

Public Masking: Safety, Freedom & Politics

July 20th, 2020

Public masking during this time of national turmoil has pitted medically concerned citizens against citizens who see masking as a politically motivated infringement on their constitutional and civil rights. While the medical community's oath to "do not harm"¹ is absolute, Okaloosa County Commissioners have pledged to value "continual improvement of infrastructure; health, safety, and well-being of the citizens; preservation of natural resources; responsible economic development; leadership; and stewardship."² Our elected leadership is called wise in balancing competing interests.

Science in Masking

1. The World Health Organization's current guidance (June 2020) states: "Many countries have recommended the use of fabric masks/face coverings for the general public. At the present time, the widespread use of masks by healthy people in the community setting is not yet supported by high quality or direct scientific evidence and there are potential benefits and harms to consider..."³
2. The only Randomized Clinical Trial (RCT) to date, comparing cloth masks to surgical masks concludes: "This study is the first RCT of cloth masks, and the results caution against the use of cloth masks. This is an important finding to inform occupational health and safety. Moisture retention, reuse of cloth masks and poor filtration may result in increased risk of infection."⁴

Additionally, from the same study:

"The use of cloth masks (referred to as fabric masks in this document) as an alternative to medical masks is not considered appropriate for protection of health workers based on limited available evidence. One study that evaluated the use of cloth masks in a health care facility found that health care workers using cotton cloth masks were at increased risk of influenza-like illness compared with those who wore medical masks."⁵

"There is limited evidence that wearing a medical mask by healthy individuals in households, in particular those who share a house with a sick person, or among attendees of mass gatherings may be beneficial as a measure preventing transmission."⁶

3. Surgical (Paper) Mask manufacturer packaging specifically states: "This is not a respirator and will not provide any protection against COVID-19 (Coronavirus) or other viruses or contaminants." Various (and political) 'Fact Check' sites confirm the validity of this statement while denying its message⁷. Additionally "The CDC's recent advice on surgical masks contrasts with another CDC web page that says surgical masks do "NOT provide the wearer with a reliable level of protection from inhaling smaller airborne particles and is not considered respiratory protection"⁸.

The weave and fit of standard “over the ear” surgical masks do not appear to provide any significant protection against COVID-19 as the virus particles (0.1 microns) are smaller than the weave in the material (0.3 microns)⁹. Catching phlegm and sputum does not prevent the expulsion of virus through normal exhalation. Regardless of the thousands of mainstream news articles (‘if it bleeds it leads’), the preponderance of evidence from *the scientific community* has determined that both Surgical (Paper) Masks and Fabric Masks for the general public do not *medically* work for the spread of viruses.

Constitutional & Political Issues

1. In Florida Statute 381.00315 we read: “The State Health Officer is responsible for declaring public health emergencies, issuing public health advisories, and ordering isolation or quarantines.¹⁰” Note the State Health Officer is able to offer advice and order “Isolation” and “Quarantines.” These are defined:

- “(a) “Isolation” means the separation of an individual who is reasonably believed to be infected with a communicable disease from individuals who are not infected...”
- “(d) “Quarantine” means the separation of an individual reasonably believed to have been exposed to a communicable disease, but who is not yet ill...”
- (4) The department has the duty and the authority to declare, enforce, modify, and abolish the isolation and quarantine of persons, animals, and premises as the circumstances indicate...”

Note that the State Health Officer does not have the authority to isolate or quarantine healthy people. The Health Department may not restrict an individual unless that individual is reasonably believed to have been exposed to a communicable disease. Otherwise, the State Health Officer advises the governor, who then makes a policy (political) decision under the laws of the US Constitution and the State.

2. The Department of Justice cautions: “Section 242 of Title 18 makes it a crime for a person acting under color of any law to willfully deprive a person of a right or privilege protected by the Constitution or laws of the United States¹¹; For the purpose of Section 242, acts under “color of law” include acts not only done by federal, state, or local officials within their lawful authority, but also acts done beyond the bounds of that official’s lawful authority, if the acts are done while the official is purporting to or pretending to act in the performance of his/her official duties¹². Persons acting under color of law within the meaning of this statute include police officers, prisons guards and other law enforcement officials, as well as judges, care providers in public health facilities, and others who are acting as public officials¹³.” In short, officials must not exceed their constitutional authority in restricting the freedoms of their citizens under “color of law;” and consequently opening the door to personal litigation against them.

