

WHO updated guidance on the use of masks

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE NO. 30
12 June 2020



Current global situation

- More than 7.25 million COVID-19 cases globally
- More than 400 000 deaths

Top ten countries with the highest number of new cases over the past 24 hours:

Brazil – 32 091

USA – 17 235

India – 9 996

Russian Federation – 8 779

Pakistan – 5 834

Chile – 5 737

Mexico – 4 199

Peru – 4 040

Saudi Arabia – 3 717

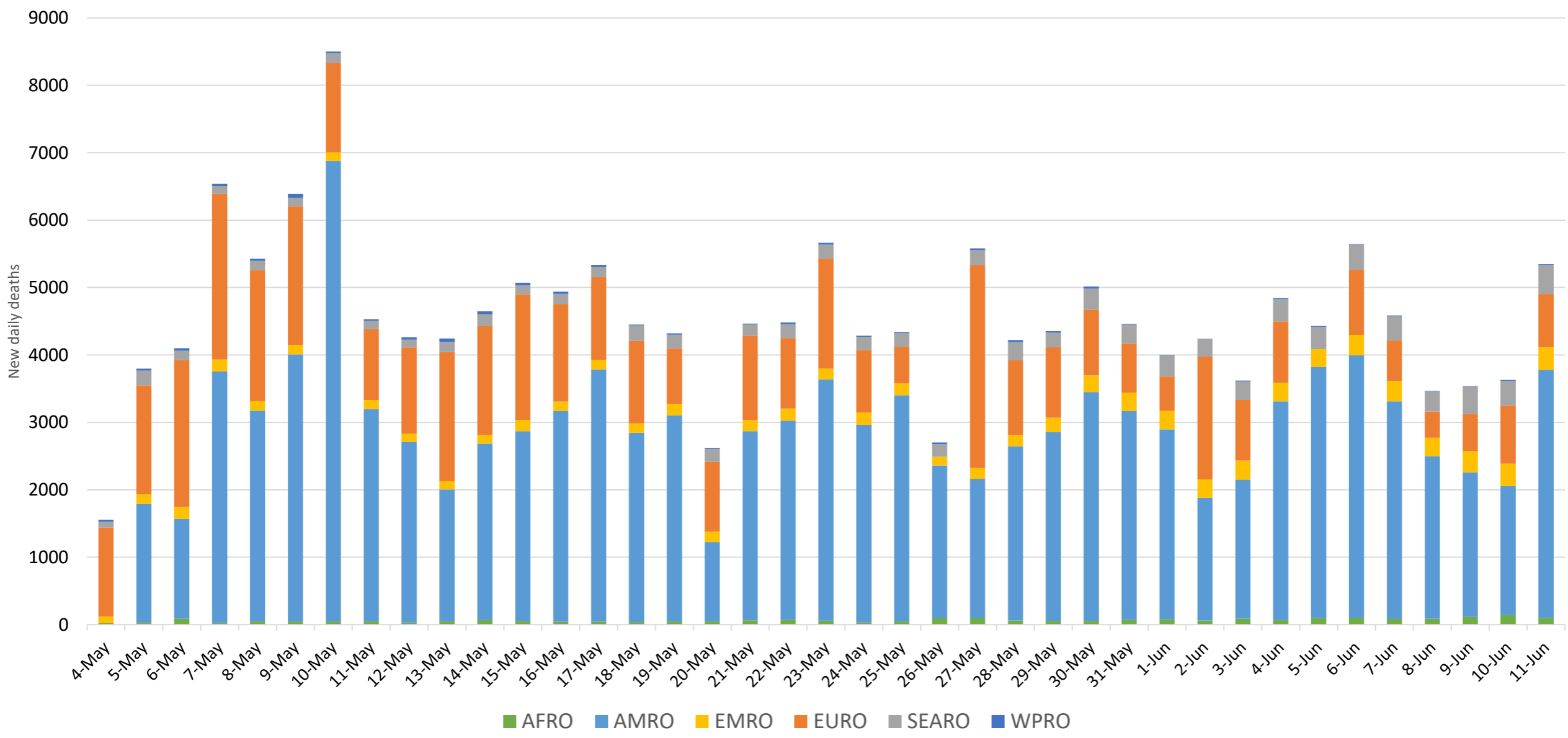
Bangladesh – 3 190

Data as of 06h00 12.05.20



Current global situation

Number of new deaths of COVID-19 per day, by WHO Region





Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19

Interim guidance published 5 June 2020

- **Scope:** advice on the use of masks in health care, in the community, as well as during home care
- **Audience:** it is intended for decision makers, public health and infection prevention and control (IPC) professionals, health care workers (HCWs), and individuals in the community.
- **Updated information:** what type of mask to wear in different settings and by different populations



