

NEWS RELEASE

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Face Coverings Recommended When Physical Distancing is a Challenge

North Bay, ON – The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (“Health Unit”) is reminding the public to use face coverings (e.g., homemade cloth mask) when physical distancing, a space of two metres or six feet, cannot be maintained, especially in an indoor setting. If worn properly, a face covering, in addition to other protective health measures, can help protect others from your infectious droplets.

“A face covering does not replace physical distancing and other protective health measures such as hand washing, and isolating yourself when you have symptoms or have come in close contact with someone with COVID-19 or suspected to have COVID-19,” said Dr. Jim Chirico, Medical Officer of Health. “I recommend using face coverings when physical distancing cannot be maintained, especially when in an indoor setting, on public transit, and when receiving essential or close-contact services.”

“At this time, we are not recommending mandating the use of face coverings district wide. The Health Unit will continue to monitor local data and will reassess the situation if necessary.” said Dr. Jim Chirico, Medical Officer of Health.

“It is my hope that the use of facial coverings during the COVID-19 pandemic voluntarily becomes widespread and the social norm rather than being mandated. If this does not occur in a timely manner, we will be asking the provincial government to issue a directive under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act to ensure consistency throughout the province, rather than having health units and municipalities legislate the use of facial coverings.”

Face coverings should not be worn by children under the age of two, or by a person who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove the face covering without assistance. To learn more about face coverings, including how to wear, clean and discard them, visit www.myhealthunit.ca/FaceCoverings/.

Currently, there is no specific treatment for COVID-19. It is important to remember that most people with COVID-19 have no symptoms or mild symptoms. People who are mildly ill should isolate and care for themselves at home. Most will recover in one to two weeks by simply treating the symptoms.

The public needs to remain cautious. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, isolate yourself and call a [testing centre](#) to book an appointment. If you have additional questions about COVID-19 please call the Health Unit's call centre at [1-800-563-2808](tel:1-800-563-2808) option 5.

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