

NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: Wallace Welch & Willingham

CDC Director Says Widespread Mask Use Can Get COVID-19 Under Control

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the use of masks and face coverings in public, and CDC Director Robert Redfield expanded on the topic during a discussion hosted by medical journal JAMA.

Redfield stated, "If we could get everybody to wear a mask right now, I think in four, six, eight weeks we could bring this epidemic under control." During the discussion, Redfield noted that "we are not defenseless against COVID-19," stating that "cloth face coverings are one of the most powerful weapons we have to slow and stop the spread of the virus—particularly when used universally within a community setting. All Americans have a responsibility to protect themselves, their families and their communities."

Redfield coauthored an [editorial](#) published by JAMA, which expands on the topic and shows the results of two studies seeking to identify the effectiveness of masks in preventing the spread of COVID-19. The CDC currently [calls on Americans](#) to wear masks, which help prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2—the virus that causes COVID-19.

The Effectiveness of Wearing Cloth Face Coverings and Masks

Studies have found that cloth face coverings and masks can help prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Notably, many carriers of COVID-19 are asymptomatic and may transmit the disease without being aware that they have it. This particular editorial showed the results of two studies involving the use of a mask, and found that masks are effective at helping

prevent the spread in varying environments. The results have been cited by the CDC in a press release, and the CDC retains its stance of recommending that masks are worn in public and calling on Americans to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

According to CDC Director Robert Redfield, the United States could be able to get the coronavirus "under control" within four to eight weeks if the general population wears a mask.

COVID-19 and the Use of Masks

Since shortly after the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, the CDC and various health experts have advocated for the use of masks. The CDC analyzed data from surveys about attitudes toward mask use, and found an increase in its acceptance. In April, 62% of respondents planned on following guidance, increasing to 76% of those surveyed in May.

While there is opposition to measures that include mandatory wearing of masks in public, the CDC reports that Americans are increasingly adopting the use of masks, with the hope that more will adapt to the practice.



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