Surgical mask (Credit: DACH Schutzbekleidung)

Medical mask
(3-ply)



N95 respirator (Credit: 3M)

Respirator
(N95, FFP2, FFP3)



Non-medical mask
(cloth)

Source: [https://www.who.int/publications-detail/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-the-community-during-home-care-and-in-health-care-settings-in-the-context-of-the-novel-coronavirus-\(COVID-19\)-outbreak](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-the-community-during-home-care-and-in-health-care-settings-in-the-context-of-the-novel-coronavirus-(COVID-19)-outbreak)



Key messages

- WHO has updated its guidance on the use of masks to incorporate new research findings and to provide more practical advice.
- The main changes relate to the use of masks by health workers, and specifics on using non-medical masks for the general public in areas of community transmission – i.e. where COVID-19 is widespread.
- Masks are part of a comprehensive package of measures to suppress transmission and save lives: the use of a mask alone is insufficient to provide an adequate level of protection.



Masks are part of a comprehensive package of measures to suppress transmission and save lives

- Follow your local authorities' advice on the use of masks.
- A mask alone can not protect you from COVID-19, you should always combine its use with these protective measures:
 - Keep at least 1 metre distance from others
 - Avoid touching the mask or face
 - Clean hands frequently and thoroughly
- Fabric masks can prevent the spread of the virus; by wearing a mask, you protect others. When others wear a mask, they protect you.



Please follow your local authorities' advice on the use of masks.



Who should wear **medical** masks?

- health workers,
- people with COVID-19 symptoms or who suspect they have the disease,
- people who take care of confirmed and suspected COVID-19 patients at home or elsewhere,
- people who are 60 and above and people who have underlying health conditions.

If you have no symptoms of COVID-19 and are not considered a higher risk group of developing severe forms of the disease, save medical masks for those who need them the most.





Who should use a fabric mask?

- When it is recommended by local authorities, in areas of widespread transmission where there is limited capacity to implement control measures such as appropriate testing, contact tracing and when physical distancing of at least 1 meter cannot be guaranteed
- In areas in widespread transmission, where physical distancing of at least 1 metre cannot be achieved, fabric masks should be considered for use in public settings, such as public buses and trains, shops, grocery stores and workplaces.



Summary table

Mask	Who: Masks should be used for	Where: Settings
Medical mask	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care settings within the clinical areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People caring for suspect or confirmed cases of COVID-19 outside of health facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home settings with a sick person
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any setting in the community
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People aged 60 or over • People with underlying health conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained
Non-medical mask Fabric mask	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People in the general public in areas with no or limited capacity to implement control measures, including physical distancing of at least 1m • People on crowded transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public settings • Workplaces • Public transport - Bus, metro, etc



