

PCS Advocates Wearing Facemask For All

Philippine College of Surgeons

The Philippine College of Surgeons highly commends the Inter-Agency Task Force latest advisory on mandatory face mask in areas under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). PCS is recommending that wearing of masks be made mandatory THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY based on the following evidences:

- COVID-19 virus spreads through small droplets that an infected person (even asymptomatic) person expels when they talk, cough or sneeze.^{1,2,3}
- Wearing facemasks can prevent infected droplets spewing from the sick person's mouth or nose, including the many others who are asymptomatic, according to Dr. George Gao, Director-General of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention.³
- China, South Korea and Taiwan have shown that wearing of facemasks proved to be advantageous in preventing the transmission of the virus.⁴ Recently, several European countries (Czech Republic, Slovenia and Austria) have adopted the use of facemask.
- Wearing of facemask for ALL individuals will also prevent discrimination between infected and non-infected persons.⁵ And this will work only if EVERYONE WEARS THEM.⁶
- Facemask becomes a barrier to stop those infected from contaminating others through emission of droplets while talking, coughing or sneezing or even breathing. If everyone wears a facemask, we can protect each other and reduce community transmission. However, due to a global shortage of surgical masks, "alternative, home-made masks" maybe acceptable if no surgical mask is available.

It is important to note that wearing of facemask is NOT AN ALTERNATIVE TO other PREVENTIVE MEASURES such as handwashing and social distancing. When collectively practiced, all these measures help fight against COVID-19.

Let the mask be a symbol of support to all Healthcare Workers – the frontliners.

The Philippine College of Surgeons is the leading organization of surgical professionals, responsive to the community, committed to excellence and ethical practice.

**PCS advocates #Masks4ALL.
Let us Fight as one, Heal as one!**

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