

EPA Tools & Resources Webinar

Effectiveness of Medical and Cloth Masks for COVID-19 Protection

Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 3:00 to 4:00 PM ET

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*Certificates of attendance are offered!**

Despite widespread adoption of face mask use for personal protection and to help stop the spread of COVID-19, there is little or no public information available on the performance and efficacy of different types of masks or modifications on existing face coverings. Important questions, such as which type of mask to buy or make, what modifications can be made to disposable medical-grade surgical masks and other face coverings, or the compatibility of facial hair with protective face coverings, remain. EPA researchers are working to change that.



In a series of projects started at the request of UNC Hospitals, EPA investigators have collaborated with University of North Carolina partners to test the fitted filtering efficiency of face coverings available to hospital workers and the general public, as well as the relative performance of face coverings for individuals with beards.

This presentation will highlight three of these projects and their impact on:

- Informing hospital infection control personnel on the relative performance of alternative materials and practices that can guide prioritization during shortages in the supply of high efficiency respirators.
- Providing a relative comparison of fitted filtering efficiency on improvised, disposable and reusable face coverings used as personal protective equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic, informing members of the public on their best options.
- Evaluating the efficacy of popular modifications reported to increase the efficiency of disposable surgical and procedure masks worn by the public during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Examining the relative performance of protective facial coverings against the SARS-CoV-2 virus for people with beards, including an interventional approach to improve filtering efficiency for those who grow beards as a personal, religious, cultural or medical necessity.

About the presenter: Dr. James M. Samet is a senior principal investigator with the Clinical Research Branch, Public Health and Integrated Toxicology Division in EPA ORD's Center for Public Health and Environmental Assessment.

Who should attend?

State and local governments, tribes, public health and medical officials, and others interested in learning more about relative performance of face coverings being used by hospital workers and the general public during COVID-19.

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For registration questions:
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*NOTE: Acceptance of certificates is contingent on state and/or organization requirements - EPA cannot guarantee acceptance.