

All USask faculty, staff, students and visitors will be required to wear 3-ply single-use masks in all indoor spaces on USask campuses in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert and outdoors if two or more people are together and can't maintain a minimum of 2 metres of physical distancing. This change is an enhanced measure against the spread of COVID 19 and is expected to be in place until Dec. 31, 2021, when it will be re-evaluated.

Although there are some exceptions to the USask mask protocol, generalized mask exceptions will not be provided for issues of comfort, fogging glasses, or general laboratory activities.

USING MASKS IN A RESEARCH LABORATORY

Face masks must be used in research laboratories with consideration for:

- Users must prevent contamination from radioactive, biological, and chemical materials.
- If there is a risk of hazardous materials (such as chemical solvents) absorbing into or onto cloth face masks, use disposable face masks instead.
 - Disposable masks are typically made of polymers and non-woven fabrics making them less absorbent than cloth face masks.
- When the procedure calls for a flame resistant labcoat, a mask with an equivalent level of resistance should be selected
- Like a lab coat, face masks used in a laboratory must never be worn outside the lab.
- If you must leave the lab, utilize a different mask outside the lab.
- Ensure face masks are laundered or disposed of at the end of the day.
- Do not wear reusable face masks in areas where biological/infectious contamination is a concern (such as labs operating at Containment Level 2); and where hazardous chemicals or radioactive materials are used.

WHEN AND HOW CAN SINGLE-USE MASKS BE REUSED?

Single-use masks, as they are named, are made for single-use. Yet, with proper care, and if the mask is not contaminated, degraded, or soiled, these masks can be reused throughout a day of work or study as you take it off for eating, to utilize your private office, to follow laboratory protocols, or in other appropriate circumstances.

Please remember the following when reusing any mask:

- perform hand hygiene before and after donning and doffing a mask;
- before and after use, inspect for any contamination, tears, rips, holes, elastic/straps ripped/stretched, and other damage;
- do not reuse a mask that is damaged
- do not share masks

HOW SHOULD SINGLE-USE MASKS BE STORED BETWEEN USES

Outside of the laboratory, masks should be stored for reuse in a clean, breathable, labeled container or bag, or hung by the straps in a dust-free, low traffic location until the next use

- If using a reusable container or bag for storage, ensure it is disposed of or cleaned regularly;
- Store masks so that they do not touch the masks of others.

MASK USE TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES

Always ensure hand hygiene is performed before and after donning and doffing you face mask. If a face mask is uncomfortable, try different style straps or try pleated masks.

To prevent fogging issues, try the following solutions:

- Apply an anti-fog (ex. Uvex Fog Eliminator) to the lens of your glasses;
- Use a mask with adjustable/flexible nose bridge to ensure proper fit; and
- Use athletic tape or similar tape to tape the mask down near the glasses.