FACT

Masks Work Against COVID-19

The continued aggressive spread of the Delta variant makes wearing face masks more important than ever. Make sure you know the facts around the importance of mask wearing.

FACT: You should wear a face mask if you are fully vaccinated.

Because the new Delta variant is far more contagious than the initial strain of COVID-19, vaccinated individuals should wear face masks to help slow the spread and to protect themselves and others.

FACT: The vaccine strongly protects you from getting seriously ill.

Viruses develop and change over time, and the Delta variant has different properties and behaves differently than other strains of the virus. Vaccinated individuals will likely experience less severe symptoms and complications if infected with the Delta variant.

FACT: Those without symptoms can still unknowingly spread the virus.

In order to protect your safety and the safety of everyone around you, you should consistently wear a mask in indoor settings away from your home. The aggressive spread of the Delta variant means face masks are more necessary than ever.

FACT: Cloth masks can protect you from COVID-19.

While experts agree the N95 and KN95 respirators are the most effective masks available, disposable 3-ply surgical masks and cloth masks are proven to help slow the disease's spread. Masks reduce the number of respiratory droplets a person releases into the air when talking, sneezing or coughing, and fewer droplets in the air reduces the risk of being exposed.

FACT: You will not become ill due to breathing carbon dioxide (CO_2) from wearing a face mask.

Carbon dioxide (CO_2) molecules are very tiny and the amount of CO_2 created by wearing a mask is miniscule. Cloth and surgical masks are not only very breathable, they allow CO_2 to escape freely as you breathe. Remember that doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers have worn masks for years with no adverse health effects.

FACT: Wearing a face mask does not weaken your immune system or increase your chances of getting sick.

Even if you are infected with COVID-19 but do not have symptoms, mask wearing helps prevent the virus from spreading.

FACT: Face masks alone will not provide 100% protection.

While face masks provide great protection for yourself and others, we must do everything we can to safeguard ourselves from the highly transmissible Delta variant: social distancing, avoiding large gatherings, particularly those indoors, while also wearing masks. Most importantly, getting vaccinated against COVID-19 gives us the best chance to slow the spread of the virus.

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Schedule your vaccination appointment on the MyChart portal today. Visit **ochsnerlsuhs.org/vaccine** for more facts, or call **844-888-2772** with any additional questions. For more COVID-19 information and resources, visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (cdc.gov) or the Louisiana Department of Health (ldh.la.gov) website.

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