey Zients, Chief Medical Advisor to the President of the United States and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci, MD, Occupational Safety and Health Administration Assistant Secretary of Labor Douglas L. Parker, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH regarding coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) mask guidance. I am responding on behalf of Dr. Walensky.

CDC continues to learn more about SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves. CDC's Science Briefs¹ summarize the scientific evidence behind specific guidance and recommendations. In our "Science Brief: Community Use of Masks to Control the Spread of SARS-CoV-2,"² we summarize the studies that have assessed the effectiveness of mask-wearing to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which have informed our masking guidance.

CDC's guidance on masks was updated to provide information for those who choose to wear N95s or other respirators and was not a broad recommendation for their use. CDC recommends that individuals consider their situation and other factors when choosing a mask that offers greater protection. The most critical aspect of this recommendation is that individuals should wear the most protective mask they can, which both fits them well and which they will wear consistently.

Experimental and epidemiologic data support community masking to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2 among adults and children. The preventative benefit of masking in community settings is derived from a combination of source control and wearer protection. The relationship between source control and wearer protection is likely complementary and possibly synergistic, such that individual benefit increases with increasing community mask use.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/index.html>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>

Mask use has been found to be safe, including in children, and is not associated with clinically significant impacts on respiration or gas exchange under most circumstances, except for intense exercise. The limited available data indicate no clear evidence that masking impairs emotional or language development in children. Available evidence suggests that even children who may have difficulty wearing a mask can do so effectively through targeted interventions.

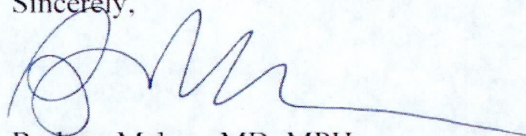
Throughout the pandemic, CDC has recommended utilizing a number of controls to prevent transmission within the community, workplaces, and healthcare settings. Examples of these guidance include Ventilation in Buildings,³ Ventilation in Schools and Childcare Programs,⁴ Upper-Room Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation (UVGI),⁵ Testing in Non-Healthcare Workplaces,⁶ Testing in Schools,⁷ and Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Settings.⁸

Remaining up to date⁹ on COVID-19 vaccines is the best protection from COVID-19-associated severe illness, hospitalization, and death; however, wearing a mask also remains an important tool in preventing the spread of disease. Masks are effective at reducing transmission of SARS-CoV-2 when worn consistently and correctly.

CDC continues its research to learn more about the effectiveness of different types of masks for preventing COVID-19, and we will continue to update our guidance as the science indicates.

I appreciate your letter as we work together to fight COVID-19. Please share this response with the cosigners of your letter. CDC remains committed to leading with science, promoting equity, and protecting the American public during this pandemic.

Sincerely,



Barbara Mahon, MD, MPH
Incident Manager
COVID-19 Emergency Response
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation.html>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/ventilation.html>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation/UVGI.html>

⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/testing-non-healthcare-workplaces.html>

⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/what-you-should-know.html>

⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>