3. Regarding the counting of COVID-19 numbers; there seems to be a pandemic of misunderstanding and out-right dishonesty by state and national health organizations. Counting and reporting numbers of asymptomatic positive test results vs. increased hospitalization gives the appearance of being deceptive. Americans were initially (and rightly) told that masks and distancing were “to flatten the curve¹⁴” for hospital overload. A March 2020 report states by “spreading the cases over a longer period... the cases grow and peak, but stay below the health care system capacity line. The system can absorb them.¹⁵”

In March, the focus was on deaths and ICU beds. Now, *mysteriously*, the focus changed to ‘positive test results’ without context. Most Americans will test positive¹⁶, at least 50% with the virus will not have any symptoms¹⁷, and of those that do, 80% will have mild to moderate symptoms¹⁸. Those with severe symptoms or death are in the same demographic as those subject to other moderate or severe respiratory viruses; the elderly and immune compromised. Sadly, hospitals will have busy and barren periods. Staff may be worn out and in short supply; and a few in the community will lose a loved one.

4. Along with the Centers for Disease Control, the State of Florida’s Department of Health appear to have been caught spiking the numbers of reported COVID-19 cases^{19 20 21 22}. Discrepancies always seem to appear as boosted numbers. Strange...

5. A number of mainstream reports confuse “Face Coverings” and the N95 Respirator Mask²³. “A properly [tight] fitted N95 Respirator will block 95% of tiny air particles ... but surgical masks, designed to protect patients from a surgeon’s respiratory droplets, aren’t effective at blocking particles²⁴. “A Covid-19 particle is smaller than 0.1 micron, according to South Korean researchers, and can pass through a surgical mask.²⁵” A surgical mask or fabric face-covering is not a properly-worn N95 Respirator. Early on in this epidemic, due to the limited supply of N95s, face-coverings were offered as ‘better than nothing.’ *Mysteriously* they have become the ‘gold standard’ for community health.

6. The requirement for “Face Coverings” with no technical specifications is the major red-light for decision-makers. Both peer-reviewed science and the international medical community state unequivocally that surgeon’s masks and fabric face-coverings do not protect from COVID-19. Why then would national officials suggest “face coverings” instead of a specified weave of fabric or paper? In a candid moment, Dr. Fauci stated: "I want to protect myself and protect others, and also because I want to make it be a symbol...showing respect for another person.²⁶” Is a mask technical or political?

In Closing,

There are no peer-reviewed clinical trials demonstrating that paper filter masks, fabric masks or face-coverings have any significant effect on restricting the spread of COVID-19. Most will get COVID-19, mask or not, and most won’t even know it. Americans are divided ...and angry. One group of Americans believes public masking is the answer, while another sees masking as a political assault.

Please tread carefully.

Respectfully,


Chaplain Rob Sugg

Chaplain Rob Sugg

Biography: [linkedin.com/in/chaplainrobsugg](https://www.linkedin.com/in/chaplainrobsugg)

Website: www.truthforthesoul.com

Endnotes

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primum_non_nocere

² <http://www.co.okaloosa.fl.us/bcc/home>

³ WHO, Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19; file:///C:/Users/Home/AppData/Local/Temp/WHO-2019-nCov-IPC_Masks-2020.4-eng.pdf

⁴ A cluster randomised trial of cloth masks compared with medical masks in healthcare workers; <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25903751/>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2020/may/21/facebook-posts/disposable-homemade-masks-are-effective-stopping-a/>

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/apr/28/us-face-masks-n95-surgical-coronavirus-health-workers>

⁹ <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:VLXWeZBll7YJ:https://multimedia.3m.com/mws/media/9577300/respirators-and-surgical-masks-contrast-technical-bulletin.pdf+&cd=13&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>

¹⁰ http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0381/Sections/0381.00315.html

¹¹ Emphasis mine.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <https://www.justice.gov/crt/deprivation-rights-under-color-law>

¹⁴ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/03/11/coronavirus-flattening-curve-quarantine-stop-spread/5021564002/>

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ <https://www.businessinsider.com/coronavirus-150-million-americans-may-get-infected-2020-3?op=1>

¹⁷ <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/50-percent-of-people-with-covid19-not-aware-have-virus>

¹⁸ <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/blog/coronavirus-symptoms>

¹⁹ <https://www.foxnews.com/health/coronavirus-update-florida-labs-not-reporting-negative-test-results-report>

²⁰ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/florida-health-official-admits-man-who-died-in-motorcycle-crash-listed-as-coronavirus-death>

²¹ <https://twitter.com/EmeraldRobinson/status/1284104344225423361>

²² https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2020/05/29/us_covid-19_death_toll_is_inflated.html

²³ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2020/06/11/fact-check-n-95-filters-not-too-large-stop-covid-19-particles/5343537002/>

²⁴ <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:VLXWeZBll7YJ:https://multimedia.3m.com/mws/media/9577300/respirators-and-surgical-masks-contrast-technical-bulletin.pdf+&cd=13&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>

²⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/apr/28/us-face-masks-n95-surgical-coronavirus-health-workers>

²⁶ <https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/27/politics/fauci-coronavirus-wear-masks-cnntv/index.html>