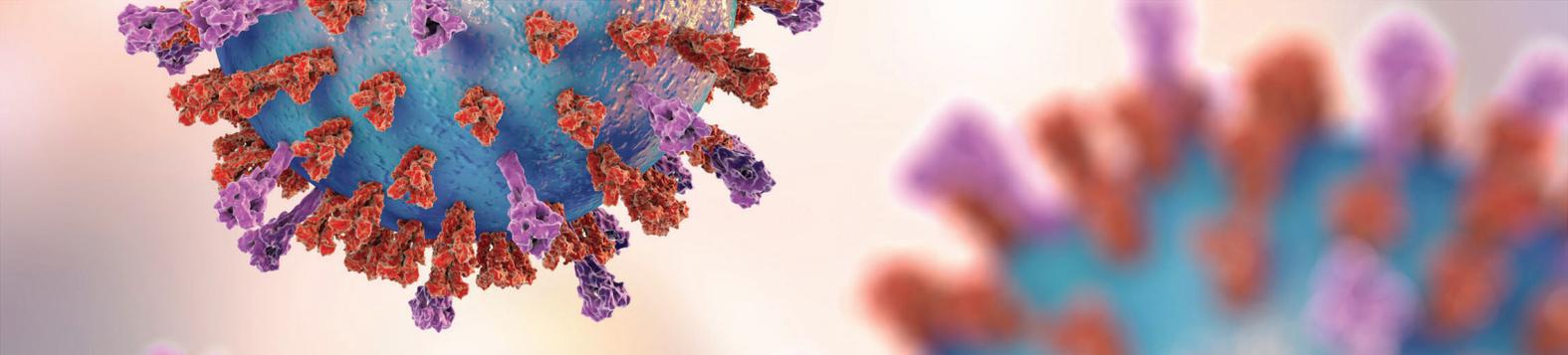




## **COVID-19: Children Under The Age of 2 Should Not Wear Masks or Cloth Coverings**

While the CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings or masks in public, it is important to know that masks and face coverings are dangerous for children under the age of 2, or anyone of any age who is unconscious, or unable to remove the mask without help.

- ▶ **Infants and toddlers have small airways. Covering their nose and mouth could make it hard to breathe.**
- ▶ **There can be an unsafe buildup of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) behind the mask.**
- ▶ **They might not be able to tell you if they're having trouble breathing.**
- ▶ **They might not be able to get the mask off if they're having trouble breathing.**
- ▶ **They could choke on pieces from a homemade mask such as hair ties or rubber bands.**



# How do viruses spread?

Viruses spread mostly through droplets in the air. When a person with a virus coughs, sneezes, or talks, droplets are released into the air. Those droplets can enter the nose, mouth, or eyes of someone nearby.

The droplets also can land on things that you touch. If someone touches a surface that has droplets on it and then touches their own, or the child's nose, mouth, or eyes, that could spread the virus.

**Though you can't use a face mask on infants and toddlers, you can still help to stop the spread of the virus by doing these things:**

- ▶ Only go out in public when you must and keep it as short as possible. Practice social distancing by staying at least 6 feet away from others. Limit contact with other children.
- ▶ Cover the mouth with a tissue when you or your child coughs or sneezes, or you can cover your mouth and nose with the bend of your arm. Then wash your hands!
- ▶ Wash both your hands and the child's hands often. Use soap and water and scrub for 20 seconds. Use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol, especially when you go out in public.
- ▶ Sanitize high-contact areas regularly such as tabletops, counters, doorknobs, light switches, and anything you touch regularly.
- ▶ Wash clothes and plush toys as needed. Use the warmest water setting and dry them completely.
- ▶ Stay away from people who are sick. If someone is showing symptoms of a virus such as coughing and having a fever, keep infants and toddlers away.
- ▶ Limit time with older adults, people with health conditions like heart or lung disease, and immunocompromised people such as those getting chemotherapy. Even if infants or toddlers don't have symptoms, there's still a chance they could spread a virus to others.