

Face masks won't help the healthy, but are useful in high-risk settings

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New recommendations relating to the wearing of face masks and respirators have been released by the University of Adelaide's JBI, an

international research organization in the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and other infections. The recommendations build on JBI's COVID-19 Special Collection released last week.

The latest best practice guidance added to JBI's COVID-19 Special Collection is in relation to the use of face masks and respirators for [healthcare professionals](#) and the general community in reducing the transmission of respiratory infections. This guidance has been added to the Collection in response to the need for clear and concise evidence-based recommendations regarding the effectiveness of face masks and/or respirators.

"The evidence suggests that a multifaceted approach, for example using a mask in addition to safe hand hygiene processes during high risk exposure, is recommended to prevent the transmission of respiratory infection in the community," says Professor Zoe Jordan Executive Director of JBI.

"But it does also indicate that wearing masks or respirators by uninfected people in the general community is not necessary or effective."

Rather, the research says that masks should be worn by people at high risk of exposure, such as those individuals living in a household with an infected individual. Other recommendations include ensuring the mouth and nose are securely covered and discarding masks following a single use, after six hours or if they become damp. Cloth [masks](#) are not recommended under any circumstances.

"The JBI team is working tirelessly during this [public health crisis](#) to deliver the best available research evidence quickly to inform decisions being made by [health professionals](#) globally at the point of care," says Professor Jordan.

"It is so very important in challenging times like this current global pandemic that organizations like JBI contribute to ensuring everyone's safety. The way we can do that is with relevant, high quality information," she says.

The updated resources are available for free download from [JBI's website](#) and will be disseminated to [health](#) professionals locally and globally via JBI's commercial partner Wolters Kluwer Health, as well as its 75 collaborating healthcare and university partners in 36 countries, this includes SA Health.

Provided by University of Adelaide

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