

GRMC recommends the use of masks and cloth face coverings to fight COVID-19

OAKLAND, MD- Garrett Regional Medical Center recommends the use of masks or cloth face coverings in public places including grocery stores, pharmacies, and other essential businesses as outlined in the latest CDC update. The use of a simple cloth face covering or mask can help slow the spread of infection by blocking respiratory droplets, preventing those who may not know they are infected from infecting others. Cloth face coverings can be fashioned out of fabric or other common household items including scarves, t-shirts, or bandanas as an additional protective health measure when out in public.

“We have learned that the virus can be transmitted to others by individuals who do not experience any symptoms and by those who have not developed symptoms yet,” said Linda Danjou, Director of Employee Health and Infection Control at GRMC. “The use of a mask or cloth covering can help protect those infected, who do not know it, from spreading COVID-19 through common interactions such as speaking, coughing, or sneezing.”

CDC recommendations for cloth face coverings include —

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops
- Include multiple layers of fabric
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape
- Cloth face coverings must be washed and cleaned regularly

Homemade masks should be made to cover your nose and mouth in order to be effective. In general, it is better to use a thicker and more tightly woven fabric.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Critical supplies should still be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders working directly with patients, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Along with cloth face coverings and masks, the public should continue to practice social distancing of at least 6 feet, continue to wash hands, avoid touching your face, nose and mouth, stay home whenever possible, and try to limit store trips to once a week. For more information on COVID-19 and what you can do to stay healthy, visit www.cdc.gov, www.grmc-wvumedicine.org, or www.garretthealth.org.



Staff at GRMC wearing homemade masks donated to the hospital by several members of the community.