

CDC: Double-Masking, Tighter Fit More Effective

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Wearing a second cloth mask on top of a medical face mask or knotting a medical mask's ear loops can offer significant additional protection against COVID-19, according to research the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published Wednesday.

Wearing a medical mask without knotting the loops blocked 42 percent of the particles from a simulated cough, the CDC found, while a cloth mask alone blocked 44.3 percent. But combining the two with a medical mask on the bottom and a cloth mask on top – often referred to as “double-masking” – blocked 92.5 percent of cough particles because it provided a more snug fit on an individual's head.

“The data in this report underscore the finding that good fit can increase overall mask efficiency,” researchers wrote. “Multiple simple ways to improve fit have been demonstrated to be effective. Continued innovative efforts to improve the fit of cloth and medical procedure masks to enhance their performance merit attention.”