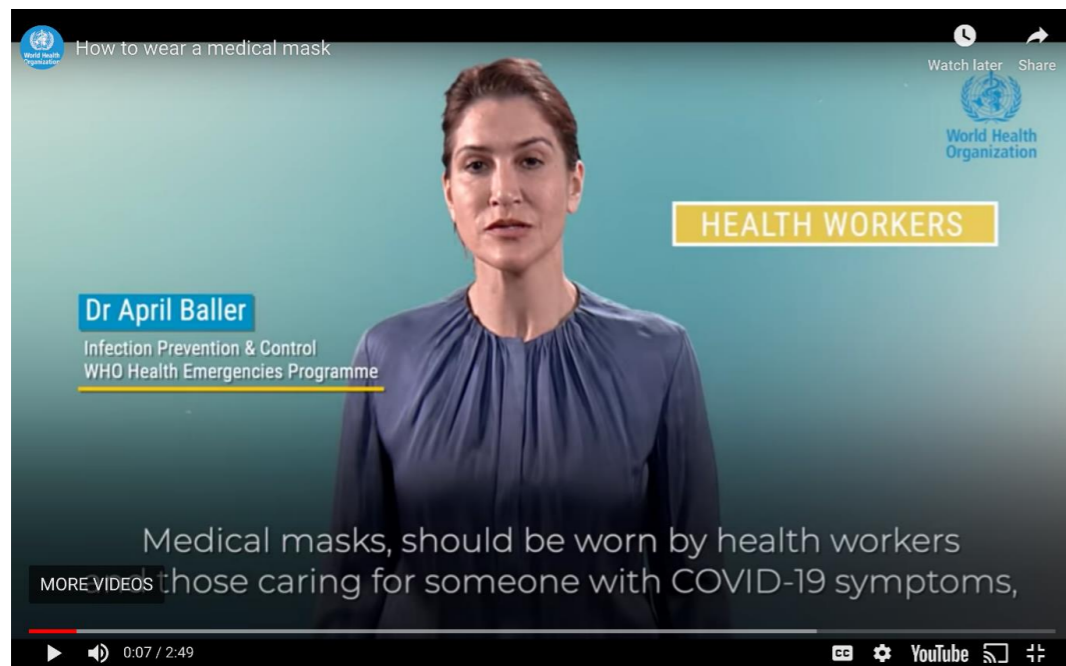
How to wear a mask

1. Ensure **hand hygiene** is performed before putting on the mask.
2. Place the mask carefully, ensuring it **covers the mouth and nose**, and tie it securely to minimize any gaps between the face and the mask.
***Avoid touching** the mask while wearing it. Replace masks as soon as they become damp with a new clean, dry mask.*
3. **Ensure hand hygiene** is performed before touching the mask.
4. **Remove the mask** using the appropriate technique: do not touch the front of the mask but untie it from behind or from the straps.
5. After removal or whenever a used mask is inadvertently touched, **clean hands** using an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.



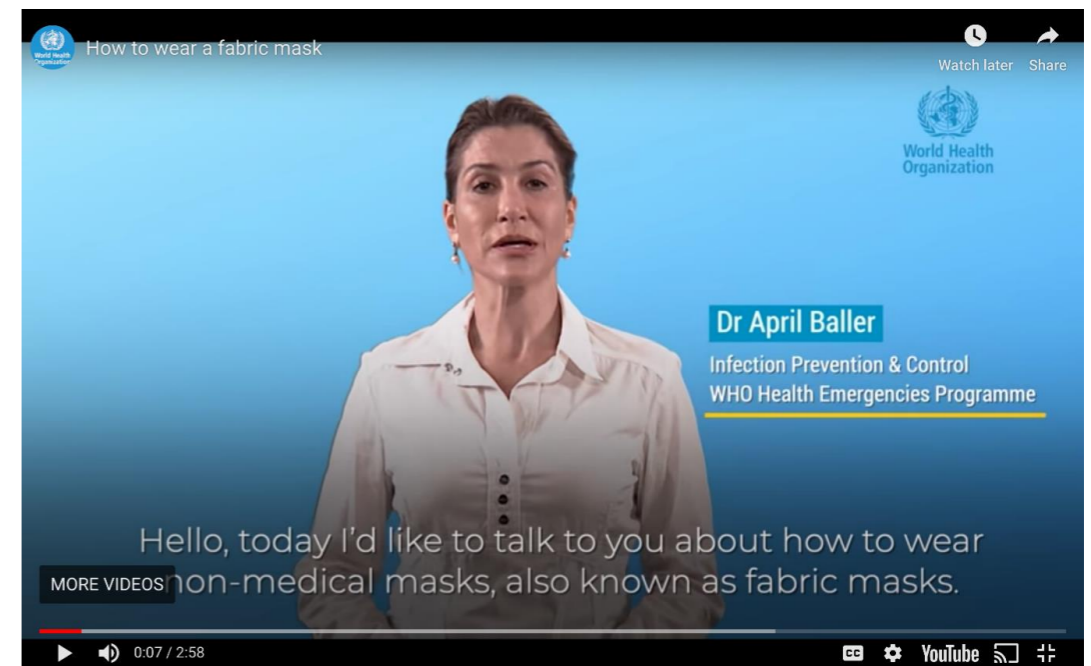
Explanatory videos on “how to wear masks”

How to wear **medical** masks



https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&v=adB8RW4I3o4&feature=emb_logo

How to wear a **fabric** mask



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciUnizGD4tY&feature=emb_logo



How to care for a fabric mask

- Wash fabric masks with soap and hot water (at least 60 degrees) at least once a day.
- Do not share your mask with others
- Change your mask if it gets dirty or wet
- If your fabric mask is not dirty or wet and you need to re-use it, store it in a clean, resealable plastic bag. When removing the mask from the bag, hold it by the elastic hooks.



How to choose a fabric mask

- When wearing a mask, make sure you can breathe through it easily
- Do not use ones which only have one layer
- Choose fabrics which can be washed in high temperatures regularly
- WHO requested research on composition of fabric masks, which identified that the fabric mask should have the following layers, type of fabrics and composition:
 - an inner layer of absorbent material, such as cotton
 - a middle layer of non-woven material, such as polypropylene
 - an outer layer of non-absorbent material, such as polyester or polyester blend





Resources

Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19 – [interim guidance](#)

Risk communication materials – [videos and infographics](#)

EPI-WIN webinar - COVID-19 - social and behavioural insights on the use of face masks

Meeting Recording:

https://who.zoom.us/rec/share/6epvcZP6rGhIa9aT4XHhfKovP7W0aaa8gyFLr_ZZnRr3oMMoX2ithAxutPZ1BpUS