

Appendix 2:

Advice on the use and cleaning of textile community masks (MNB) as of: 19th April 2020

Simple covers for mouth and nose made of commercially available materials, so-called community masks, do not have any proven protective function. Nevertheless, they can contribute to preventing an infection by trapping droplets, e.g. when coughing (primarily protection of others), by forming a barrier between mouth/nose and potentially contaminated hands, and by sensitising people to attentive interaction.

When using reusable textile community masks, it is important to observe the following rules published by the German Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices (BfArM).

Extract from the recommendations of the BfArM on the use of DIY masks¹:

- The usual hygiene regulations, in particular the current recommendations of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI, www.rki.de) and the German Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA, www.infektionsschutz.de) must continue to be observed.
- Even when wearing a mask, the safety distance of at least 1.50m from other people recommended by the WHO should be maintained.
- When putting on a mask, make sure that the inside does not get contaminated. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap before.
- The mask must be placed correctly over your mouth, nose and cheeks, and must fit as tightly as possible around the edges in order to minimise air ingress at the sides.
- When using the mask for the first time, check that the mask allows enough air to pass through in order to make sure it hinders your normal breathing as little as possible.
- A soaked mask should be removed immediately and replaced if necessary.
- The outside of the used mask may potentially contain pathogens. To prevent contamination of your hands, try not to touch it.
- After taking off the mask, wash your hands thoroughly (at least 20-30 seconds with soap), following the general rules of hygiene.
- After use, the mask should be kept in an airtight bag or a similar container, or washed immediately. Keep it for as short a time as possible, especially to prevent the formation of mould.
- After every use, wash the mask ideally at 95 degrees, but at least at 60 degrees, and then let it dry completely. Observe the manufacturer's information on the maximum number of cycles after which the strength and functionality is still given.
- If available, all manufacturer's instructions should be observed.'

¹ Recommendations of the BfArM on the use of DIY masks ('community masks'), medical face masks (MNS) and filtering half masks (FFP2 and FFP3) regarding coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2 / Covid-19), as of: 31st March 2020

<https://www.bfarm.de/SharedDocs/Risikoinformationen/Medizinprodukte/DE/schutzmasken.html>, 19th April 2020