

"I DON'T NEED A MASK, I'M NOT AFRAID OF BEING SICK, I'VE HAD COVID BEFORE AND IT WAS MILD."

COVID complications and Long COVID can impact anyone, including people with seemingly mild or asymptomatic cases. Every infection makes you more vulnerable to complications and Long COVID. Even mild cases have been found to increase risk of long-term neurological, vascular, immune, cardiac, and pulmonary outcomes, including heart attacks, strokes, blood clots, chronic pain and fatigue, migraines, seizures, cognitive and memory disorders, respiratory issues, immune dysfunction, and dysautonomia. Long COVID impacts roughly 1 in 5 people who survive COVID-19.

"I DON'T HAVE PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS."

While it is true that disabled, chronically ill, and immunocompromised community members are at a higher risk of having a severe infection, COVID complications, and Long COVID, all people are vulnerable to adverse COVID-19 outcomes, regardless of age or health status.

"I DON'T NEED A MASK, I'M VACCINATED."

While COVID-19 vaccines reduce many people's risk of severe illness and Long COVID, they do not make anyone invincible to disease. Vaccinated people can still acquire COVID-19, and transmit COVID-19 to others. SARS-CoV-2 is an ever-mutating virus, requiring everyone to get the most recent booster for the vaccine to truly be effective.

Vaccine availability also does not equal vaccine accessibility. Many people experience financial, language, physical, and work-related barriers to vaccination.

Finally, masks protect those who cannot get vaccinated or will not develop an adequate immune response after getting vaccinated, e.g. children under 6 months and some immunocompromised people.

"WEARING A MASK HURTS MY EARS."

There are masks with loops that go around one's head instead of behind the ears! Ear savers are another option.

"I DON'T NEED A MASK, I DON'T FEEL SICK."

Several scientific reviews and meta-analyses have found that about 40% of COVID-19 cases are asymptomatic. People without symptoms can still spread many viral illnesses while infected, including COVID-19, RSV, and the flu.

"BUT COVID ISN'T A THING ANYMORE."

COVID is not over! While our governments have stopped talking about COVID-19, 2) eliminated funding for testing, vaccines, and treatments, 3) removed paid sick leave and labor protections for workers, and 4) started to criminalize masking, COVID-19, influenza, RSV, and norovirus cases remain at high levels in the community and H5N1. These diseases predominantly impact Black, Indigenous, and of-color communities, migrants, and queer, incarcerated, working-class, and disabled people. COVID-19 is a reproductive justice issue.

Learning to live with this pandemic, and the next, means practicing disability justice and taking every step we can to protect and care for each other in a world that treats our communities as disposable. We keep us safe!

TYPES OF MASKS

Not effective at preventing aerosol transmission—the main way COVID-19 spreads.

Still better than not masking and do prevent droplet spread, especially if doubled up and fit is improved.

Swap for a high-filtration mask if available.

CLOTH ❌

SURGICAL

WE REQUIRE AND RECOMMEND HIGH-FILTRATION (HF) MASKS

KF94 & KN95

N95

"BUT CLINIC DEFENSE IS OUTDOORS."

While being outdoors greatly reduces risk of disease transmission, this risk is nonzero and transmissions is still possible in crowded outdoor settings, like direct actions and community defenses. All patients, including patients receiving abortions, deserve to access healthcare without worrying about acquiring disease.

WHERE TO BUY MASKS

- DISPOSABLE HF MASKS**
- Bona Fide Masks | bonafidemasks.com
 - Planet Halo | planethalohealth.com
 - DemeTech | shop.demetech.us
 - Blox | bloxdirect.com
 - WellBefore | wellbefore.com
 - BreatheTeq | breatheteq.com
 - 3M (found at Home Depot and Lowes)

- REUSABLE/ELASTOMERIC HF MASKS**
- Envomask | envomask.com
 - Flo Mask | floomask.com
 - Vogmask (washable KN95, ~80% HFE)

COVID RESOURCES

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| WEBSITES | INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS |
| • covidadvocacyny.org | • @covidactionmap |
| • peoplescdc.org | • @maskblocnyc |
| • biobot.io/data | • @clean.air.club |
| • bit.ly/nootka-rose | • @comeforever_ |
| | • @longcovidjustice |

WHY WE REQUIRE MASKING AT OUR EVENTS & ACTIONS

A zine by NYC for Abortion Rights & NYC Action Medical

MARCH 2025

MASKING TO PROTECT EACH OTHERS' HEALTH

Masks are one of many tools we can use to protect each other from communicable diseases, along with vaccines, medications, hand hygiene, disinfecting surfaces, anti-viral rinses and sprays, frequent testing, clean air and water, and transparent risk communication.

The more layers of protection we use, the more we are able to care for and keep each other, including clinic patients, safe.

When worn correctly, high-filtration masks reduce the spread of all airborne diseases. One may need to try different shapes/sizes to maximize fit for both comfort and efficacy.

MASKING TO PROTECT FROM DOXXING & SURVEILLANCE

Masking can help prevent bad actors (cops, fash, artis, etc.) from identifying you — or at least make it harder for them to do so. While it also takes wearing sunglasses and covered eyebrows to fully protect from facial recognition software, masking the lower face does help.

MASKING TO PROTEST MASK BANS

Several mask ban bills were already introduced in NY State in 2024, with one passing in Nassau County. Kathy Hochul and Eric Adams have both expressed their support for banning masks in NY, including at protests and on subways.

Masks are critical to public health. They help protect us from contagious diseases, pollution, wildfire smoke, and more. Banning them puts the health of all NYers at risk — a health exception is not enough. In this light, wearing a mask has become an act of radical care and dissidence against a state that does not care if we are sick or disabled.

If one person is identified, it becomes easier to identify others in their orbit — so your masking helps protect your comrades' privacy too.