



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION



FDA Advisory
No. **2020-1374**

21 JUL 2020

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC

SUBJECT: ADVISE ON THE USE OF FACE MASK WITH VALVE

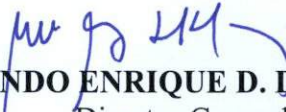
The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is strongly advising the public that the use of a facemask with a valve is not recommended during this COVID-19 pandemic. The person wearing the mask with a valve can be protected from the virus. However if that person has the virus, he/she can infect other people.

FDA does not recommend use of face masks with valve or valve-masks during these times. The masks are designed with a one-way valve allowing exhaled air to pass through a small round or square filter disc attached to the frontpiece. Some commercially available cloth masks also feature a valve. These type of face masks provide one-way barrier protection against respiratory droplets.

Two-way protection is needed to prevent possible transmission of the virus. The presence of valves may cause a potential source of leakage permitting air to flow out of the respirator facepiece. Though the valve mask allows easier breathing, this does not provide the needed barrier protection. The person wearing the valve-mask is protected but if that person has the disease, he/she can spread the virus to other people.

Face masks with valve should not be used in healthcare settings such as hospitals, clinics and other healthcare facilities including swabbing centers or in situations where a sterile field must be maintained such as the operating room because unfiltered exhaled air escapes to the field. Use of this face mask is also discouraged in the community setting especially in enclosed environment such as malls, offices, restaurants, hotels, etc.

FDA reminds the public on the proper use of face masks which must cover the nose and mouth. The use of face mask must be complemented with equally relevant measures for infection prevention and control to provide adequate level of protection and limit the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.


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Director General

<https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/documents/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-2019-ncov.pdf>
<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/251426/9789241549721-eng.pdf?sequence=1&ua=1>
https://www.who.int/medical_devices/priority/COVID_19_PPE/en/
<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/1994-05-25>

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