**Mask or No Mask?**

**戴不戴口罩?**

Experts seem to agree: If you are not a health care worker, do not buy N95 masks, long considered the best of protective masks.

专家门似乎认同以下说法：如果您不是医护工作者，请不要购买N95口罩。一直以来N95口罩都是公认的最佳防护口罩。

They will not help you much, and they are in extremely short supply for the people who need them most: health care workers trying to protect themselves from COVID-19 while saving lives.

它们对于普通人并没有太大用处，而对于那些最需要它们的人来说，（N95口罩）已经极度供不应求——医护人员在挽救他人生命时，需要它们保护自己免受新冠肺炎的侵害。

However, there is still debate over whether everyone should wear some kind of face covering when they leave their homes.

然而，关于大家出门是否都需要佩戴某种口罩仍然存在争议。

Staying home and limiting contact with groups of people remain the best ways to stop the spread of the new coronavirus.

待在家里并尽量避免与人群接触仍然是阻止新冠病毒传播的最佳方法。

But some experts suggest that some kind of face covering may help, too -- not by protecting the wearer from infection, but by protecting others from the wearer.

但一些专家表明遮盖面部可能也有帮助——虽然不是保护佩戴口罩的人免受感染，但它能保护这些人不会传染其他人。

There is growing evidence that people can spread the disease without having signs of sickness themselves. Two studies have linked 6 percent to 13 percent of infections to people who were not showing any signs of infections themselves.

越来越多的证据表明有些人会在自身没有任何感染症状的情况下传播该疾病。已有两项研究发现6%至13%的感染病例与没有任何感染迹象的传播者有关。

The new coronavirus, which causes COVID-19, spreads mostly through small drops of liquid that infected people expel from their mouths. That happens when they cough or sneeze. But it can also happen when they talk or sing.

能够引发新冠肺炎的新冠病毒会通过感染者口腔中排出的细小粘液进行传播，尤其是当感染者咳嗽或者打喷嚏时。有时也会通过说话或唱歌进行传播。

If virus-infected drops of liquid land on surfaces, people who touch the surface get the drops on their hands. From the hands, it is a short trip to the eyes, nose or mouth. Masks may help by blocking at least some of those droplets.

如果携带病毒的粘液颗粒散落在物体表面，接触这些物体表面的人会将其粘到手上。病毒会通过手快速进入眼睛、鼻子或嘴巴。遮盖面部或会阻止一些粘液颗粒传播从而起到帮助人们的作用。

"I don't think it's going to be the most effective tool in our toolbox, but I think it might help," said Tim Schacker. He is vice dean for research at the University of Minnesota Medical School.

明尼苏达大学医学院的研究副院长蒂姆·沙克说：“我认为它并不是工具箱中最有效的工具，但它可能会有所帮助。”

However, he added, "this is a tough question because like all things COVID, we lack data."

但是，他补充道：“这是一个棘手的问题，就像所有其他冠状病毒疾病一样，我们缺乏数据基础。”

There is not much definitive research on how well face masks of any kind work to prevent any disease, and even less research for a new disease like COVID-19.

并没有多少研究表明口罩能多么有效地预防任何疾病，针对像新冠肺炎这样的新型疾病的研究就更少了。

N95 masks generally are best for preventing someone from catching a virus. When used correctly, they fit closely onto the face and block more particles than most other masks.

一般来说N95口罩最适合预防感染病毒。如果被正确使用，它们可以紧贴脸部，而且能比大多数其他口罩更有效地阻挡更多颗粒。

However, many people do not use them correctly. They often do not get a tight enough fit, which largely defeats the purpose of the masks.

但是，许多人并不会正确使用它们。他们不会紧密地将其贴合至面部，而这在很大程度上违背了使用这种口罩的目的。

Dr. Chongfei Jin works at Patient First in the state of Virginia. He said there are many videos available online that show how to wear the mask the right way.

金崇飞（音译）医生在弗吉尼亚州的“患者至上”医院工作。他说，线上有很多视频教大家如何正确佩戴口罩。

He said, “I just want to remind the public three things: Avoid inside out. Avoid upside down. And cover your nose as well.”

他说：“我只想提醒公众三件事：避免戴反，避免倒着戴，同时要遮住鼻子。”

Health care workers are facing serious shortages in part because the panicked public has bought N95 masks for themselves.

医护人员面临N95口罩严重短缺的情况，而部分原因是惊慌的公众为自己购买了N95口罩。

"If they run out of masks, then it's very difficult for them to stay healthy to take care of you and me when we get sick," said Jon Andrus, a professor of global health at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

华盛顿特区乔治华盛顿大学全球健康学教授乔恩·安德鲁斯表示：“如果他们用不了（N95）口罩就很难保证不被感染，如果他们都病了就更无法医治可能被感染的我们了。”

Surgical masks are another popular choice. But experts say they provide limited protection from the coronavirus since they do not fit as closely to the face. They may help prevent the wearer from infecting others. But again, the masks should be saved for health care workers.

外科医用口罩是另一种受欢迎的口罩。但专家表示，由于它们不能紧贴面部，因此它们对冠状病毒的防卫作用有限。它们可能有助于防止佩戴者感染他人。但同样，这些口罩应该留给医护工作者。

Some cloth masks may also help protect the public too. But it is not clear how much protection different kinds of fabric provide.

一些布制口罩也可能有助于保护公众。但是尚不清楚不同种类的布制口罩能有多大的保护力度。

Some efforts have aimed to ask the public to sew fabric masks for health care workers facing extreme shortages. But, these homemade masks do not provide the usual level of protection.

一些人呼吁公众为面临口罩极度短缺的医护人员缝制布制口罩。但是，这些自制口罩并无法达到基本的防卫水准。

One study from 2013 states, "A homemade mask should only be considered as a last resort to prevent droplet transmission from infected individuals." The researchers added, "But it would be better than no protection."

2013年的一项研究指出，“自制口罩仅应被视为防止感染者进行飞沫传播的最后手段。” 同时研究人员补充称其为：聊胜于无。

Jin, the Virginia doctor, said a “homemade mask, I believe that is the last resort. If you have a surgical mask, please use the surgical mask [as] that's much better.”

弗吉尼亚的金医生说，“我认为自制口罩是万不得已的备用方案。如果您有外科医用口罩，那么请使用医用口罩，因为它效果更好。”

Andrus, the global health professor, is worried that masks will give wearers a false sense of security. Wearing a mask of any kind is no substitute for social distancing, he said.

全球卫生学教授安德鲁斯则担心口罩会让佩戴者产生错误的安全感。他说，戴上任何口罩都不能替代保持社会安全隔离。

But, "This is a war," he added. "Anything we can do to minimize risk is critically important."

但是他补充道，“这是一场战争。我们为降低风险所做的一切都至关重要。”

I'm Ashley Thompson.

阿什利·汤普森报道。

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