

## Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit - Uncovering the Facts on Face Coverings

### MEDIA RELEASE:

#### Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit

April 22, 2020

#### Uncovering the Facts on Face Coverings

The Government of Canada has recommended the use of face coverings when physical distancing (2m/6ft apart) is difficult to maintain and has **mandated that all air passengers use them during travel**. With this in mind, now is a good time to uncover the facts on face coverings. Knowing the facts will help you and your family make an informed decision about wearing a face covering during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Outside of air travel, wearing a face covering is a personal choice. A face covering is a non-medical mask made of cloth that covers the nose and mouth. It should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face and be secured with ties or ear loops. Here are some considerations:

- Face coverings protect those around you by preventing your respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces. It is a way to cover your cough or sneeze.
- Given recent evidence related to transmission from persons who are pre-symptomatic or have no symptoms, a face covering is another measure you can choose when keeping a distance is a challenge, such as on public transit/in taxis and in smaller grocery stores or pharmacies.
- Remember, wearing one does not replace the need to continue with other public health measures, such as staying home as much as possible, avoiding close contact with others outside of your household and thorough and frequent hand hygiene practices.
- Face coverings should not be placed on or used by: children under the age of two, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- You can make your own face coverings with materials you have on hand. Check out these **'sew' and 'no sew' instructions along with guidelines** if you choose to purchase one made by someone else.

When wearing a face covering, take the following precautions to protect yourself:

- Wash your hands before putting it on & taking it off.
- Avoid touching your face covering while using it.
- Use your own face covering and do not share yours with others.
- Clean surfaces that your dirty face covering touches.
- Change it as soon as it gets damp or soiled. Cloth face coverings can be laundered with other items using a hot cycle, and then dried thoroughly. Check out the **Do's and Don't's of using shared laundry**.

Wear cloth face coverings only and keep the medical masks for our health care workers! Remember the best protection is to stay home, practice physical distancing and wash hands often. For more information on face coverings: **Government of Ontario** and **Government of Canada**

The Health Unit has staff answering COVID-19 related questions and concerns for the public from 8:30am to 4:30pm every day at 1-800-660-5853 extension 2499. Public Health Inspectors are also available to discuss environmental health concerns. You can also get more information about COVID-19 by visiting [www.healthunit.org/coronavirus](http://www.healthunit.org/coronavirus) or by connecting with LGLHealthUnit on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.