

RADIO EPISODE 10:

WEARING MASKS AND WASHING HANDS – THERE IS STILL CONFUSION

RADIO:

Start with playing the 'COVID-19 – Together we can beat it' song.

Welcome to the 10th of our 'COVID-19 – Together we can beat it' radio programmes. Keep listening so that you understand COVID-19 and know how to protect yourself, your family and friends against the many challenges that the pandemic brings.

Ask questions and share your experience. Phone us on XXX, SMS us on XXX or send a WhatsApp message on XXX to be part of this conversation.

Over the last eight weeks, we have shared factually correct information about the Coronavirus and COVID-19 disease. We have discussed each of the five Golden Rules which will protect us if we follow them, and stressed the importance of meeting people in places with a flow of fresh air.

Last week we examined some of the many myths and misconceptions about COVID-19.

From next week, we will look at how the pandemic has disrupted all of our lives, and talk about how to cope with the challenges that it has caused.

Before we do this, however, we are going to try to help clear up some of the confusion that still exist about wearing masks and washing hands.

I'm joined today by our health expert, XXXX, as well as by XXX (youth facilitator).

Let us talk about it:

Wearing masks in public and washing our hands regularly and well are critical for staying healthy.

Even when the COVID-19 disease is no longer a factor to consider, wearing masks in public and washing our hands regularly and well with soap and water will still be important ways to stay healthy and protect ourselves against a variety of existing and potentially new infections.

But listeners' questions and comments have made it clear that there are still a lot of questions and confusion about both of these.

COVID-19 health experts have answered some of the common questions which listeners have asked.

Our country health expert is also here to answer any extra questions you may have. Call or message us now, to join in the conversation.

LISTENERS' QUESTIONS ABOUT MASKS:

1 Q: How should you wear a mask?

A: So that it covers your mouth AND nose.

2 Q: How often should you wash a mask?

A: Every time after you have worn it outside your house.

3 Q: Should you wear a mask in your house?

A: No, you don't need to. Unless you have visitors who are in the same room as you, or if you are sick with a cough

4 Q: What if you wear a mask and other's don't? Especially on a bus?

A: It means you are protecting them, and they are not protecting you. If you can, stay far away from them. On a bus, you have the right to ask others to wear masks. Or ask the bus driver. If you can, move to a section of the bus where people are wearing masks.

5 Q: What about people on a motorbike who wear a helmet? How do they also wear a mask?

A: If you wear a helmet, you don't need to wear a mask as well.

6 Q: What kind of mask is the right one?

A: If you are not a health professional, the right mask is a simple cloth mask, ideally with two or three layers of cloth.

7 Q: People say wearing a mask can lead to headaches. Is that true?

A: There is no reason why this should happen. Unless you are doing heavy exercise, masks will allow enough oxygen in and carbon dioxide out. Masks only stop droplets that you breathe, talk or cough out, which could contain viruses. These are much bigger than the air molecules we breathe in and out.

8 Q: Should you wear a mask when you are doing exercise?

A: The World Health Organisation says that people need not wear masks when they are doing strenuous exercise, like running or cycling. But then they must make sure that they stay at least two metres away from others. It is a rule in some countries to even wear a mask when you are exercising

9 Q: Can we share masks among our family members?

A: Masks should not be shared – even among family members, unless they are washed well with soap and water and dried before a second person wears them.

4 Q: When and where should one wear a mask?

A: You should always wear a mask when you are interacting with people outside your home

- 5 Q: Not everyone has enough money to buy masks. What can people do if they do not have enough money?
- A: Masks can be made very cheaply at home, if you have clean fabric which you can fold and elastic, string, or strips of fabric to use as ties. Look for simple patterns on the internet.
- 6 Q: What do you do if you can't get hold of a mask? What can you do?
- A: See answer to Question 5 above. You can also wrap a scarf twice around your nose and mouth.
- 7 Q: Will wearing a mask guarantee you that you are safe from being infected by others?
- A: Wearing a mask is a sign of goodwill because it protects others from infection if you are COVID-19 positive. Even if you wear a mask, you must still keep a safe distance away from others.

QUESTIONS ABOUT WASHING OF HANDS

- 1 Q: Do all soaps kill the Coronavirus? If not, what kind of soap kills the virus?
- A: All soaps can kill the Coronavirus. You can use the cheapest soap - like dishwashing liquid or any cheap brand of soap. Just remember that the virus must be exposed to soap for at least 20 seconds. That's why you should wash each of your hands for 20 seconds.
- 2 Q: How often should you wash your hands? It seems that to be safe, you need to wash your hands every time when you've touched a surface of an object. But that's obviously not practical.
- A: As often as you are worried that the surfaces or objects that you are touching outside your home may be contaminated. If you have brought food or other objects into your home from outside, you should wash or wipe them down, and wash your hands after touching them.
- 3 Q: Is cleaning your hands with hand sanitiser better than washing it with soap?
- A: Proper sanitiser is as effective as washing with soap. Hand sanitiser must have a minimum of 70% alcohol to be effective, and you still have to rub each hand for 20 seconds. Washing your hands well with soap and water is just as effective as using a hand sanitiser, and is cheaper and better for your skin.
- 4 Q: In remote areas, people struggle to buy soap due to economic hardships. Is it ok if they wash hands without soap?
- A: Washing your hands without soap may dilute the amount of virus on a person's hands, but it won't kill the virus. That's why we recommend using cheap soap like dishwashing liquid. Add a quarter of a cup of dishwashing liquid to two litres (e.g. a plastic milk bottle) of water. A family can use this for days to wash their hands, and it is enough to kill the virus. Try to find out how to make a 'tippy tap'.

(See below)



5. Q: How do keep washing your hands if you're short of water.

A: See Q 4. Making a simple 'tippy tap', which your whole family can use for days, is the answer. Pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of liquid soap and five cups water into a 2-litre plastic container and close the top. Make a small hole in the 'shoulder' below the top. Tip the bottle to pour soapy water into your hands, then wash your hands well and air dry them. Hang it on a string outside your home's entrance, so that everyone can use it.

- 5 Can washing hands with soap prevent TB infection?

No, washing hands with soap cannot prevent TB infection. TB is only transmitted through breathing. Washing hands with soap can however prevent a lot of other infections which are spread by dirty hands such as diarrhoea, the common cold and flu.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL

To the health specialist:

- 1 Is it also your experience that there is confusion about wearing of masks and washing hands?
- 2 Can you add any other questions which you've heard people ask about masks and handwashing, and can you answer them for our listeners?

To the youth facilitator/second panellist:

- 1 Are people in your school or community also confused about wearing masks and washing hands? If so, what are their questions?
- 2 Do you have any questions of your own?
- 3 How do you plan to share the information you have now?

SMS TOPIC 11:

Wearing a mask and washing hands often and well are important ways to protect yourself against COVID-19 and other illnesses. But there are many questions about how to do this correctly. *Tune in to XXXXXXXX THIS XXXXday from XXXXXXXX, to get correct answers.* Next week's SMS will also have a link

to Q&A about masks and hand washing. *To opt out send 'stop' to XXXXX.* (300 characters no spaces, 367 with spaces)