NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: Ronstadt Insurance

CDC Says Masks Protect Wearer From COVID-19

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently updated its guidance on the effectiveness of cloth masks to include protection for the wearer of the mask, in addition to helping prevent the spread of COVID-19.

According to the CDC's scientific brief, observational and epidemiological studies demonstrate that wearing a cloth mask can offer protections from contracting SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

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According to the CDC, "studies demonstrate that cloth mask materials can also reduce wearers' exposure to infectious droplets through filtration, including filtration of fine droplets and particles."

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This strengthened endorsement of mask-wearing comes after previous CDC guidance focused on community benefits of masks, advising that multi-layer cloth masks can block the release of exhaled respiratory particles into the environment and help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The CDC stated that individual prevention benefits increase when higher numbers of people use masks consistently and correctly—which benefits the entire community.

CDC Continues to Monitor Studies

The CDC continues to monitor ongoing studies of the effectiveness of mask-wearing, cautioning that further research is needed to expand the evidence base for cloth masks' protective effect, including studies that evaluate the effectiveness of different types of masks and combinations of materials.

In addition to studies of individual and community protection, the CDC referenced an analysis of the United States' economic impacts of mask use conducted by Goldman Sachs. The analysis found that increasing mask use by 15% could help prevent the need for lockdowns and reduce losses associated with the coronavirus by up to $1 trillion in the United States' gross domestic product.

Current CDC guidance remains that community use of masks can help avert future lockdowns, especially if combined with other measures such as social distancing, hand-washing and using adequate ventilation systems.